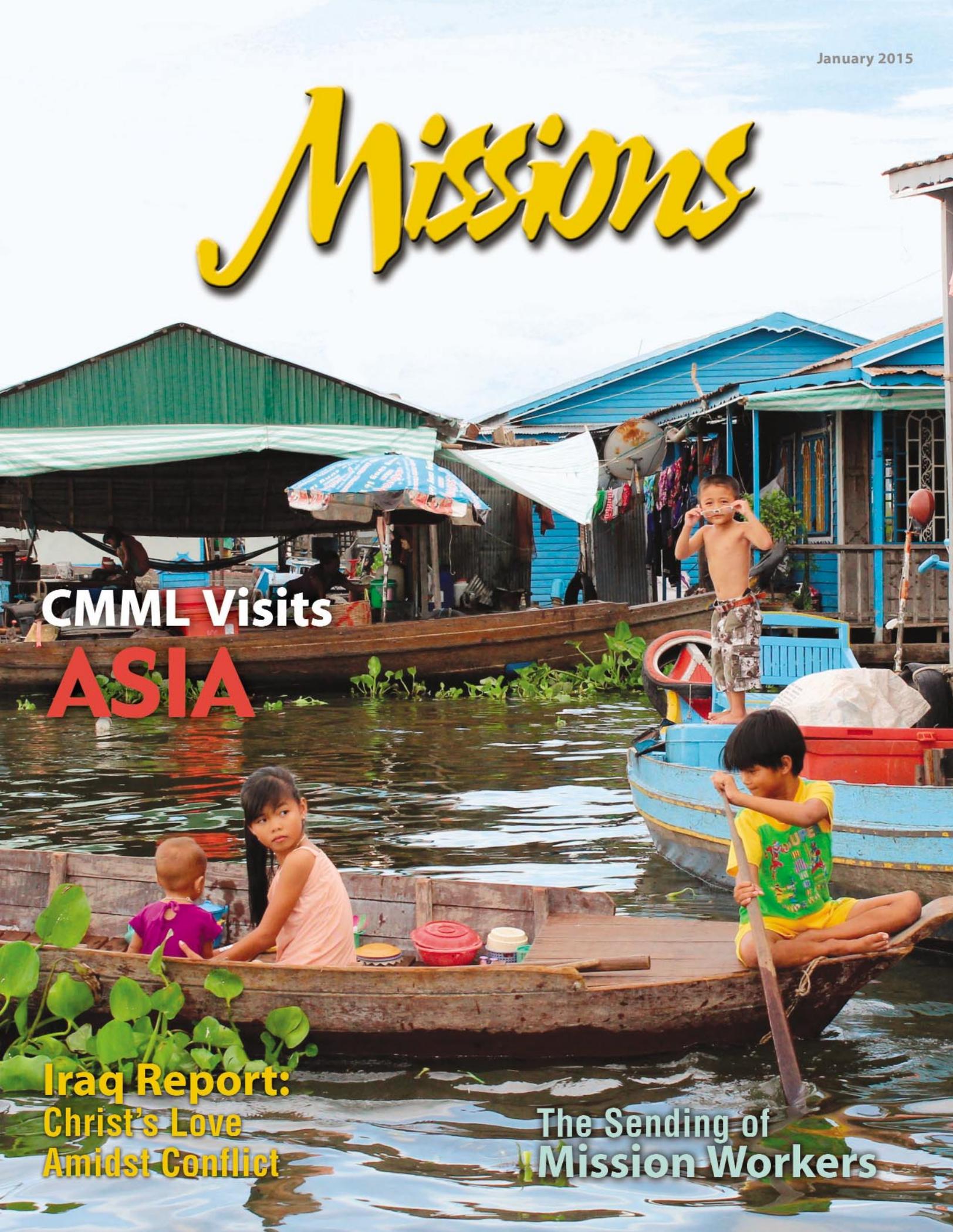


Missions

CMML Visits
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Iraq Report:
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Mission Workers





Thinking It Through

T. J. MARINELLO

Bequeathal What Will We Leave?

Many readers have experienced the death of a loved one. In the aftermath, one question that often arises is, “What did the deceased leave you?” In one conversation I witnessed, one heir received his father’s prized ring and another his father’s socks! What we leave behind, however, is much more than jewelry and clothing. We leave behind the effect of our character and actions.

