



LEGACY INSTITUTE

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Dear Fellow Laborers with Jesus Christ,

September 15, 2003

I decided to get a quick letter off to all of you before the Feast of Tabernacles. Our brethren in Asia and all of us from the West who serve here need your prayers.

Please pray for the Karen brethren in Thailand. Gloria and I just returned to Chiang Mai from a trip to the Burma (now called Myanmar) border. The Church of God has 15 baptized members and their families living either in border towns or in refugee camps along the border. The other Karen members live in Chiang Mai and Bangkok. All are refugees from war and political persecutions in Burma. Those who must live in refugee camps have little or no chance for employment; their children are given limited education, and they live in very poor conditions.

Myanmar is a patchwork quilt of many tribes and languages. The majority are Burmese people who live in the central plains. The mountains and border areas are populated by ethnic tribal groups such as the Karen, Kachin, Shan, Chin, Karenni, Arakanese and others. Most of these ethnic minorities have been at war with the military junta that has ruled Burma for over 50 years. Our Karen Church of God members are refugees from the continuous destruction and rapine across the border in Myanmar. Returning home is not an option as long as the military still controls the government. Most of our brethren would be imprisoned or executed.

The Thai government has a policy not to make things too comfortable in the refugee camps lest more and more flood across the border. With the latest embargo by the US and other western nations on goods from Burma, many have lost jobs. In Rangoon (Yangon), the Capitol of Burma, and other areas the price of rice and other food staples has skyrocketed. Evangelist Lazum Brang told me in a recent letter that many in Burma are in deep trouble. This embargo will cause even more pressure on border refugee camps as more and more people find life in Burma untenable.

We are very busy setting up the Feast sites for our brethren in Thailand. We will have 2 this year. We will once again be holding the Feast in Chiang Mai. And we also are preparing another feast site in the mountain town of Mae Sariang, closer to the Burma border for our Karen brethren who live in refugee camps and border towns.

The current administration in Thailand wants to put pressure on insurgent groups living along the border to make peace with Rangoon. So the government has enacted strict policies to restrict movement and monitor the activities of the Karen, Shan and other tribal groups. Permission to travel for our refugee brethren is now severely restricted and they are not allowed to leave the camps. Some few of our Karen brethren have travel passes and can attend the Feast without difficulty. Others are not so fortunate.

We have 7 baptized members and their families who live in 2 border refugee camps. It will take God's merciful intervention to get them to the Feast. We must first acquire permission for them to leave the camps for 10 days. This will not be easy. If and when we get the go ahead for that, we will then need to get permission for them to travel from their respective refugee camps to Mae Sariang. Gloria and I just traveled the entire route they must take. First we traveled north from Mae Sot along the Thai - Burma border for several hours. Then we turned east and headed up into the mountains on a road that, in some places, is still under construction or re-construction from landslides and washouts.

We traveled through no less than 8 check points. Some were manned by the army; some by the police; and some were manned by both police and military personnel. As you can see, this will be no ordinary "walk in the park". Please pray, and ask your family and friends to pray, that God protects our people and works out all things so that they can attend the Feast of Tabernacles in peace and safety.

In Thailand, at least up until now, God is not calling Thais or Karen who are Thai citizens. It would sure make it a whole lot easier come Feast time if He did! In a prayer to Him recently, I asked God why He was only calling refugees. Why not those who had papers so they could travel without difficulty or earned enough income to help with Feast expenses? Every year we must struggle to get God's people to the Feast because of a lack of proper papers, etc. Last year it took us 2 months to pay off the hotel bills from the Feast because more and more refugee families are being called. Legacy Institute must subsidize housing, food and transportation for almost all the Karen who attend the Feast – *and* also for our Legacy School volunteer teachers and students! If God wills, this year we will have a total of 56 Karen people attending the Feast + 14 students and 7 Legacy School staff members.

But God's Will is more important than the daily struggles and headaches we have as His servants! He knows what He is doing. He has chosen to call the weak and defenseless here in this country. It is our solemn duty to do our best to get them to the Feast and take care of them once they are there.

