

Gospel Going Global

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A newsletter from the desk of Chris Swinford the Assistant Dean of International Studies at SIBI

Classes To Begin In Phnom Penh, Cambodia! We Can All Learn From Our Newest Students

I am so excited about the ministry training school we are administering in Cambodia. It is obvious that God is at work and has opened an incredible door for evangelism, church planting and ministry training. I truly wish that each of you reading this could have been there to witness firsthand what God is doing through our brothers and sisters in this receptive area of the world. The people of Cambodia have a tragic history, but are entering a fantastic future as the Lord's Church begins to truly spread and grow throughout the cities and villages of this country. I thank God for the brothers and sister (in the picture to the right) who are so willing to go out and teach the lost of their own nation.



A picture of James Cheou and the six students of the Cambodia Bible Institute in Phnom Penh. This picture was taken in our classroom at the school building.

As we interviewed the students of the Cambodia Bible Institute, we realized that there were many things they needed to learn. They desired in-depth teaching and were excited about the opportunity to learn more about the Word of God. They, however, could teach all of us a few things about studying the gospel message, teaching the gospel message and having the heart to reach out to those in neighboring communities with the gospel message. They all knew the message that saves and all were involved in teaching it to others. As we talked with them, my thoughts began to crystallize into one thought, "We need to make sure, as we teach them the deeper things of God, that we never diminish their desire to teach the gospel of Christ to those around them." It would be tragic to see them lose the evangelistic fire in their eyes. Testing, memory work, Bible study, etc. are all so important, but nothing compares with the heart to learn it and teach it to others. May God give every student we teach, and every teacher, the heart to change lives.

As I got on the plane to return to America, I smiled at the thought that, once again, I was the student and they were my teachers. This was true in Ukraine and has been true everywhere I have traveled. It is my prayer that our congregations in this country have the same heart to learn, apply our knowledge and affect the lives of our neighbors as I have seen in Asia, Europe, Africa, etc.

Dennis Malepa From Botswana Visits SIBI

It is always a pleasure to meet those who are actively working to train preachers, teachers and church leaders, and it was certainly a great privilege to meet Brother Malepa. He is the Dean of our ministry training school in Botswana, Africa (near South Africa).

Brother Malepa is reporting to congregations who have been supportive of the work in Botswana, and is seeking help from interested brothers and sisters.

Brother Malepa spoke in chapel to an enthralled audience. As he told the story of the great

things God is doing in Botswana, we all praised God for the great things He has done.



MINISTRY TRAINING CENTER LOCATIONS

Albania	1
Botswana	1
Brazil	1
Cambodia	1
Cuba	1
Dominican Republic	1
Ecuador	1
Ethiopia	4
Ghana	1
Greece	1
Haiti	1
Indonesia	1
Liberia	1
Mexico	1
Philippines	3
Russia	1
South Korea	1
Thailand	1
Ukraine	1
United States	2
Zambia	1

This makes a total of 28 schools in 20 nations! We are preparing an agreement regarding a ministry training school in Singapore. Pray that God help us as we seek to enhance our existing works and as we seek to expand to new areas!

The Cambodia Bible Institute Is Already At Work In Villages



John Sproul and orphans

The thing I always enjoy when traveling to various ministry training schools around the world is seeing the students at work in their congregations. It's gratifying to see those they are studying with, those they have converted and to see the effect they are having on their world.

Our students in Cambodia are actively at work in the villages surrounding the capitol city of Phnom Penh. One congregation, called the T-N-T Church of Christ, was seeking to help orphans in their area. They were building a special house for them and members from the congregation were working hard to provide for their needs. Pictured above is John Sproul, the Dean of the Cambodia Bible School. John is pictured with several of the orphans being helped by the congregation. John and his family are preparing to move to Phnom Penh and begin

their work with the school in 2006. He will not only be teaching classes at the school and taking care of administrative needs, but using his expertise in managing fisheries and agriculture to help the Christians of that area to support themselves and serve their communities. John will be working with our students to continue work at congregations like T-N-T. There were four baptisms at the T-N-T congregation in the days after George Carman and I left for Korea. The students are apparently still hard at work.

