



LEGACY INSTITUTE

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Mae Sot, Thailand

November 9, 2002

Dear Friends and Fellow-laborers,

Warm Greetings to all of you from our Karen Church of God members in the border town of Mae Sot!

Gloria and I traveled to Mae Sot from Chiangmai, Thailand to meet with Lazum Brang, Pastor of the Church of God in Kachinland and Burma (Myanmar). He was finally able to cross the border after checkpoints were reopened by the Burmese military junta. The border was closed for several months because the Burmese military leaders were angry that Thai border rangers crossed into Burma in hot pursuit of drug smugglers.

Drug use in Thailand is now commonplace and the Thai army's war against drug traffickers has escalated. Heroin and amphetamines are flooding into Thailand from drug factories just across the border. The Burmese junta allows ethnic warlord armies (such as the *United Wa State Army*) to continue their drug manufacturing and smuggling; and is doing nothing to suppress their activities. In fact, most observers agree that the Burmese military is, in fact, a full partner in this dirty business!

Such is normal life in Southeast Asia!

Anyway, it was good to see Lazum Brang again and receive his report about evangelistic activities in Kachinland, central Burma and the China border region. He told us that Lashi Naw, the deacon who assists him in Kachinland, just returned from an evangelistic tour of the China border and had logged *over 1000 miles* traveling on his Legacy-donated mountain bike! That has got to be some sort of record. One remote village he visited had never before had someone come riding a bicycle. Usually they only had visitors arrive by foot or horseback.

Pastor Brang also told us that Gloria and I have been invited to visit the new Church of God congregation in Kalaymyo, Burma (Chin Hills). This group, now numbering over 100 persons, recently split from a Sabbatarian group called the *True Jesus Church* because they now understand the Bible name for the Church is the *Church of God*. They are keeping the annual holy days but understand little about their meaning. They are also confused about several other doctrines because as members of the True Jesus Church, they performed infant baptisms and a number of other unbiblical doctrines. They have asked us to please visit their congregation in the Chin Hills and teach them the TRUTH!

This is exciting. I keep saying that the Holy Spirit is now very active in South and Southeast Asia. I have heard that some do not believe me. Whether they do or don't doesn't really matter. I always say, "let the fruits speak for themselves!" What really matters is that we have a group of over 100 new believers now demonstrating their faith by keeping the Sabbath and Annual Holy Days and eagerly asking to be taught more of God's Bible Truth. And we *WILL* go to visit them as God's Grace permits.

Lazum Brang also tells us that he is receiving more and more visit requests from the China border area. He has asked me to schedule a visit to that area with him. Since the border on the Burma side is restricted to foreigners, Pastor Brang wants me to come in from the Yunnan, China side through the mountains. Going anywhere with *frontier evangelist* Lazum Brang is always an exciting mission and adventure!

Christian Leadership Training Program – Chiangmai, Thailand

The weeklong Legacy Institute-sponsored *Christian Leadership Training Program* was held in Chiangmai this year after the Feast of Tabernacles. Every year we invite one or two experienced elders and/or pastors to help train local Asian men for God's Work. This year we invited Pastor Robin Webber and his wife Susan of the Eagle Rock, California UCG congregation. Robin Webber is an experienced field pastor and writer for church publications. The Webbers are graduates of Ambassador College and have had the experience of working at the headquarters of the WCG in Pasadena for many years. Elder Herbert Vierra, Secretary of Legacy Institute and this year's coordinator of the Chiangmai FOT site, remained in Thailand to help teach.

Our participants this year were fewer than last year because of the Burma border closure. Pastor Lazum Brang, Pastor David Ye Gyan and new church member Saw Htoo Saw were not permitted to cross to attend our program. Also, Davidson Lay Bey and his wife (Karen Church members from Thailand) could not attend because he could not get the extra time off from his job.

Attending were David Mya Maung and his wife Eh Moo; Jack Aung Min and his wife Elizabeth; and Michael Hubert from Chennai, India.

Robin Webber, Herb Vierra and I all gave lectures on church organization and evangelism. We taught sermon preparation and song leading. We also presented material on the responsibilities of the church leader. We talked about the importance of taking care of God's sheep. They are God's sheep – not our sheep. We are only servants in God's pastures. We are not overlords, but rather servants of the TRUE Overlord, Savior and Shepherd of the sheep, Jesus the Messiah. Our duty is to serve Jesus as *assistant shepherds* by caring for and feeding *HIS* sheep that are in *His pasture* – not our pasture.

Jesus talked about the way of Gentile leadership. He said that the Gentiles lord it over their people and want to be known as benefactors. This method of leadership creates a dependency on the benefactor. People then tend to look to the human leader, not to God. Jesus taught that leaders in His Church are to be different. He said that the *greatest leaders in the Church must be servants of all*. This is the foundation we want to establish

in the Churches of God in Asia. We DO NOT want to just recreate the past mistakes that have been made in our own western church organizations. We seek to establish church leadership for Asia based on the *Bible model of righteous humility as taught and exemplified by Jesus Himself*, and establish such leadership in the context of their own cultures. With God's guidance, we will help establish leadership for these foundational Asian Church congregations that are built on The Rock -- not on sand!

Some may scoff at the idea of spending money for a Leadership Training Program that has only 5 participants! But God does not scoff! I liken it to what I call the grain of mustard seed model. Even the Kingdom of God, which is to encompass the whole universe, must begin as the least of seeds. The size of the group is not what matters – it is what you teach them that matters.

**Phupan Rajanivej Palace
Sakon Nakorn, Thailand
November 22, 2002**

Gloria and I are here at the annual SUPPORT Foundation Silk Festival at the invitation of Queen Sirikit of Thailand. Every year she holds this festival to promote the beautiful silk handicrafts produced by the people of Northeast Thailand. And every year the queen invites Gloria and I as her honored guests. We are here to help her explain to interested designers and textile buyers from around the world just what the SUPPORT Foundation is all about.