These people need the Feast of Tabernacles! It is perhaps the one time in the year they can fellowship and worship God together in peace – *without fear*. It is the one time in the year their children can have all the food they can possibly eat! And it is the one time in the year that they receive an abundance of spiritual food – *every day*! This time becomes a REAL FEAST of joy and celebration for those who *cannot even imagine* the freedom and wasteful abundance we take for granted in our own Western countries.

Please pray that, they too, can receive a foretaste of the Kingdom of God at the Feast – and please pray for us, that we can be used to get them there and back in peace and safety!

We will also help sponsor the Feast in Madras (Chennai), India, again this year. Gloria and I will travel to Chennai for the Feast of Trumpets and to confer with Michael Hubert about Feast preparations. We will also once again visit the AIDS clinic and hostel where some of our new members live. Also, we plan to revisit another remote village about 6 hours by car from Chennai to meet with our new members and some new prospective members.

This year Wade Fransson, an Elder from California, will again be spending the entire Feast in India. Legacy Institute will also be sending one of our teachers, Ryan Foster, to India to help out with speaking and other assignments.

In India, God is not calling well-to-do, English-speaking Indians from high-class, traditional Christian families. He is calling farmers and AIDS patients who are Hindus.

As the Second Coming approaches, I believe we will see more and more of the poor and downtrodden being called into God's Family. Seeing the fruits of the Holy Spirit at work in Thailand, Burma and India really makes the words of **Isaiah 61** come alive:

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me. Because the Lord has anointed Me to preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; to proclaim the acceptable Year of the Lord.”

Jesus quoted this scripture Himself when he gave His first sermon in the synagogue of Nazareth (**Luke 4:18-19**). This scripture in Isaiah and Luke is called the *Jubilee discourse* because it describes the Work of the Messiah in terms of the Jubilee Year of Release when all debts are cancelled, all slaves go free and all men return to their inheritance.

The whole world is enslaved! It is dying! Billions are “blind” and “imprisoned” to a way of life that leads nowhere but death! *Jesus is showing us the way!* It is the duty of all who call themselves His disciples to follow His lead! He started this Work of proclaiming the Gospel – opening the eyes of the blind and releasing the prisoners – on that very day He stood up in Nazareth and quoted Isaiah 61! He commands us in Matthew 28 to carry on *His divine mission* as fellow-laborers in the Fields of The Almighty – *to the end of the age!*

Are we *really* living up to this calling? Are we *really doing everything we can* to help break the chains of blindness and death for the poor of this world? Are we *really* part of this Jubilee Work of Jesus Christ? Are we *really DRIVEN* to accomplish the Work He started nearly 2000 years ago? We need to ask ourselves this very hard question: *If not – why not?*

Everything I see, *daily*, in Asia tells me that the fields are ALREADY ripe for the harvest! The blind are really “seeing” for the first time. Prison doors are being opened. Broken hearts are being healed. And most importantly, people are being led back to their true inheritance – the Kingdom of God!

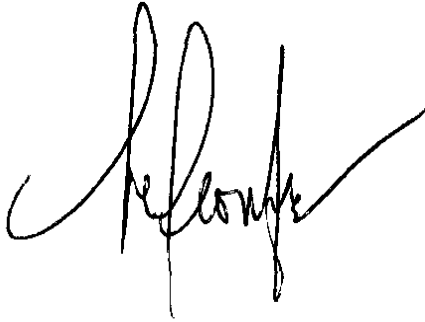
God is pouring out His Holy Spirit upon His chosen people in Thailand, Burma, India, Africa and other parts of the world. The poor and brokenhearted are being called to become our new brothers and sisters. This Work of God has never been the work of one man, one

congregation or even one church organization. It is a collective effort of *ALL* members of the Body of Christ.

Please don't let this day go by without taking the time – at least a minute or two - to pray that God sends more workers into His harvest.

All of us here at Legacy in Thailand pray that all of you will have a safe and spiritually revitalizing Festival of Tabernacles. May God's grace and peace be upon all of you.

In the Holy Name of the King of Kings,



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.*

P.S. Some of you received the August Legacy Letter by post without page 7 (last page). Since it is difficult to know which of you – we are resending page 7 of the last letter along with this one. (*Email recipients received the entire letter.*)
Thank you for your understanding.