On a recent visit to Cambridge, I came face-to-face with a plaque in a small stone chapel (now converted into a café), which described what one man left to those who came after him. These words are found: “I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified.” (1 Corinthians 2:2) Below that was, “Lovest thou Me? Feed My sheep.” (John 21:16) This 19th century plaque was erected in memory of a local church leader and professor of Greek by “Parishioners and others who valued his ministry.” They saw the message of these two verses as the inheritance this man had bequeathed to them.

In 1 Kings 3:5–9 we find another passage which details the results of a life’s bequeathal. While not a formal pronouncement of things given to one who remained behind after a death, the implications are quite clear. The setting is the appearance of the Lord to King Solomon in the aftermath of David’s death. The Lord says, “Ask what I shall give you.” As Solomon responds to the Lord, he gives a clear summary of what his father David had left him. First, David bequeathed him **an example of faithfulness to the Lord** (verse 6). Solomon notes that David “walked before You in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart toward You.” That’s quite a bequeathal, one which made an indelible mark. Even though Solomon unexpectedly finds himself before the Lord who appeared to him in a dream—likely an unsettling encounter—he still is able to note the faithful example of his father. Second, David bequeathed to Solomon **the knowledge**

of God’s covenantal faithfulness (verse 6). Solomon recounts the covenantal faithfulness of the Lord God who fulfilled His promise to David. In fact, he mentions God’s “steadfast love” both at the beginning and end of verse 6. Solomon had learned from his father that the Lord God was the One who is faithful and true. Third, David bequeathed his son **an attitude of dependence upon the Lord** (verse 7). Solomon makes no pretentious statement of his rightful place as David’s heir to the throne. He clearly understands that his position as king

“I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified.”

1 Corinthians 2:2

after David was one given by the Lord. This is quite a contrast to the grasping after power found in the record of many of the other kings of Israel. Further, he well realizes the enormity of the responsibility as well as his own inability to fulfill the task through his own power and abilities, even though the task was a God-given one. Finally, David bequeathed his son **the goal of service to the Lord’s people** (verse 9). A well-known story tells of the appearance of one who grants three wishes to whomever has just freed him from a bottle. While the telling of this fictional story differs in the precise details, the wishes normally concern the material wants of the one who opened the bottle (and the ensuing unhappy results); but 1 Kings is not recounting a fictional story, which one day would be behind a Hollywood cartoon. The Maker of heaven and earth, the Lord of glory, the One who has all power to do as He wills consistent with His character, asked what He can do for Solomon. Solomon asks for that which he most needs to effectively serve the Lord’s people: he asks for wisdom.

For each believer, our day will come when we pass into the presence of the Lord unless, of course, He first comes to take His Church to be with Him (1 Thessalonians 4:16–17). As we pass away, what will we bequeath to those who remain? Material inheritance alone, or also lessons of godly character and conduct? ■

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COVER PHOTO: Vietnamese children on Tonle Sap Lake, Cambodia—Philip Parsons



The Sending of MISSION WORKERS

BY IAN BURNES

One of the most important tasks a local church may be asked to perform is to release and commend one of their members to God's service. This may be done well, with adequate time given for prayer, assessment and waiting on the guidance of the Holy Spirit for confirmation. When the process is done poorly, without sufficient consideration, it can result in serious consequences for all involved, and potential damage to the work on the field.

Who is the sender?

Ultimately all missions and sending originates with God. He is the prime cause as He reaches out in grace to the world He has made.¹ Yet He chooses to use Christians, who respond to His call, as the secondary instruments to help accomplish His plan. It is not possible here to trace in-depth the biblical theme of the "Mission of God," but readers may wish to pursue this topic through other publications.²

This theme is all through Scripture and reaches the summit when the Father sends the Son. John especially emphasizes that Jesus is the "sent One," who completed the work given Him by His Father.³ The process of sending then continues, for our Lord tells His disciples that after His departure the Holy Spirit would be sent to be with them forever, and He, the Spirit, would provide power for their witness and work.⁴ Before He left them to return to His Father, Jesus announced that they were being sent by Him to continue the work that He had begun: "Jesus said to them again, 'Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you.'" (John 20:21) This Scripture, alongside what is called the Great Commission recorded by Matthew, reminds us that all sending originates with God, so that the church is not the sending agency—it is the *sent* agency, called to engage in the mission of God who is the sender.⁵

all sending originates with God

What about calling?

