



Harmony OUTREACH

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BRINGING HOPE AND HELP TO CHINA, CAMBODIA, ETHIOPIA & VIETNAM

VIETNAM'S UNDERGROUND CHURCH

by John Bentley



A self-professed nerd, I freely admit to liking super-heroes and sci-fi. One of my favorite characters is Captain Kirk from the original *Star Trek* series. So you can imagine how grateful I am that God saw fit to pull me out of my old life as a work-a-day professional and send me to **boldly go where no man** (in his right mind?) **has gone before!** My latest assignment from His Celestial Majesty is to bring Harmony Outreach to a place where even the Marines did not go—to Hanoi, the very heart of North Vietnam! Here's how it happened.

In July I was in Saigon. My assignments were to provide three water wells to needy Christians in remote tribal areas, speak at a house church in Saigon, and meet my underground pastor friends to plan sending American pastors to train their Vietnamese counterparts. I was blessed to have as my traveling companion Dr. Bill Baugh, a Christian dermatologist

from Orange County, CA. Pastor Daniel, the overall leader of 6,000 underground churches in Vietnam, arranged for us to be escorted around by Pastor Song from Saigon who has the secondary duties of coordinating the education program and missionary efforts of the underground church.

Pastor Song described how many South Vietnamese dislike and resent North Vietnamese—feelings remaining from the Vietnam war—because they conquered South Vietnam and caused a lot of suffering and persecution, including his own family.

He told us that after years of pastoring in the South, the Lord called him to spread the Gospel in Hanoi—originally the capital of North Vietnam and consequently, after the takeover, of all of Vietnam. But like Jonah, his response was, **"God,**
(Continued on page 2)



John speaking at a house church in Saigon.



Dr. Bill and John on the Mekong River.

**Boldly
Go...**

(Continued from page 1)

I don't want to go to Hanoi. You know how much I hate the North Vietnamese." The Holy Spirit would not let him rest, however, and he grudgingly relented and went. He spent ten years pastoring in Hanoi and said it turned out to be the most radical ministry time of his life! He described how indoctrinated most North Vietnamese were into the utopian ideas of Communism. They really believed they were creating a better and more just society. But after years of living under Communism, the utopian society they were promised never materialized. The result is that most North Vietnamese are deeply disillusioned and feel a void in their lives. But that disillusionment has proven to be fertile ground for the Gospel.

Pastor Song explained that while the church in North Vietnam is small, it is **STRONG!** Ironically, some of their greatest advances have been among the criminal class of North Vietnam—former gangsters and drug traffickers who were in and out of prison prior to hearing the Gospel and coming to faith in Christ. How did this happen? When Pastor Song and other underground church leaders would—from time to time—be arrested for spreading the Gospel, they shared their faith while in prison with these hardened criminals. Many of these tatted-up men have since become pastors in their own right—and they are absolutely fearless! When the police come threatening to arrest them because of their work spreading the Gospel, their response is, **"Go ahead, throw me into prison. I've been there many times. I will not stop declaring what Jesus has done in my life."** The police, realizing

that their threat of prison is not creating the desired effect, will often just give up and leave them alone.

After ten years of serving in North Vietnam, God called Pastor Song back to Saigon. And while many people in the South are open to receiving the Gospel, he has observed a big difference. There, when the police come threatening new believers with persecution, many are quick to deny Christ.

As I listened to his words, I couldn't help but think about my own country. We have had it easy for so long. When the persecution comes—and it is already beginning—will we stand up and endure the fiery trial or will we be quick to deny Him? I pray we will have the fortitude to be like the North Vietnamese and stand!

You say, 'I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.' But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked. I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, so that you can become rich; and white clothes to wear so you can cover your shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so you can see.
(Rev. 3:17-18).

Harmony is in process of supporting the underground church in Vietnam in two ways: By providing water wells to Christians in remote areas (see below) and by expanding our pastor training—by invitation—into North Vietnam, with our first trips anticipated in 2014. Pastors, if you would like to explore the possibility of participating in one of these trips, please email John@HarmonyOutreach.org.

Breaking Good

Mr. Ngan was a former pimp and drug dealer prior to meeting Christians from the underground church. Now he is now on staff at Pastor Song's church in Saigon.

WATER WELLS FOR CHRISTIANS IN REMOTE TRIBAL AREAS



This scum-covered pond is where the Stieng people bathe.

