

Inter-ethnic Evangelical Ministry

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My colleagues and the giant..



At a Thai(Seed) church in Ratchaburi. The man in the bottom right hand corner is a new convert. His name is Mat. He's a friend. We don't understand each other that well, but we laugh a lot.

1. Thai Culture and religious background

I have had the privilege to attend a church camp during my holiday in October where there were about 1000-2000 Thai Christians together in Suratane. There at the camp I met some interesting people and heard more about Thailand. Some facts were not new to me but I haven't mentioned them before so I thought the time is now right. Thailand is situated in the 10/40 Window. In missiological and geographical terms this means areas between 10 degrees North of the Equator to 40 degrees North of it. Here lies the people groups in the worlds who have been least reached and penetrated by the gospel. Two thirds of the world's population live in these areas and most of them are non-Christians. This area includes India, China, the Middle East Japan and so on. Some people groups here are unreached. That means they have never heard the gospel of Jesus Christ. To learn more of the unreached people groups go to www.joshuaproject.net. There is a list of the most unreached and all the things you would like to know about them.

Now you might wonder: how does Thailand fit into this puzzle. For starters, Thailand has a population of over 66 million. Less than one percent of this 66 million people are Christians. They reckon that about 95% of these are Buddhist. And there are some Muslims here as well. In fact the

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pastor of the church where the church camp was, was a Muslim about 20 years ago before he received Christ as his Saviour. The statistics differ from source to source. In Operation World there are also many facts on Thailand's religious life. Operation World is a great source on unreached and less reached people groups. Probably the most comprehensive one for the mission situation in the world. Half of all the Christians in Thailand are Catholic. The Catholic church has many schools here in Thailand.

As I said before there are numerous temple's and statues of the Buddha. Big, small, on necklaces, in cars on the dashboard, almost everywhere you can think of. According to the Thai culture Seminar that I have attended it is estimated that there are more than 200 000 Buddhist monks in Thailand. They dress in a orange kind of a gown and live like beggars. The culture and the Buddhist religion are much intertwined in Thailand. Just now in the last week of November they had Loi Krathong. That is a celebration of involving the River god. What the Thai's do here in Ratchaburi is they take money or food and put it in little baskets that can float on the river and by so doing hope that the River god will forgive the sins of polluting the river as they pray. The more food and money they give probably the more likely they hope to be forgiven. As my Thai teacher explained this to me I interjected and said to her, "but that is exactly why Jesus Christ came to

earth, to take our sins away as you hope the River god would take yours away. She only smiled and laughed. I wish I could speak Thai better now so I can explain the gospel to many. Tracts and gospel booklets must do for now and a few phrases about God in Thai. Strangely enough the Thai's will also celebrate Christmas on the 25th of December. They have many holidays and many are to celebrate some fish or something weird.

2. Narivitaya School

My teaching is going well. The School will be having their 70 year celebrations on the 6th and 7th of December. They also had a big sports event for three days in October and over Christmas time there will be much festivities going on. Dances, songs and so on. It is quite an experience watching them jive. If anyone has seen the people in Asia dance it sometimes look if they go into a trance. Their bodies twisting and turning incessantly as they dance on the beat of the drums. I have had a great opportunity to share God songs with the clubs in school. I have two different classes(clubs) apart from my normal teaching. In these clubs I teach them a song with actions and then play a game and then tell a simple story using a book. In this way I can teach them about Jesus and the gospel.

I had a great opportunity to teach the Grade 5's and 6's about Christian holidays. I explained the gospel during that time with my Thai teacher

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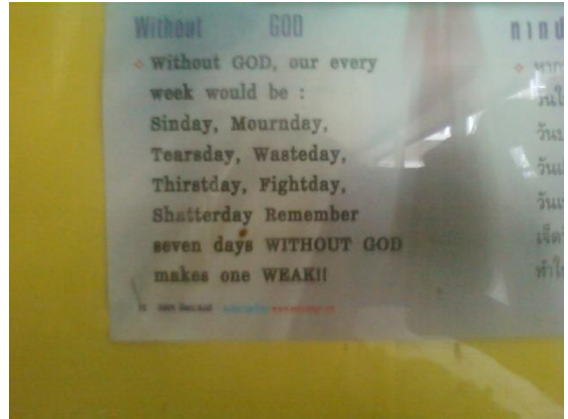
translating. I explained Christmas, Good Friday, Easter; Ascension Day and Pentecost. Unfortunately we don't celebrate the Second Coming of Christ! So part of the gospel was left unsaid, depending on your definition of the gospel.