The question then arises: who does God send? Is there such a thing as a special calling to service? Scripture makes clear that all of God's people have been

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called, with what Os Guinness has described as “Our Primary Call.”⁶ We have been called *by* Christ, *to* Christ and *to live for* Christ. That calling applies to every believer. But there is also strong evidence in Scripture, and through Christian history, of those who have received a specific call to particular service for God. Biblical examples are numerous and Christian biographies affirm an ongoing process. Those whom God calls, equip and prepare themselves in order to carry out their calling, and wisely seek the approval and affirmation of their local church and other Christians.



What is the role of the church in sending?

In the New Testament, local churches had a key role in the sending process—there were no other options! More recent mission practice has often marginalized the role of the local church, which is seen simply as a source of people and money, recruited by specialized agencies that do the work of missions. More recent reflection has reemphasized the key role of the local church in the process of sending.

So how does the church identify those whom God has called to His service? It begins with prayer as the local church, concerned about missions, prays that God will call some to His service, and is willing to release any who are called. We find an

example in Acts 13:1-4, and discover valuable principles that still apply today.

The church recognized those whom God had called

The church at Antioch was told to “set apart” Barnabas and Saul for the work, which means “marking off from the rest, separating and identifying as distinct.”⁷ By such recognition, the church was responding to the command of God as it marked out the chosen workers. As they had actively waited on God for guidance, they were willing to obey when God revealed His will. We remember that the Holy Spirit speaks in the community of the church, not just to individual members.

The church released God’s chosen servants

The church at Antioch demonstrated their association with God’s choice by releasing Paul and Barnabas to service. Luke records three things:

- 1 They fasted and prayed, focusing on those whom God had set apart. Any new initiative for God must be saturated in earnest prayer.
- 2 They placed their hands on them, not to impart any specific gifts, but to identify them to the church as God’s chosen servants, and to associate the church at Antioch with their mission. F. F. Bruce writes: “By placing hands on them they, by this means, expressed their fellowship with these two and their recognition of the divine call.”⁸
- 3 They sent them away. God’s claim on their service had priority, so they let them go. This was an active response by the church, identified with this task. John Stott writes: “In our anxiety to do justice to the Holy Spirit’s initiative, we should not depict the church’s role as having been entirely passive. Would it not be true to say both that the Spirit sent them out, by instructing the church to do so, and that the church sent them out, having been directed by the Spirit to do so?”⁹

They reported back to the church

After they completed their mission, Paul and Barnabas returned to Antioch to meet with the church. We read that, “On arriving there, they gathered the church together and reported all that God had done through them and how He had

opened the door of faith to the Gentiles." (Acts 14:27) They now recount to the church at Antioch what God had done through them, demonstrating a sense of accountability to the church which sent them.

The sender must also be a supporter

Other references in the New Testament, to sending by the local church, emphasize the responsibility to provide support and provision for those who are sent by the churches.¹⁰ Paul writes to the Romans that he hoped "to have you assist me on my journey there," and that the Corinthians would do the

Each church will face the responsibility of supporting God's servants

same, "so you can help me on my journey." (Romans 15:24; 1 Corinthians 16:6) He urged Titus, "Do everything you can to help Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their way and see they have everything they need." (Titus 3:13) John writes, "You will do well to send them on their way in a manner worthy of God." (3 John 1:6) The Christians visited and ministered to, also had an obligation to help them by providing for their material needs.

Each church will face the responsibility of supporting God's servants, whether they work locally, or are sent elsewhere. If we send, then we need to support those whom God has called.

The practicalities of sending

How do we assess potential workers for God's service, whatever type of service that may be? Two particular areas require careful assessment.

1 Knowledge of the person being sent

- Character—this involves an assessment of the maturity, spirituality and stability of the person. If significant questions arise, then it is better not to proceed, or at least to wait for a time.
- Commitment—this should be obvious and seen in service for God and involvement in the activities of the church. A minimum period of two to three years spent in the church fellowship is recommended.
- Gifts and abilities—is the person suited to the work? Have they adequate training or is further training required? Is there capacity to learn another language, adapt to new cultures and relate to people from different cultures?
- Physical fitness—are they fit or do they have any medical

problems? A thorough medical examination is part of the process.

