



## LEGACY INSTITUTE

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Monrovia, California

My Fellow-laborers in God's Fields,

Gloria and I are back in the USA on a speaking tour in California, Texas, Minnesota and Missouri. We also attended our annual Legacy Institute board meeting at Herb Vierra's home in Monrovia, California.

Every year at our board meeting we re-evaluate 3 things: *where we are; where we are going; and how we are going to get there.* It is much like we used to say: "Why are we here?" What is the mission of Legacy Institute? Are we accomplishing that mission? If not, what can we change so that we can better accomplish the mission given to us by our Lord Jesus? This self-examination and re-evaluation each year bears very beneficial fruits.

We at Legacy believe firmly that the organization follows the mission, not the other way around. What do I mean? Jesus gives us the mission. He provides the direction and the resources to accomplish that mission. The organization we create to do the job is a TOOL of the mission. The organization is NOT the mission!

The Church of God throughout history has been organized in different ways depending on the needs, circumstances and the social issues of the times. Sometimes it had a more centralized organization; and sometimes circumstances dictated a less centralized organization. Most of the time due to persecutions, the Church of God was scattered and separated. Various congregations, engaged in accomplishing the mission of Matthew 28 in different parts of the world, were many times cut off from one another!

In recent history, the Church of God in the western world has had the blessings of the religious freedoms and physical bounties provided by the United States of America. There is NO OTHER place like it on earth! In America, Churches of God can meet freely; flourish and grow; and provide financial support for evangelistic missions to other parts of the world.

The over-all mission of the Church is four-fold and can be found in Matthew 28. We are to:

- 1.GO out;
- 2.PREACH the Gospel;
- 3.BAPTIZE people into the Body of Jesus Christ; and then,
- 4.TEACH them God's Way of Life.

All these words are proactive – they are all action words. Notice that nothing is said about any specific organization or "cookie-cutter" way of organizing to accomplish that mission.

Legacy is organized as a foundation. But at the same time, we are actively engaged in evangelistic projects and what I call “church building” – the planting and nurturing of new congregations in Asia. Does that make us a church? Well, not exactly. I like to say we are a foundation that is engaged in the mission of Matthew 28. We are not organized as a church – but we are a part of “THE” CHURCH – the spiritual organism founded and led by Jesus the Christ who said He would be with us until the end of this age. As such, we are actively engaged in church-related activities. We also do what I label “good-works projects” because Jesus showed by His example while on Earth as a human that we should help the poor and repressed living in this evil world.

I know that Legacy’s form of organization makes some people uncomfortable. But it works for us; and more importantly, it accomplishes the mission Jesus gave us.

One of the most important missions of the Church is evangelism. Some of us shy away from using this word because of misuse or abuse of what it really means, but it comes from the Holy Bible! The English word “evangelist” comes from the Greek word *euangelistes*, which means, "a messenger of good" (GK. *eu*, "well," and *angelos*, "a messenger"). This term denotes a “messenger of good news” or a "preacher of the gospel" (see **Acts 21:8; Eph 4:11**). Evangelism is the most important mission of any organization that is carrying out our Lord’s royal command of Matt 28.

Another very important mission of the Church is to nurture and develop the local congregations that are the natural fruit of evangelism. This I call “Church Building”. After the evangelist GOES out, PREACHES the Gospel and BAPTIZES those God calls to His Church; the important long-term task of TEACHING God’s Way of Life and nurturing the new congregations is the job of the pastor.

The evangelist “evangelizes” and the pastor “pastures”. These are 2 separate jobs. There is naturally some crossover. But generally, the evangelist is too busy traveling around evangelizing to pasture a local congregation; and the pastor is too busy concentrating on “church building” to travel about evangelizing! The evangelist does the “GO”, “PREACH” and “BAPTIZE” part of Matt 28 and the pastor continues to do the “BAPTIZE” part and also performs the “TEACH” part of Jesus’ command.

To be effective, the Church must do both. One cannot just evangelize without consideration of what happens after the preaching and baptizing. The evangelist generally moves on. Unless someone is there to nurture and teach God’s Ways to the fledgling congregation, they will dry up and die, like a newly planted tree that gets no water. New congregations are fragile. They need constant care and spiritual feeding.

The first century Apostles usually spent 3 or more years in one area preaching the gospel and developing a sustainable structure for the new church congregation. They did not just “let God take care of them”. They organized and ordained a local ministry to carry on the pasturing of the newly baptized once they moved on to repeat this process somewhere else.

*“And when they had preached the gospel to that city, and had taught many, they returned again to Lystra, and to Iconium, and Antioch, Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God. And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed. And after they had passed throughout Pisidia, they came to Pamphylia”.* **Acts 14:21-24 KJV**

The Apostles needed to move on. If they had to stay and pasture the church congregations in any of these cities, they could not carry on the main mission of their calling – evangelism! Pastors and teachers who could take care of and build up the sheep were needed.

