



LEGACY INSTITUTE

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Dear Fellow-laborers,

The Fall Festival Season is nearly upon us. This year we will have a small group of foreigners meeting with our students and members here in Chiang Mai to keep the Feast, fellowship and appear before God. *(This year Legacy Institute will also help sponsor one Feast site in Burma, one in Kenya and two in India.)*

I remember the very first Feast of Tabernacles ever to be held in Chiang Mai. It was in the fall of 1980. I was an English teacher at Chiang Mai University. This was during the time we had an Ambassador Foundation project in Chiang Khong teaching hilltribe refugees from Laos. I helped to start this project and acted as advisor.



Dr. Lady Pharani Mahanondha, Her Majesty's Deputy Private Secretary (center) poses with Peggy Summers (left) and Gloria Sexton (right) on a visit to Chitralada Palace just after the Feast of Tabernacles.

Every six months, 12 Ambassador College student volunteers were sent to the Baan Tong Refugee Camp near the Mekong River to teach English and French to Lao and hilltribe refugees fleeing the Communist Lao and Vietnamese armies. Our Ambassador College

students taught the lowland Lao people and the highland Yao, Hmong, Lahu, Liu, Lao Tung, Tai Dam, and others. Many of them had fought for the CIA in the so-called “Secret War” against the Pathet Lao forces in Laos.

It was really something to see these battle-hardened hill tribe warriors sitting in class and learning “ABC’s” from 19-year old co-eds who had never seen or experienced anything even close to the war and death these men experienced on a daily basis! Some of these men and women had even survived the “yellow rain” (*a poison gas*) dumped on them from the air in an attempt to exterminate them. I remember very vividly looking across the Mekong and seeing combat helicopters landing at a Vietnamese army base in Baan Huey Sai, Laos. I also remember many times hearing machine gun fire at night as people were being shot at while trying to escape across the river.



Elders Herbert Vierra (left) and Leon Sexton conduct the “Blessing of the Children” ceremony during the Feast in Chiang Mai

During that time I was asked to hold a Feast of Tabernacles for the local Karen members and several of the Ambassador students who remained behind to take care of the project. The other students went to Malaysia for the Feast. At that time, our Karen COG members were part of the Karen National Liberation Army fighting the central Burmese government. They all served in non-combatant positions, but could not get permission to leave the army.

We held the Feast with 11 people in the home of a Thai man who had business dealings with the Karen Army. His house even had a small pool in which three of our Karen members were baptized the following year by Dr. Herman Hoeh.

We kept all 8 days and I spoke every day and twice on High Days! The Ambassador students helped me with sermonettes. It was invigorating in those early days as all of us worshipped and feasted together in obedience to God’s Word.

That first Feast was 27 years ago. Things are much different today. Now we meet with Legacy Institute students and feast-goers from the West at the 4-star Empress Hotel. But every year we still have Karen refugee members, even though many have now left for western countries to resettle. *(I just learned that 4 days ago another Church of God family, Saw Di, Ma Oo and their little son Jubilee left for the U.S.; Hser Nay and his family are leaving for Canada on Sept 9; refugee COG Member Monday, her daughter Anita and their families left for Norway last month; and Davidson Lay Bey and his family will be leaving for the U.K. very soon. Please pray for these COG families to be blessed in their resettlement. With only two COG refugee families left, we will be cancelling our border festival site.)*



Legacy Institute students perform special music in their native Kachin tribal costumes

Time marches on. With each passing year, we get closer to the time pictured by the Feast of Trumpets; the End of the Age when many of the prophecies of Jesus, Daniel and John will find their fulfillment. It will be a time of terrible war and destruction. Unless God cuts time short, no human will survive! (Matthew 24:22)

I have asked myself the question often: Why did Jesus go to heaven and allow time to go on for another 2000 years? Why didn't He just set up the Kingdom of God *then* soon after His resurrection? The disciples and others actually thought He was going to do just that! And they were disappointed when it didn't happen. Some thought that since He died the death of a criminal instead of kicking the Romans out and declaring Himself king, He couldn't possibly be the Messiah. So WHY didn't he do it? Why wait? Wouldn't setting up the Kingdom then have saved a lot of heartache and terrible problems on the Earth?

There are some very important scriptures that tell us why He is waiting nearly 2000 years to bring the Kingdom of God from Heaven. First, let's look at what Jesus said about the timing of the coming of God's Kingdom.