- If married, is the marriage and home stable?
- Other circumstances—what is their work record? How long have they spent in the workplace? Can they budget and manage money?
- Validating the call—evidence should be prayerfully considered. Hard questions need to be asked and time spent waiting on God. The will of God must be clear. Never be in a rush.

2 Knowledge of the work they are going to do

Information can be gathered from those who know the proposed area of service—other workers, service groups, etc. Areas that need to be researched:

- What role will be filled? What are the conditions like? How will language be learned?
- Are there specific dangers? Any health problems?
- Has the situation been well researched by the potential worker?
- If the worker is single, is the situation suitable for him/her?
- Is the work already established there? Who is doing this work?
- Will they receive a welcome? Are they needed or wanted?
- Are they compatible, culturally and doctrinally?
- If there is a local church, will the people welcome them?

This may appear to be a long list, but the sending of mission workers is a serious matter. It needs to be approached with careful consideration, so that those who are sent are truly called and prepared for the work for God.

The needs of the world are as great today as ever, and new workers are always required, often in the hardest places. While we long to see needs being met, we recognize that we must send the right people, equipped to stand for God and do His work, even when things get tough. ■

Ian Burness is the general director of Echoes of Service.

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1. Romans 11:33–36; 2. e.g., *The Mission of God* (2006), Christopher J. H. Wright; 3. John 6:29; 4. John 15:26; Acts 1:8; 5. Matthew 28:18; 6. Romans 1:6, 1 Peter 1:15; *The Call* (1998), Os Guinness; 7. *Dictionary of New Testament Words* (1940 edition), W. E. Vine, p.210; 8. *The Acts of the Apostles* (1951), F. F. Bruce, p.254; 9. *The Message of Acts* (1990), John R. W. Stott, p.217; 10. *Let the Nations Be Glad* (1993), John Piper, p.225.

ASIA

5 Weeks, Countries, COUNTLESS BLESSINGS

BY PHILIP PARSONS



Missionaries serve because the Lord has called them to show people love, care and concern, and to point them to the Lord Jesus Christ. Often, missionaries cope with issues of isolation, political unrest, corruption, and spiritual warfare. Lack of supportive care can cripple missionary effectiveness. In an effort to encourage and support missionaries, CMML has launched a new initiative: "Assembly

Relations and Missionary Care." What follows is a brief summary of a recent missionary trip Phil and Mary Parsons took to visit a number of CMML associated missionaries in parts of Asia (*Missionary Prayer Handbook* Days 8 through 11). The purpose of the trip was to encourage and support our missionaries, listen to their challenges, and pray with them as they engage in the ministry the Lord has called them to do.

HONG KONG



We enjoyed a brief two-day visit with **John and Karen Short** (commended from Australia) at the Christian Book Room in Hong Kong. We stayed in a large apartment on the warehouse's 14th floor where the CBR office is located. The highlight was spending the following morning learning about CBR's ministry and meeting the staff. One young man, from the assemblies in South Korea, was finishing a short-term ministry translating gospel tracts.

From left: View of Hong Kong harbor from the Christian Book Room; Christian Book Room volunteer staff with John and Karen Short.

Globe: ©iStockPhoto.com/zennie



Top to bottom, left to right: Korakuen Garden, Okayama, Japan; Tim and Christiane Marcy; Jay and Ruth Kraai; Peter and Mary Clift; Peter Clift distributing invitations to an after-school event; Robert and Megumi Longo with Phil and Mary at Okayama Castle.

Our first stop in Japan was the city of Takasaki where **Tim and Christiane Marcy** live. They have a small but lovely apartment connected to the assembly that is ideal as they intern and help with the assembly ministry. Both are taking language classes. Tim meets with the elders and regularly preaches at the assembly, and Christiane helps with youth and ladies' ministries. Their long-range goal is to begin a new work and plant an assembly, seeking the Lord's direction for location and timing. Tim authored an excellent article (*Missions*, July 2014) on Japan with an appeal for additional workers.