Earlier this year Queen Sirikit was awarded the Louis Pasteur Award for sericulture for her work to reestablishing the production of silk by poor farmers. The production of hand dyed and woven silk was dying out and being replaced by cheap synthetic fabrics. Many of the intricate patterns were ancient family patterns - lost forever, as the elderly women were not passing on their skills to the younger women in the family. The queen found a way to help the poor and at the same time preserve this ancient art by setting up training centers to teach traditional silkworm raising and production of silk fabric. The students are women of poor farming families. The queen teaches them and then buys and markets their products. In this way she helps augment their family incomes during the off-season when it is too dry to farm.

An added benefit is that it also helps the younger women in poor families to be able to earn a small income as a way to stay on the farm and help their families. In the past, poor farm girls would be recruited by unscrupulous brokers who promised their parents they would help them get jobs in Bangkok. They were then sent to work in sweatshops at very low wages or were sold into prostitution.

Gloria and I spent 4 days as guests of the queen and had the opportunity to spend a great deal of time with US Ambassador to Thailand, Daryll Johnson and his wife Kathleen; Thai Ambassador to the UN Chuchai Kasemsarn and his wife; Tom Mintier of CNN and other journalists, including Dirk van Versendaal from the German magazine *Stern*; fashion designers such as Mary McFaden and others from New York, Italy, Australia and Japan; and various other dignitaries and guests.

Queen Sirikit has taken the production of silk in Northeast Thailand from an obscure and dying handicraft to become a world-class commodity – the envy of designers and fashionable women the world over. She has done this through very hard work and perseverance.

While attending the fabulous silk festival and fashion show, and seeing the fruits of years of labor, I could not help but be reminded of the past. In 1984, Herbert W. Armstrong visited King Bhumibol and Queen Sirikit in this same palace. I was along as part of the Ambassador Foundation team. At that time the queen explained her project and the goals she wanted to achieve to help her people. The project was in its infancy and the queen needed help. Mr. Armstrong decided to help the queen get her silk project off the ground and donated seed money. Now, nearly two decades later, we find that the church's involvement in these projects to help the poor in Thailand, through the efforts of the king and queen, have once again been blessed by God and have born abundant fruit.

So much for the gainsayers who say Herbert Armstrong was throwing money down a rat-hole by *giving* to help the royal family of Thailand or that he “bought meetings” with them with church money! Once again, the gainsayers forget that Almighty God was directly involved in planting these seeds long ago.

The glory is God's. Gloria and I are just honored and blessed to be a continuing part of *His* vision for Thailand.

Legacy Leadership Training Center Update

The Legacy leadership school in Chiangmai is going well. Bonnie Turner and Hiedi Hanisko will return to the US after their term of volunteer teaching service ends in March. We are going to miss them terribly! They have been nothing less than fantastic teachers and good examples for our students. We now need to start considering replacements to serve the next school year. We are looking for a “few good men and women” willing to pay their own way over and give a year out of their lives to serve God in Asia. This will *not* be like a year-long summer camp in the US or Canada! It will mean long hours and hard work. It will mean heat and humidity. It will mean giving up certain western luxuries for a time. It will mean sacrifice. But it will also mean great opportunity, adventure and the experience of a lifetime! We need people with skills in public speaking, computers, music and voice, sports and health, organic agriculture, and – last but not least – men and women totally dedicated to God and His Way of Life. Please pray that God sends us who **He** wants to help give young people from Thailand and Burma and perhaps others areas in Asia the Truth of God's Way of life.

Legacy Speaking Schedule in USA

Gloria and I are returning to the US for the month of December. We will be in California, Texas and Ohio. Many people have asked us about the purpose of Legacy Institute and the nature of our projects in Asia, so I will be speaking and providing updates about our ongoing projects at the following times and locations:

Sunday, December 1, 6:30 pm

Club House (Directions Ph: 760-722-8885)

195 Basilica Way

Oceanside, CA 92057

Questions: Herb Vierra 626-357-2588 accmo@verizon.net

Friday, December 13, 7:00 pm

Crowne Plaza Hotel (Ph: 972-980-8877)

14314 Midway Road, Addison, TX 75001

Questions: Al Garrett 972-257-0220 james.a.garrett@ssa.gov

Saturday, December 21, 7:00 pm

Hampton Inn (Ph: 330-339-7000)

1299 West High Ave.

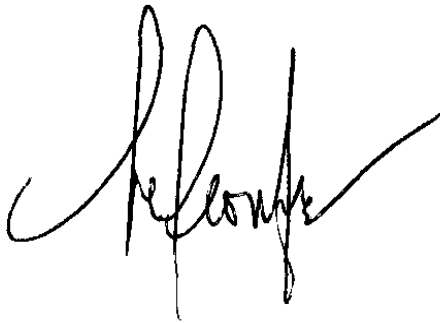
New Philadelphia, OH 44663 (Exit 81 off of I-77)

Questions: Anita Showers 330-852-2709 mshowers@wilkshire.net

Gloria and I look forward to meeting many of you who receive this letter and getting to know you better. We hope we also will be able to answer many of your questions about what *God is doing* in Asia at this time.

All of you stay close to God. Hope to see many of you soon,

In Jesus' service,



Leon Sexton

WHAT IS LEGACY INSTITUTE?

LEGACY INSTITUTE is a private, non-profit, charitable foundation and is not affiliated with any human church organization. Legacy Institute seeks to serve and help mankind in the spirit and example of our Lord Jesus Christ. His instructions were to freely give. This means without discrimination and without prejudice. Your donations to Legacy Institute are tax deductible in the USA.