We traveled to several village congregations that depend on our students for preaching and teaching.

Each week, on Sundays and Wednesdays, *Motorbikes used for evangelism.*

(pictured to the right) and ride many miles, going from village to village teaching the gospel. Those of you helping with our working fund helped to fix these motorbikes so that the students could continue traveling to the villages.



An Amazing Conversion Story From Our Donetsk, Ukraine School

When we tried to purchase all of the apartments in the building where our school in Ukraine was located, there were a few hold-outs. Foremost among them were a couple named Shabanov. We tried to deal with them, but they were continually raising the price, harassing us, and doing whatever they could to make us so miserable we would pay a tremendous price to them for their apartment. Rather than pay the ever-increasing amounts they offered, their were court battles, arguments, threats and inconven-

What a perfect example of lives being changed by the examples of longsuffering and consistent Christians!

iences. It was a challenge to maintain a kind and gentle Christian spirit at times, but we were determined to respond and react as Christians should. Decency will not allow me to discuss all the underhanded tricks this family tried, but it climaxed with this couple assaulting and injuring one of our female graduates of the school. They then went into hiding.

They emerged from hiding because of health concerns and begged for forgiveness for the things they had done in the past. Several students, especially one named Bogdan, had been studying with them and they were desiring to be baptized. It was an amazing moment for all of us who had known them. The Christians in Donetsk are still celebrating and marveling at how persistently living the Christian life can change hearts.

Brother Patinya Thitathan Is Making A Difference In Thailand

Our school in Bangkok, Thailand, has excellent facilities, though they are still working on areas of the building, good students, organized administration, quality classes and many advantages, but the greatest asset seems to be the Dean, Brother Patinya Thitathan. He is an exemplary leader, known far and wide as a leader in the Lord's Kingdom, and is dedicated to making our ministry training school in Bangkok as good as it possibly can be.

The congregation in Bangkok is a joy to visit. There is a wonderful spirit that you can't help but notice. They are working to plant a congregation in another area, are seeking to strengthen ties with area congregations, and are reaching out to the community around them.

The congregation is also blessed with a team of Adventure In Missions students who are actively ministering in Thailand. This adds a new element to the services the congregation provides to its' members and the community.

I look forward to returning to Thailand soon. I enjoy the food, the scenery, but more than anything else, I love the Body of Christ there.

Our Dean in Thailand, Brother Patinya, at his desk. He is a great administrator & teacher.



Amazing Opportunities - From The Desk Of *Chris Swinford*

As I travel, it becomes more and more clear that the world needs Jesus. I received a stark reminder of this fact while visiting the “Killing Fields” of Cambodia. As we walked among the mass graves, looked at the pictures of faces of those tortured by a sadistic and evil leader, and looked at the memorial literally filled with the skulls of those that had been tortured and murdered, I was saddened by the thought that many are now experiencing even worse torture because they did not know and obey the gospel of Christ. There is nothing that we can do about the dead bodies that were dug up from mass graves in the “Killing Fields”, but we can teach those walking the streets of Phnom Penh and other cities of this world. We can reach them with the life changing message of Christ before it is too late! We not only can do this, we must! I hope that you will make it your goal to join us as we seek to teach and train people all over the world to teach the gospel.



Killing Fields Memorial



I would not want to give the impression that the only exciting things happening are in Asia! All over the globe, we are working to train preachers, teachers and church leaders. We have recently had meetings regarding our school in Barnaul, Russia (building pictured) that has everyone excited about great things for the future. Doug Reeves, Jerry Sisemore, Sammy Flannery and others have been meeting and making plans to expand the church planting and student recruiting in this area. I believe that there will be great things to report in the near future!

It is almost graduation time in Haiti! Brother David Dirrim and others are preparing for this special ceremony. It is always great to see students complete their studies, graduate and begin working full-time in the work of the Kingdom! Graduation, as you can see in the picture to the right, is a big event in Cap-Hatien, Haiti.