Jesus Himself chooses His team and gives them different assignments. But ALL on the team work together for the benefit of the building up of the Church. Paul talks about this in his letter to the **Ephesians, chapter 4, verses 8, 11-15:**

Verse 8: *“Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.”*

Verses 11-15: *“And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, Christ:”* KJV

Now we come to the main purpose of the *Legacy Institute International Leadership Training Center.*

Presently in Asia we have a few men like Lazum Brang whom I would call pure evangelists. Lazum Brang’s evangelistic efforts take him from the Delta region of south Burma (Myanmar) all the way to Putao in the far North near the Tibetan border. It takes him from the China border region of eastern Burma to the Chin Hills of the West. He spends several months in each of these areas, busily preaching the Gospel and raising up fledgling Church of God congregations. But he then must move on to other areas to do the same thing.

The problem he now has is that there are NO pastors to feed the new congregations. He is faced with exactly the same dilemma all who went before him also faced – he is only one man – he cannot do everything that is needed!

What is absolutely necessary are trained people who can go in and pasture the new churches. Unless God supplies those who can pasture these new congregations, in time they will die on the vine! Legacy School was founded primarily to fill this gap. We accept young people from the various tribes along the Thailand border and across the border in Burma. Some of these young people are from COG backgrounds, others are not. Our goal is to prepare those GOD CHOOSES to go back among their own people and help feed the new flocks being raised up. Others may

return to their own areas; tell their families about the Bible Truth and evangelize among their own tribal groups. We have no control over whom God will call to His service. We try to take as many COG students as is reasonably possible, but there are no guarantees God will choose from among them – rather than someone else not from a COG background.

We are not going to try to limit God or second guess His Divine Will. He does what He wants. During the 3 years Legacy School has been in operation, we have discovered that we really cannot predict exactly what is going to happen. Sometimes the person who appears to be the most promising student disappoints us in the end. On the other hand, another student who does not show much promise at first, ends up striving diligently to learn God's Truth!

You may be surprised to learn that a couple of our best Bible students were Buddhists when they came to Legacy School! They never opened a Bible before, but they are trying very hard and are learning (and even practicing) the moral principles taught by the Bible.

God's Word is powerful. It is SPIRITUAL! If it can miraculously change our lives - it can change theirs too! But it is all up to God. He must turn the spiritual switch that gives them understanding. This is something we cannot do. Our job is to teach them the Truth of God's Word. It is God's job to miraculously call and choose those He is bringing into His Service as part of the Spiritual Body.

Legacy students are taught Bible, English, Computer, Public Speaking, Music and Chorale, Health and Hygiene and Organic Agriculture. After 2 years, they must complete a 3rd year of volunteer service teaching among their own people. After this 3rd year, some are carefully and prayerfully chosen to complete a 4th year of concentrated Bible and Homiletics training. Only those we feel are being called to serve God as potential young evangelists, pastors and Bible teachers will be accepted into our 4th year program. After that, they will be sent back to help build up the Body of Christ by serving in fledgling local congregations.

This is a very ambitious – but also a very necessary program to educate workers for the End-Time Harvest in God's Fields. I am not ashamed to tell you that it is a lot of WORK and STRESS for Gloria and me, as well as for all the volunteers who come to help teach.

Also, Satan is very angry with what we are doing. He does not want a School of God planted in the middle of his territory. He knows that the results will be changed hearts and minds. He knows what God is up to through Legacy Institute and tries to stop us at every turn. It is like being on the front lines in a combat zone and under constant attack! Satan never sleeps! He is relentless! Without your fervent prayers for God's protection and inspiration to continue forward doing His Will, we would have been defeated long ago.

Please never let up on your prayers! Please always remember us every day! We need all of our "fellow-laborers in God's Fields" to continuously support all our efforts in Asia. We cannot do it without you. We know that you too face a daily battle with Satan and the hardships and trials of living in this world's society. Please remember that we appreciate you and continue to pray for all of you too.

## New Website

Please don't forget to check out our newest website at: <http://www.LegacyLeader.org/>. This website shows issues of the Legacy School newspaper and the activities students and teachers are engaged in. Many articles are written by Legacy students who are in the process of learning English, so don't be surprised at a few "errors" that slip through the editing process.

## Donations by Credit Card

Some donors have requested that we set up a method of making donations by credit card. This can now be done by using a secure site service called *Paypal* on our regular website at [www.LegacyInstitute.org](http://www.LegacyInstitute.org).

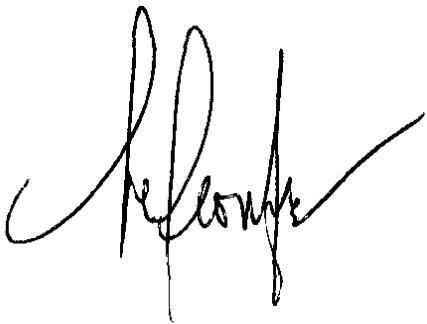
## Changes of Address

If you change your physical address or email address, please inform us. If you don't receive the Legacy Newsletter for a month or two, please let us know and reconfirm your address so that we can keep you current on the work of the Legacy Institute.

That is about all for this letter. Gloria and I are "on the road" and heading for Texas and Missouri. I will return back to Thailand early March, while Gloria will stay for awhile in California to visit with her parents. Gloria's father, Werner Jebens, has prostate cancer and your continued prayers are appreciated.

Thanks again for all your prayers. God bless and be with all of you as, together, we press forward to do His Work!

In Jesus Our Lord's 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.