Acts 1:6-8

“Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, “Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel” And He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority. But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”¹

Matt 24:11-14

*“Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. But he who endures to the end shall be saved. And this **gospel of the kingdom** will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, **and then the end will come.**”*

Notice that Jesus said something had to be accomplished before the Kingdom could be established on Earth. He told His disciples that they would be *His witnesses to the end of the earth!* Here is the key to the answer! The Gospel must be preached to the whole world! That takes time. And God has allotted 2000 years for us to do it!

Yes, God could have set up the Kingdom shortly after Jesus’ death and resurrection, and preached the Gospel by sending out His Angels. But that is NOT the way God has chosen to do it. God has decided to use the disciples of Jesus to announce the Good News of the Kingdom of God!

Jesus’ first mission on earth was finished. He needed to go back to Heaven and take up His responsibilities as High Priest in the Heavenly Temple (**Hebrews 9:11**). Before He left, He gave His disciples clear instructions what message they were to take to the nations.

Matt 10:5-15

*“These twelve Jesus sent out and commanded them, saying: “Do not go into the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter a city of the Samaritans. But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as you go, preach, saying, ‘**The kingdom of heaven is at hand.**’ Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons. Freely you have received, freely give. Provide neither gold nor silver nor copper in your money belts, nor bag for your journey, nor two tunics, nor sandals, nor staffs; for a worker is worthy of his food.”*

Jesus told them that part of their responsibility would be to heal the sick, raise the dead and cast out demons. But their main duty was to announce the advent of the Kingdom of God.

When Jesus began His ministry, He also healed the sick, raised the dead, and cast out demons. BUT His main focus was **PREACHING THE KINGDOM OF GOD!**

¹ New King James Version throughout unless otherwise noted.

Mark 1:14-15

*“Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, **preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God**, and saying, **“The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel.”**”*

Notice the three points clearly pronounced by Jesus Himself:

1. *“The time is fulfilled”*
2. *“ The kingdom of God is at hand”*
3. *“Repent, and believe in the gospel.”*

Jesus’ focus was on announcing that the Kingdom was near at hand and that people should REPENT!

Jesus message contained a clear call to REPENTENCE!

It was not just some announcement about some ethereal idea concerning a prophetic, future, other-worldly kingdom or some kind of kingdom “in your heart.” It was a clear announcement that time is up; the Kingdom of God is soon to arrive on Earth; and it is time to REPENT!

Jesus was concerned about getting the Gospel out and He needed people to help Him fulfill His commission from the Father to take the Gospel to the four corners of the world.

Matt 9:35-38

*“Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people. But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd. Then He said to His disciples, **“The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.”**”*

Jesus asked His disciples to pray for MORE harvesters! He had already selected His first disciples and trained them Himself for three and a half years. They came from many different backgrounds. He turned them into harvesters of men.

Matt 4:18-20

*“And Jesus, walking by the Sea of Galilee, saw two brothers, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. Then He said to them, **“Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.”** They immediately left their nets and followed Him.”*

Those first disciples would carry forth the Gospel message and then they would die. They were followed by men such as Paul, Barnabas, Titus and Timothy. And they in turn were followed by others. The Gospel was taken to many places on Earth by many “fishers of

men”. But the 2000 or so year period is not up yet. Jesus said the Gospel would be preached **FIRST** to the WHOLE WORLD, and then the end would come. This is an important qualification. Since the Kingdom hasn’t arrived yet, the job is not yet finished!

It has been the job of Jesus’ disciples throughout the ages to carry the Gospel message to others in many parts of the world. The job has never been done by just one man. It was not completed in the first century. A series of “works” have waxed and waned through the centuries. Sometimes the Work of God has been done in great power! At other times it has been only a whisper. And it’s not over yet! There are still many places that need the Gospel message of a SAVIOR who will return soon to save the oppressed and destroy the wicked.

It is very important that a clear call to repentance accompany any Gospel preaching effort!

Matt 13:36-43

“Then Jesus sent the multitude away and went into the house. And His disciples came to Him, saying, “Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field.”

“He answered and said to them: “He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. The field is the world, the good seeds are the sons of the kingdom, but the tares are the sons of the wicked one. The enemy who sowed them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels. Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age. The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!”

