



Plans Come Together

"May he grant your heart's desire; may he bring all your plans to pass!"

Psalms 20:4 (Net Bible)

God's plans are so much more amazing than what we can even imagine. As was mentioned in a previous newsletter, God has led us to start a business in SE Asia as a non-traditional way of doing missions in a foreign country. It has been exciting to see how the Lord works and how these plans have come together.

We have rented a building, purchased furniture and equipment, hired four full-time staff and have been working with the Thai national church to get digital resources prepared to be available to Christians throughout the country.

One of the objectives of the business is to provide employment to disadvantaged and exploited women. A workplace that provides them a new opportunity in life and where they can learn about Jesus at the same time. We have partnered with two Christian foundations (New Life Center and Just Food, Inc.) to refer ladies to us who currently are at risk for labor exploitation. So far we have hired three women from these organizations and are looking to hire more. One of these organizations, Just Food, Inc. was recently written about in the January 2007, Christianity Today magazine. You can read about their work at: <http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2007/january/16.29.html>

After opening the business, we started working with the national church and two other mission organizations to gather translated Thai materials for conversion into a digital format. These young women have diligently been working in preparing these materials.

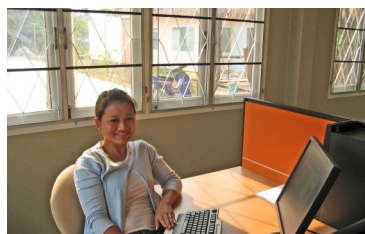
Very few Christian resources are available in Thailand so, those that do exist, need to be made available to believers. Typically, once a book is out of print it is not re-printed due to the expense involved. (Largely because there is such a small market for them— there are only 175,000 Thai Christians out of a population of over 62 million people!) Our task then is to find these valuable out-of-print books and convert them into a digital format so they can be downloaded from the internet or provided on a CD. Since we began working on this project, we have converted over 50 books and booklets. Starting this month these materials will be available on <http://www.thaichurches.org> with many more soon to follow.

Please pray for the people of Thailand. Missionaries have worked in this country for more than 160 years with very little response to the Gospel.

Blessings,

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The “Book-keeper”



As you can see from the article on the front, things are really starting to fall into place. Along with the materials coming in, is the fact that everything needs to get organized. That is where I come in. I have been designated as the official “book-keeper.” As we receive literature from different organizations, it must be catalogued in some fashion, so we are setting up a system to enter as much information about each book as we can. Of course, this brings its own set of problems as I don’t read Thai yet, so I work alongside one of the girls who can input the Thai information. It is just like working in a library, but in two languages at the same time. It has been a challenge, but once we get the process flowing, it will work well. As I was going through the books last week, I thought about all the work missionaries have done in the past, and it is a privilege to have just a small part in reviving this Christian literature for use by the church and Thai Christians. Who would have believed that we would have this opportunity to continue what others have started.

I am also the company bookkeeper (accountant). That is a major challenge for me as I have never done accounting before. Another challenge is that it is all done in cash so it takes many trips to the bank and then to the tax offices to pay the correct taxes and, of course, the trips to the shopping mall or the local 7-11 store to pay the bills.

As far as language school goes, I finished the third module, but choose not to take the test. I am able to understand and speak in short sentences, but the long sentences are just too difficult for me, and the tests are all done by the book. I have moved on to Thai Kindergarten which is learning the characters (writing) and reading. Everything learned so far has been in a phonetic language. I am excited about finally being able to recognize some Thai characters.

By the time you receive this newsletter I will be preparing to return to the States to put our house on the market and pack everything up. After discussion with the kids at Christmas, we decided it was time to sell. We will be setting Crystal up in an apartment in Waco, TX, where she will be able to stay until she is finished with college. Tim is planning to come over to Thailand for language study and do mission work. We will trust God as to His timing of everything – “He knows the plans He has for us.” Thank you for your continued prayers and support of our family as we serve him from the other side of the world. This has been a challenging year for us, but God has brought us through and we are thankful that it has made each of us stronger.

Serving Him in Chiang Mai...Mary Kay

Prayer Requests:

- Continued cooperation with other missions to get materials for the Thai people
- Wisdom in hiring new employees
- Tim and Crystal as they finish this semester of college
- MK as she travels to Alabama and packs up the house
- The right buyer for our house and a quick sale

Praises:

- God’s provision of employees and equipment
- Continued good health and safety as we travel within the country

God’s Provision

One of the pieces of equipment needed in order for us to have the right tools to reprocess the literature was a good scanner. This isn’t your everyday desk-top scanner, but a high quality document scanner. In Thailand, the scanner we wanted cost \$8,000 which was more money than we had budgeted. Through a ministry partner in Birmingham, we were able to purchase the scanner for less than half this price. God then worked it out so that another missionary returning to Chiang Mai from the United States was able to carry it back with him as luggage. He was able to bring it the whole way without any additional airline or custom’s charges. This was a miracle because he was way over on luggage and weight restrictions. God just sent it all the way through!



Dwight & Bam using scanner

Birthrights

One of the books we found has a very special meaning for Dwight. Fifty years ago, when Dwight’s mom was pregnant with him in Thailand, she was busy translating Torrey’s Topical Textbook of the Bible into Thai. After his parents retired from the mission field in the late 1970’s, this book had not been reprinted for over 20 years. When Dwight visited Thailand in 2002, the only place this book could be found was in the reference section of Bible School libraries. It could no longer be purchased. However, this time, when Dwight was looking for books, he discovered that the publishing house, where his parents left all of their translated work, saw the value of this book and published it again in 2004. Praise the Lord! Dwight explained the story of this book to the manager of the publishing house and asked for the rights to publish it digitally. She said that shouldn’t be a problem, he had “birthrights” to it!