New well under construction for Stieng people in south Vietnam.



New well in progress in north Vietnam serving the Muong people group.

New well in progress serving the K-hor people group of central Vietnam.





Harvest Bible College needs *You!*

by John Bentley

News in spite of hardships. The problem is that most are uneducated and unfamiliar with the Bible and doctrine.

HBC provides a place for them to stay, three meals a day, transportation to Phnom Penh and back home on the weekends so they can preach, and a stipend to cover their lost wages while they are studying. Visiting American pastors, who are their instructors, pay Harmony a small fee to cover their expenses while in-country. The fee also covers about half of what we need to support the training for these pastors.

Every pastor we train has a sphere of influence on a culture that is 95% Buddhist. *Each pastor that we send out is like lighting one candle in the darkness. Over time, these pinpricks of light are spread all throughout the country!* But we can't do this alone. If you believe in the mission of Harvest Bible College and want to become part of this effort, we could really use your help!

Partners:

We need to raise **20 sponsors** to cover the other half of the cost of training a pastor at HBC. Sponsorship is \$25 per month and provides everything a pastor needs to complete his course of study. Once your pastor graduates, your sponsorship will roll over to cover the cost of a new pastor joining us at HBC. **YOU can be personally responsible for equipping pastor after pastor in this part of the 10/40 Window.**

Pastors:

We need you to teach at HBC! Your giftings as a pastor are sorely needed in this part of the world where Jesus is largely unknown. The pastors you will be training look up to you and are eager to learn. What you share with them will spread and have broad influence on the culture. For a brochure detailing this program, email Lmccain@HarmonyOutreach.org. In addition to airfare, the cost is \$750 for two weeks in Cambodia.

We're not meant to do this alone. The body of Christ is a team. Join the HBC team effort, and together let's see S.E. Asia swept with Christianity in the same way South Korea and China have been! 🌍

Forever Families for Two of our Babies! by Linda Huckaba

Success stories bless us all, and we have two to report this issue. We always rejoice when "our babies" graduate from our Three Steps to Hope program—foster care, surgery and adoption. We joyfully report that both Linda and Jennifer have joined their Forever Families!



Linda has been welcomed into a beautiful family in Southern California where she has two big brothers, a big sister and a younger sister who was adopted from China in 2012. They report that Lindy—as they are calling her—has so quickly settled into the family that they can't imagine life without her.



Sometimes we are unable to get details about where our children go, and that is the case with **Jennifer**. However, we were given the picture shown here of her new parents. 🌱

Harmony's New Home by Linda Huckaba



There's nothing like moving into a new place. It's exciting—and lots of work. When John came to the U.S. to establish Harmony's headquarters in early 2009, Far

Reaching Ministries, founded by John's brother Wes, offered us their outgrown suite in Murrieta, CA. We remained there four years rent free and are truly grateful for such generosity.

Late in 2012 the Lord opened the door for us to purchase, at a deep discount, a suite that was nearing foreclosure. Having never been occupied, it was just a big empty room. But we loved the location—across the street from an undeveloped ridgeline—and the fact that large windows allow a view of nature and wildlife such as coyotes and roadrunners. John says that coming to work is like stepping into a Looney Tunes cartoon—on multiple levels...

We are so thankful to all of you who helped us make up our financial shortfall so that we were able to move in without any debt. Most of all, we are thankful to God for choosing this beautiful property for us and always providing for us so that Harmony has never had to rent or make mortgage payments. Praise the Lord! 🌱

Selah House Update by Linda Huckaba

When we first posted the story of the Ethiopian prison children in our email communication and newsletter, the response from all of you was immediate and overwhelming. In short order, we had all the funds we needed to get Selah House opened. And shortly thereafter John was on a plane back to Ethiopia to locate a property for that new children's home. That trip was successful and I am happy to report the home has been rented, renovated, furnished, and the caregivers are ready.

We have done our part and are now waiting for the Ethiopian officials to complete the administrative process of transferring the children into our care. **And so we ask all of you who have shared our concern for these children to pray—that the One who parted the Red Sea will open these doors for the children to be released to their new home.**

In the meantime, John provided funds while he was there for new clothes and toys for the children. The sweet moment where Hanna distributed the gifts is pictured here. We told you they were cute! 🌱



To help us in our work, please send your tax-deductible gifts to Harmony Outreach.
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