This is what I fear they teach the students. This is a time table of a gr 8 class.



They zap flies and mosquitoes with this racket!



The drums on Sports day.



At an English camp one Saturday at another Catholic school with Filipino colleagues.

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**A girl trained in the art of drumming.
It's quite something to watch.**

3. Outreach and witness opportunities

Since the last newsletter I had a holiday and visited two South African missionaries in the south of Thailand. They actually live on an island. I received a lot more tracts at a Thai church and distributed some of it in Bangkok, Ratchaburi and as I travelled. Great news is that I ordered 250 Thai booklets from World Missionary Press www.wmpress.org and plan to distribute all of it in Bangkok, Ratchaburi and wherever I travel before I come to South Africa in 2013. These booklets are great, because they explain the gospel comprehensively and are a kind of a thorough follow up as well. One of my Filipino friends is going to help me distribute these.

I gave three Chinese ladies from our school a DVD to watch after I found out that they were atheists. It's called "The cross in China." from "Voice of the Martyrs." It's a documentary on the growth of the church in China over the past 100 years or so. They told me they

watched it. But we didn't have any conversation after that. We can pray that the material would have a great impact on them. I plan to give them English New Testaments as well. I don't think they have ever read the New Testament for themselves.

In January there is an open door for me and Karuna, my boss, to teach English at a local University. We want to build relationships and share the gospel with the students. Two members of a branch of Seed church are professors there and they invited us to come. So there will be a few Sundays when we will conduct English classes and share the gospel there.

With GMO(Global Media Outreach) it's going great. I have in addition to my regular contacts joined the Islam community. There was a great need for more people to get involved. So now I have the privilege to share the gospel to Muslims from the Middle East and Asia, especially Pakistan and Bangladesh on a daily basis. This is really a great door God is opening. I want to encourage anyone who is interested in sharing the gospel to get involved.

www.Globalmediaoutreach.com Online training is provided. There are many different communities to get involved in GMO. In this way we can reach the unreached from our computer and pray for their needs. There are 2,3 billion users of the Internet. GMO had 148 million visitors in 2011, 2,5 million people seeking follow up from online missionaries and over 19 million people

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making a decision for Christ or made a recommitment to God in 2011 alone.

The one Indian lady I am working with had a dream of a white shining cross. She said that in her dream her feet were chained and as she looked at the cross her feet were set free from the bondage. I have shared the gospel a few times to her a few months ago. She is Hindu, but had attended a Christian school when she was young. She embraces the Hindu gods and all religions except the Muslim one. So one day she came with this story to me and Karuna. We were amazed so I decided to give her a book on the cross. "The passion of Jesus Christ---by John Piper." An excellent book on the cross. It is like a devotion listing 50 reasons or purposes Jesus came to die. One week later she announced that she and her husband will return to India. He is also Hindu. But I think there are many reasons why they are going back. But please pray for her that the gospel may take root and conquer. Her husband is a very smart man and owns a company. They came to Thailand to expand the business.



Thai Booklets called "Help from Above" from World Missionary Press.



The whole pack! I got them within one week from ordering it! I didn't pay a cent!



Ready to fly..tracts in Thai. I got these from missionaries.



I have a few of these: Thai New Testaments. Last week I gave one to a

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Buddhist monk(He was about 65 years old) I'd say. He seemed keen to read it. He had glasses on.

4 Helpful resources

Over the years I have been privileged to study great books on missions and God. Here are a few I recommend in no particular order apart from the Bible—the greatest One off course.