The Trip To Asia Was A True Feast In Every Way

It's always a wondrous thing to get to travel to new locations and see the special things about their culture, language and lifestyle. It is a great thing to experience new sights, sounds and smells and to see how Christians live in different parts of the world.

I already anticipate a great trip to Haiti in December and fascinating adventures next year. There are always new places to see and new experiences to encounter.

Two of our students in Korea treated us to an excursion to see the leaves changing in a Korean national park. We drove cross

country and saw the sites of the country. As we approached our destination, we were treated to a meal of grilled pork and bowl after bowl of side dishes and condiments (pictured below). It was a treat to share a meal like this with our Christian family. As you can see, we had plenty of food and even some Pepsi to wash it down. The food, fellowship and family of Christ in Asia made it a wonderful experience.

A special grilled meal on an excursion in South Korea.



Looking Through The Fence Of The DMZ

One of the more sobering moments of the trip to Asia was a visit to the Demilitarized Zone or DMZ between North and South Korea. There is a fenced off gulf separating family members from one another, and hundreds of South Koreans travel daily to the DMZ to pin prayers and poems to a wall, peer over into North Korea, and hope for the day when the fences will be taken down and two sides can become one nation again. As we walked around, taking pictures of the monuments erected to American soldiers, North Korean border guards peered at us from guard towers like the one pictured to the far right. I tried to focus on what they were seeing. They would have seen dozens and dozens of school children in brightly colored school uniforms, people from at least a dozen countries taking pictures and looking at the statues and monuments, people praying for peace and restoration to family

members trapped on the other side of the fence, and vehicles and structures that would have seemed very foreign to someone from Communist North Korea.

Our Korean students talk about the time when they will be taking the gospel to North Korea. They stare at fences and pray continually for wire cutters and broken fences. Let's all join them in this prayer.



A North Korea border station

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We Continue To Need Your Help!

We are still looking for some monthly support beginning in January of 2006. Our sponsoring congregation, the College Hill Church of Christ, has taken care of our needs through the end of the year, but we will need additional monthly support beginning in January. We are also looking for additional funds to cover my travel expenses month to month. I plan to travel to each and every one of our schools and will need adequate funding to do this. I do not want to use funds that could be used for students to provide for my travel. If you can possibly help us, please feel free to contact me. I would be happy to meet with you at anytime and answering any questions you may have. I thank you in advance for supporting us in this ministry.

Plan to work with us in 2006!

Continuing The Transition At SIBI International

I have enjoyed the challenges presented to me in my first few months of service at SIBI International. Every day provides an opportunity to participate in evangelistic and ministry training opportunities all over the world, and I am humbled to be able to participate. Truman Scott has been actively mentoring me and preparing me for years of service at SIBI International, and I am grateful for each opportunity to learn and glean information from my mentor in this work and in the faith.

There is some anxiety in approaching a massive ministry such as this, and I often feel inadequate and ill prepared for the many tasks at hand. It's at times like this, that I need to realize that God is the one who opens doors, empowers believers, and gives the increase in the works that He allows us to participate in through His grace. As George Carman, James Cheou and I floated across the Makong River in Cambodia to have fellowship with our brothers and sisters on an island there, I realized that God had been keeping boats afloat and guiding the steps of mission workers for generations. What seems flimsy and unsteady is actually under-girded by the strong and mighty hand of God. Just as we traveled safely across on the ferry, I know that God will help navigate the rivers ahead.



The ferry that carries you across the Makong

A Special Word Of Thanks

I believe that one of the greatest blessings of my job will be traveling to serve in our various schools with our regional deans. I look forward to developing that special kind of relationship that can really only be forged while working together on the mission field. While touring three of our schools in Asia, I truly enjoyed traveling with Brother George Carman. He has a special love for the Lord's Church in Asia and a deep desire to see the lost won to Christ. His example of self-sacrifice and service is one of the most cherished memories I have of this trip. Thank you George for your life of service to Asia.