Jay and Ruth Kraai live near the Marcys. We spent a day hearing about their ministry in Shibukawa and visiting the assembly where they are actively engaged in a teaching and visitation ministry. Ruth has made a remarkable recovery from a recent illness although she has difficulty in reading. The Kraais are praying about the future and expect to take a furlough in spring 2015.

The Kraais drove us to Iiyama, winding our way through the mountains and valleys of northwestern Japan, to the home of **Peter and Mary Clift**. Spiritually dark and challenging for missionaries, Iiyama is noted for manufacturing ornate religious shrines called Butsudans. Many Japanese families have these ancestor shelves in their homes filled with religious icons, important family documents and heirlooms that encourage living family members to reverence their ancestors. The Clifts assist in the local assembly and engage in a wide variety of ministries that build relationships. One morning we drove to a nearby neighborhood and distributed brochures to students at an elementary school. The Clifts have an after-school activity for students to learn English. Parents are highly supportive of these efforts and it gives the Clifts an open door to share the Gospel. Mary is part of a local book reading club and Peter hosts a small group of men who come to their home to read and study sound evangelical literature. Periodically, Peter organizes a Saturday morning breakfast outreach for businessmen. He is also the Emmaus Correspondence School director for Japan.

Sunday afternoon, following a chapel lunch, we met with six Filipina women who are part of the assembly fellowship. These women are married to Japanese men, having left their homes in the Philippines to seek a better life abroad. They wanted to hear our story (as former missionaries in the Philippines) and we very much enjoyed hearing them tell their stories.

We left Iiyama by train, passed through Nagano, Nagoya and Osaka, and finally arrived at Okayama where we were met by **Bob and Megumi Longo**. That afternoon we visited Korakuen, one of the three most beautiful gardens in Japan. Although heavily damaged in World War II, it has been wonderfully restored. Bob and Megumi face similar challenges as other missionaries in this country in reaching the Japanese people for the Lord. Converts face intense pressure from their families to not abandon Shinto practices. Many assembly congregations lack men because of the demands of employers and the commitment to succeed. The Longos help the assembly in Okayama and participate in evangelism through teaching English and home Bible studies. They also make visitation a high priority and we had the pleasure of visiting a neighbor couple with them.

SOUTH KOREA



Doug and Ho Sook Neiswender met us at Incheon Airport in Seoul, South Korea. The evening was spent at Bukbu Assembly where we enjoyed tasty Korean food and met some of the assembly leaders. The following day, the Neiswenders drove us to **Tim and Yolly Stafford's** home and we visited the Demilitarized Zone, which separates North and South Korea. This is a very popular tourist site. The next day, Tim and Yolly invited us to a Saturday outreach at their assembly. As one of their evangelistic events, a chef who specialized in making sushi was invited to come demonstrate his art. That evening we returned to Bukbu Assembly to speak at a youth missions gathering and Phil was invited to speak twice on Sunday. The next day we met with some of the members of Open-Door Missionary Service Committee, the missionary service organization for Korean assemblies. It was wonderful to see and get reacquainted with them after first meeting them at CMML in 2013. Before leaving Korea, we drove two hours to see the Christian Training Institute and Phil was invited to speak to the men and women enrolled in the intensive 40-week Bible training program.

PHILIPPINES



Top to bottom, left to right: Tim and Yolly Stafford with Doug and Ho Sook Neiswender; Christian Training Institute students; An evangelistic outreach at the Noryang Jin Assembly; View from South Korea looking north at the Demilitarized Zone; Sunday morning at Bukbu Assembly; A collection of ribbons at the Demilitarized Zone with messages to families living in the DPRK; Missionaries serving in the Philippines at the annual retreat.

For three days in October, commended missionaries serving in the Philippines met for a conference at a retreat center just south of the capital city, Manila. It was a special time to get reacquainted with former coworkers and meet new workers serving in the Philippines. It is an annual conference planned by a missionary committee where the emphasis and purpose is to come together, enjoy the company of one another, and pull back from the day-to-day demands of ministry. It provided wonderful opportunities to interact with workers, listening and praying with them. Time was provided for spiritual enrichment and Phil presented a series of messages centered on the theme "Encounters with the Master." Each missionary was given an opportunity to report on their ministry. Of particular interest was to hear about the ongoing restoration in Guiuan from Paul and Gerrah Kulikovskiy. In November 2013 Typhoon Yolanda caused widespread damage in Guiuan leading Paul and others to devote their time to helping survivors rebuild their lives.

