



# THE MARTIN CHRONICLES



## Contrasting Worldviews

*"Your faith and love have arisen from the hope laid up for you in heaven, which you have heard about in the message of truth, the gospel that has come to you. Just as in the entire world this gospel is bearing fruit and growing" Col 1:15-6 (NET)*

If you visit Thailand you will see many familiar things but you will also see things that will shock you, because they are so different. Mary Kay described it well **"you are over 'culture shock' when things that looked strange to you at first now look normal."**

You also experience 'culture shock' when you talk to Thais about spiritual matters. You can't assume their understanding is the same as yours. Here are a examples of how Thais understand terms commonly used by western Christians:

**Sin** — it's no big deal. I can make merit to cover my sin, so I don't worry about it. I am more concerned about escaping the law of karma than sin.

**Jesus** – I have heard of him, but he must be a bad person because he died on a cross – he must have had really bad karma.

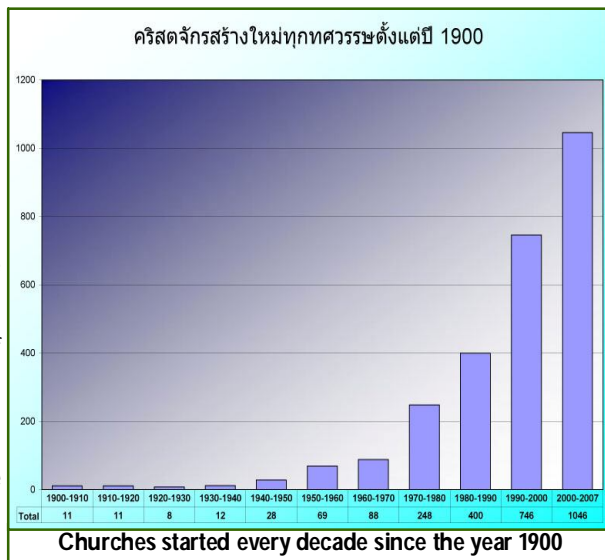
**Loving God** – Buddhists believe there is no creator God. But even if God does exist he is not worthy to be worshiped because he has emotions. Thais are taught emotions cause suffering; therefore, a loving God would be the source of all suffering.

**Eternal life** – I am trying to obtain a state of non existence. The thought of being caught in the cycle of karma is frightening. I want to escape that.

**Holy Spirit** – all spirits are bad. A Holy Spirit makes no sense.

I believe these differences in understanding is one reason why only one quarter of one percent (0.25%) of ethnic Thais are Christian.

The good news is—this is changing. Research shows Thai Christians are sharing their faith more and more with fellow citizens. An example is the Thai church movement called **THAIVSION 2010**. All Protestant denominations have joined together in unity to spread the Gospel in Thailand. This vision calls for every district in Thailand to have a church, every sub-district to have a group of Christians and every village to have a Christian witness by the year 2010. As a result, the church is growing. Data shows more churches have been planted this decade than any prior decade in Thai history. PTL !



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We are privileged to be part of this movement, to come alongside the national leadership, and provide resources to help Thais carry out this vision. We are able to do this because many of the leaders were trained or influenced by Dwight's parents 30-60 years ago as new Christians. As a result of this family relationship, we have been asked by the Thai pastors to work closely with them in this vision to reach the country with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Our relationship with you, our ministry partners, is just as important as our relationship with the Thai pastors. We are able to be here because of your prayer and support of our ministry in Thailand. This relationship enables us to work for God's Kingdom in Thailand by providing resources to thousands of pastors and Christians throughout the Kingdom of Thailand.

**Thank you for your continued partnership in the ministry God has called us to do!**



### *Ministry Update*

Recently we have had many opportunities to expand the ministry. Dwight has presented at several pastors' conferences around the country on the progress made on the digital library. Many have expressed how eager they are to have this tool because they see how it will greatly help their ministry. To have access to a Christian library via the internet or personal USB/thumb drive will be a real blessing to them. So far, over 200 pastors have pre-ordered the thumb drive. We anticipate by year's end to distribute over 1000 thumb drives to Thai Christians containing Christian resources in their language.

Christians from other countries have heard about the work and have asked us to help them also.

**Nepal:** Dwight travelled to Nepal in March to explain how to put together a digital library. Hopefully, next year Nepal will have a completed digital library of Christian resources.

**Vietnam:** Hundreds of Christian resources have already been collected. We are providing consulting on how to make them available on the internet and on a thumb drive for those who need them.

**Cambodia:** Dwight will be traveling to Phnom Penh this month to consult with missionaries there on how to collect church statistics. Reports and maps can then be produced to help Christians know where to strategically plant new churches.



### **Prayer Requests:**

- Mary Kay's mother recovering from shoulder surgery.
- To accomplish all the requests coming our way.
- Tim's future plans.
- Crystal's work load and school load.
- Time to be able to take a break and nurture our marriage.

### **Praises:**

- Favor we have received from Thai church leaders.
- For health and safety as we travel in Thailand and surrounding countries.

### *Guardian Angel*

Our nephew visited us in January for three weeks and was a great help with technical tasks at the office. We enjoyed showing him around Chiang Mai. One of our adventures took us to the village where a couple of our workers are from. We rented motorcycles and traveled over five hours, some of which was over treacherous mountain roads. We were 100 kilometers into the trip when the back brake on our motorcycle overheated as we headed down a steep hill. This is not a good thing. As a result we took a spill, and I injured my right knee. Not three minutes after the accident one of our employees, "Toon", showed up in a pickup truck. (I was still on the ground.) This was a miracle because where she found us was in a very deserted part of the road (literally in the middle of nowhere). The timing was amazing. She was able to take me in her truck the rest of the way to the village. As a result of this experience, Dwight told her he was changing her name. From now on her name was "Toot-Sawaan" which means "Angel".

We were able to visit a local "hospital" near their village to get my knee cleaned up. They did not have an x-ray machine, but thankfully my leg did not feel like it was broken. The next day I rode back down the mountain in her pickup truck to visit a doctor. There was a lot of bruising and swelling but an x-ray confirmed there were no broken bones.

When we both arrived at the village Toon teasingly told Dwight she had tried calling him several times on his cell phone. When he reached into his pocket for the phone he couldn't find it. She then handed it to him and said she found it on the road about 20 kilometers back. It had dropped out of his pocket. She truly was an angel watching over us!

Unfortunately, my injury required surgery to remove a hematoma followed by two weeks in a cast and physical therapy. It is doing better now but I am still having a little difficulty bending my knee.

Even though this was a painful experience it was encouraging to see God miraculously watching over us, even before we knew we needed it.

**- Mary Kay -**