The True Gospel Jesus the Christ announced is not some story about a soft, timid man that died for your sins. It is not about a human church organization or political entity that will bring peace to the earth by conquest or successful negotiation. It is about a REAL Kingdom that will REPLACE ALL the kingdoms and governments of the world. It is about justice and recompense. It is about destruction and punishment!

JUDGMENT is near at hand! **This is serious business and the people of this earth must be told!**

Jesus is bringing God’s Kingdom to the Earth. All worldly kingdoms will be brought down and Satan (present king of the Earth) will be arrested and imprisoned. But that is not all. The King of Kings is also bringing JUDGEMENT and the WRATH of ALMIGHTY GOD!!

There is no time to waste! Jesus, nearly 2000 years ago, announced that the Kingdom was NEAR AT HAND! Our job as His disciples is to BLAST that message to the nations and CALL the people to REPENTENCE because with the Kingdom comes **judgment!**

A great trumpet blast from Heaven will announce the End of Time!

Rev 11:15-18

"Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!" And the twenty-four elders who sat before God on their thrones fell on their faces and worshiped God, saying:

*"We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty, The one who is and who was and who is to come, Because You have taken Your great power and reigned. The nations were angry, and **Your wrath has come**, And the time of the dead, **that they should be judged**, And that You should **reward Your servants** the prophets and the saints, And those who fear Your name, small and great, And should **destroy those who destroy the earth.**"*

The Bible gives a clear warning to us who have been given the commission to take Jesus' Gospel to the nations. We cannot allow anything to distract us from our God-given calling! You and I are fellow-laborers in the great end-time harvest just before that terrible Day of the Lord at the End of Time! If we are truly called out ones chosen to be disciples of Jesus, then automatically, our collective job is the exact SAME one given to the first 12 disciples and all who followed after them over the course of the last 2000 years – to help PREACH the GOSPEL to the nations!

There is much work yet to be done and too few of us to do it!

Luke 19:11-28

"Now as they heard these things, He spoke another parable, because He was near Jerusalem and because they thought the kingdom of God would appear immediately. Therefore He said: "A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return. So he called ten of his servants, delivered to them ten minas, and said to them, 'Do business till I come.' But his citizens hated him, and sent a delegation after him, saying, 'We will not have this man to reign over us.'

"And so it was that when he returned, having received the kingdom, he then commanded these servants, to whom he had given the money, to be called to him, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading. Then came the first, saying, 'Master, your mina has earned ten minas. And he said to him, 'Well done, good servant; because you were faithful in a very little, have authority over ten cities.' And the second came, saying, 'Master, your mina has earned five minas.' Likewise he said to him, 'You also be over five cities.'

"Then another came, saying, 'Master, here is your mina, which I have kept put away in a handkerchief. For I feared you, because you are an austere man. You collect what you did not deposit, and reap what you did not sow.' And he said to him, 'Out of your own mouth I will judge you, you wicked servant. You knew that I was an austere man, collecting what I did not deposit and reaping what I did not sow. Why then did you not put my money in the bank, that at my coming I might have collected it with interest?...' "

'For I say to you, that to everyone who has will be given; and from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. But bring here those enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, and slay them before me.'"

The warning is clear. We – *to whom much has been given* – much WILL BE required!

My fellow-laborers, that awful and terrifying day of reckoning is near at hand! I pray that we strengthen and encourage one another as the time grows near and flee from those who say *"the Lord delays His coming."* I don't want to be numbered with the one who took what Our Lord gave him and...*DID NOTHING!*

I pray that this year at the Feast of Trumpets, Atonement, the Feast of Tabernacles and the Last Great Day, we all will enjoy the abundance of physical things and spiritual things we have been given. I also pray that all of us reflect on what is to come when that Kingdom is brought to the Earth – that we are mindful of the desperate need to carry out our God-given commission to announce that coming Kingdom and to call the world to repentance before the End.

Rev 19:11-16

*"Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. **Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written:***

"KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS."

I want us to be there together when He returns, whether we are dead or alive. I want all of us to be counted among the faithful such as Paul and Peter and all the others that for 2000 years have gone before us. And I want King Jesus to tell us that we did a good job!

Until that day comes,

I remain your fellow-laborer in God's End Time Harvest Fields,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. Leon Sexton', written in a cursive style.

T. Leon Sexton