Myung Sub Kim, along with **Kian and Akiko Tan** of Singapore, met us at the Phnom Penh airport. For two days, we visited Sangkhim Canaan School located about two hours northwest of Phnom Penh. This school provides a quality Christian education in a land that is predominately Buddhist. Phil was asked to share a devotional with the teachers and give a presentation to the parents. We had a wonderful time visiting classes and encouraging the staff. **Youmi and Insun Park** have been with the school for several years. Youmi served as a teacher and principal, and now is an adviser and devotes time to caring for their two young children. Insun is a supervisor at the school.

One afternoon, Kian took us to meet a worker who ministers among Vietnamese refugees on the great Tonle Sap Lake. More than a million Vietnamese live in houseboats that form floating villages surrounding the lake. We visited a floating village church and encouraged the family as they reach out to the needy.

We also spent two days with Myung Sub Kim. Following more than 20 years in the U.S., Myung Sub sensed the Lord's call to serve in Cambodia. Since 2008 she has been involved with a children's ministry on the banks of the Mekong River. Each Sunday morning, and sometimes during the week, she takes a ferry across the Mekong River and drives a few kilometers to the assembly. Sunday morning is given to teaching the Bible using flannel graph, singing songs and reciting memorized Bible verses. After this an older group of young men and women come to remember the Lord by partaking in the breaking of bread followed by a time of teaching from God's Word. During the afternoon, Myung Sub drove us around the local neighborhood to visit two families whose children come to the assembly. One family recently lost a son in an accident. The father of the second family, a tuk-tuk driver who picked up children for Sunday school, suffered a severe leg injury some months ago, limiting his ability to earn a living. It was thrilling to see Myung Sub show God's love and mercy to these families who have been impacted by tragedy and suffering.

Believers in Cambodia number less than two percent of the population while more than 75 percent of the 14,000 villages have no Christian presence. Cambodia is ripe for evangelism and church planting. The country continues to recover from the genocide committed during the Khmer Rouge regime from 1975 to 1979. In a bizarre attempt to create a country void of professionals, the leaders forced the population to become farmers and virtually eliminated any who might undermine their pursuits. It is estimated that more than two million Cambodians died as a result of being tortured, starved or executed.

Top to bottom, left to right: Cambodian missionaries Myung Sub Kim and Insun and Youmi Park; Kian and Akiko Tan with Phil and Mary; Myung Sub distributing clothes and other items to a family who lost their son; Houseboats that form a floating village on Tonle Sap Lake; Elementary students in class at Sangkhim Canaan School; Sangkhim Canaan School campus.



ENCOURAGE, PRAY, SUPPORT

Missionary care is an important component of fruitful and effective service. Today, perhaps more than ever, our missionaries need encouragement, prayer and the support of the Lord's people. Each assembly who has sent out workers to the field ought to make it a priority to visit their workers. Not only will you be a blessing to your worker, you will become a great encourager of missions in your local assembly! ■



Philip and Mary Parsons, CMML Assembly Relations and Missionary Care.

Home with the Lord

William David Ridgeway

Missionary to Ecuador • March 18, 1929 – June 20, 2014



Born during the Great Depression in Woodbury, New Jersey, Bill Ridgeway was Emily Ross Ridgeway's last of eight children. By the grace of God, his mother refused medication to end her pregnancy as she prayed that one of her children would serve the Lord. Years later, the answer to that prayer seemed to fade away as Billy stood in juvenile court, facing a third and final offense before being sentenced. His mom clung to the promise of Jeremiah 29:11: "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, thoughts of peace and not evil, to give you a future and a hope." A police sergeant, led by God to intervene, asked the judge for another chance. He had no way of knowing the plans God had for Bill's life.

As a teenager, Bill realized his need for a Savior from his troubled life. Through the ministry of a visiting Moody Bible Institute student to the chapel in Pitman, New Jersey, he was led into a lifelong love and service for Jesus.