- a) Let the Nations be Glad—By John Piper---
- b) God is the Gospel ----by John Piper-
- c) Practical discipleship—Peter Hammond
- d) The Normal Christian life—Watchman Nee
- e) True Spirituality---Francis Schaeffer
- f) Mere Christianity---C.S. Lewis
- g) The Ten Commandments—Prof. de Bruyn
- h) A cross for a crown—Bennie Mostert
- i) Sit, walk, stand --- Watchman Nee
- j) The gospel according to Jesus—John MacArthur.
- k) The Pilgrims Progress—John Bunyan
- l) OperationWorld—Patrick Johnstone and Jason Mandryk
- m) With Christ in the school of prayer—Andrew Murray
- n) One thing you can't do in heaven—Mark Cahill
- o) The greatest century of Missions and the greatest century of Reformation—Peter Hammond

and a few recommended websites on missions, evangelism and God:

www.desiringGod.org
www.operationworld.org
www.godlife.com
www.tnt.org.za
www.joshuaproject.net
www.christianaction.org
www.sermonindex.org
www.gfa.org
www.Globalmediaoutreach.com
www.cft.org
www.wmpress.org
www.livingwaters.com
www.answersingenesis.org

4. Praise Points

- a) God's gift of Himself in the gospel and through the Holy Spirit's indwelling.
- b) God's protection, provisions (food, clothes, shelter) and providences in daily life.
- c) Evangelistic material(gospel booklets, Bibles and tracts conveying the message.
- d) A good job and good health.
- e) Open doors to share God's message through songs and evangelistic material ext.
- f) For all who share God through their lives and words.
- g) For God's means of grace(preaching, prayer; the Bible ext)
- h) God helping me in teaching English. It has been more enjoyable than a burden.

Prayerrequests

- a) I would display the fruit of the Holy Spirit to those around me to God's glory.

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- b) That I would not neglect prayer and meditating on God's Word because of work and ministry.
- c) I would delight and rejoice in God and not merely for all His gifts.
- d) That I would glorify God in all His painful and enjoyable gifts.
- e) For gospel seeds through songs, words and evangelistic material to grow and bear fruit.
- f) That people who have been stirred by the gospel message (in word or literature) find a church or be followed up by others believers.
- g) God would help me in starting a website for the ministry.
- h) Learning Thai.
- i) Next year. God's will. Should I stay in Ratchaburi or look for another school to teach. I plan to stay in Thailand.
- j) For the opportunity to teach English at the University and share the gospel in January and February. There is an open door for us on Sundays.



Below: The English camp in November: The students treated us like celebrities. They wanted our autographs afterwards. We sang many songs with them. I did "Father Abraham....with actions" I think they liked the dancing.

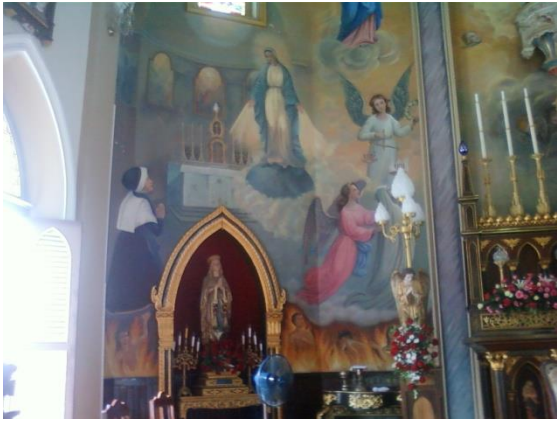


A statue with Mary and Jesus. There are many of these.



Catholic artwork in a church nearby.

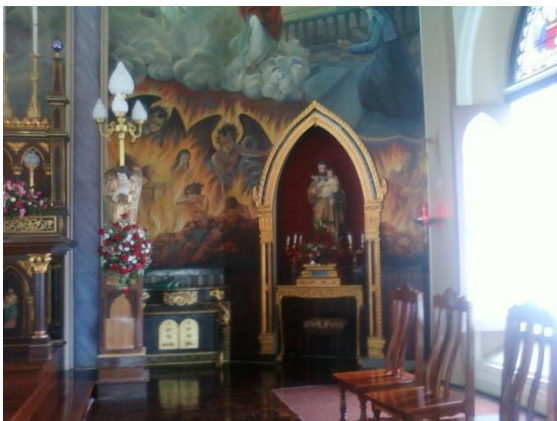
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A statue of Jesus. The second command comes to mind.. "You will not make..."



More Catholic art in a church.



Heaven and hell depicted in a church above.



To the right: A Presbyterian church in Ratchaburi. They had a choir there the Sunday morning.



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The man above sells coconuts. It's delicious. He knows about Jesus and he can speak English.



My grade 4 class. Many of them are very sharp. Some of them can speak English very well, better than many in my grade 7 class.



This is his wife with the coconuts they're selling.