At the end of the football season in his senior year of high school, Bill enlisted in the Coast Guard. After boot camp he was assigned to duty at Green's Ledge Lighthouse on Long Island Sound where he met his future wife, Irene.

Bill and Irene were married in 1951 and shortly afterward felt led to attend Philadelphia Bible Institute, followed by Columbia Bible College to complete his degree. In 1956, upon hearing of the death of five missionaries in the jungles of Ecuador, Bill and Irene felt God's call to serve Him in that country. They packed up their family of four and, after studying Spanish in Costa Rica, arrived in Ecuador in the spring of 1959.

In the small town of Pifo, Bill used his training as a diesel mechanic to keep the generators powered and running for HCJB radio station. As much as he enjoyed this work, his passion and love was for Ecuadorians' spiritual needs. As Bill and Irene welcomed two more children into their family, they prepared for a move back to the capital city.

There, Bill became head of HCJB's evangelistic department and he began to make frequent trips to different areas of the country. He would fill their Jeep

with Bibles, Bible courses, tracts and films to show along the way; he shared the message of the cross at every encounter. Sometimes the Gospel was met with great resistance in the more remote villages, but God gave protection and allowed Bill to make friendships and see people come to Christ.

When not out on evangelistic trips, Bill directed camps, set up literature and books at outdoor fairs and markets, and began a "sermon telephone" ministry, which reached out to desperate and lonely people who needed to hear the message of hope in Jesus.

In the late 1970s, Bill and Irene started regular Bible studies to follow up more closely with small groups of believers who had come to Christ as a result of evangelistic trips over the years in the outskirts of Quito. It was in one of these towns, San Antonio de Pichincha, that Bill and Irene felt led to begin meeting with a local assembly of believers. Through Bible studies, loving friendships and God's grace, a strong growing church was established and continues to impact the community to this day. Bill and Irene lived and served at Maranatha until their return to the U.S. in 2002.

Upon leaving Ecuador, Bill and Irene settled in Kent, Washington, to be near their family. Their love for Spanish-speaking people kept them busy with trips to eastern Washington to seek out migrant workers with whom to share the love of Christ, using Spanish literature. Bill's passion for lost souls led him to volunteer in a prison ministry to Latin inmates, using Spanish Emmaus Bible courses.

Bill loved to write and knew that God wanted him to write a book, but he couldn't stop long enough to do so. Eventually his health forced him to slow down, giving him enough time to focus on the book. The first copy of *If It Wasn't for the Lighthouse* (Gospel Folio Press) arrived three days after he went home to be with Jesus.

Bill's passion was to share Christ with everyone he met. He continued to witness and teach until the day he left his earthly body for his heavenly home. ■

**BILL RIDGEWAY, COOKIE CALLAGHAN,
FRANKLIN RIDGEWAY & DAN RIDGEWAY.**

MAY WE INTRODUCE

Pietro and Nichole Cara Missionaries to Italy



Pietro's Testimony

I was blessed to be born to first and second generation believers in the south of Italy. At age seven, while attending a children's Bible camp, I was overcome by the understanding of sin and holiness. At that moment I understood the grace and goodness of God, who made a way for me to be called holy in His sight, not because of anything I had done, but because of His great love and through His Son's sacrifice. I ran out of that meeting and fell to the ground; overwhelmed by tears, I surrendered my life to His lordship. I was baptized at age 16 and after one year of mandatory military service in Italy I knew that I wanted to serve God in ministry. I served one year in England among immigrants and then two years in South America where I met my wife Nichole. We served some years in camp ministry with the Brethren churches in Italy before returning to Canada where we have ministered faithfully in our local church for the past nine years. I am passionate about discipleship and churches equipped to fulfill the Great Commission.

Nichole's Testimony

I was born in western Canada to a 15-year-old troubled teen who looked for love and joy in all the wrong places. I experienced a childhood of neglect, abuse and daily exposure to all forms of lewdness and debauchery. A local believer faithfully came to collect me from among the strewn bottles and bodies each Sunday morning and take me to a little chapel down the road where I heard stories about Jesus and gazed at the watercolor pictures with childlike adoration. I don't remember a time in my life that I was not filled to overflowing with faith in

God and the gift of His Son. I accepted that gift with my whole heart at age five on the front steps of our shabby apartment building with that lady whose name I do not know but whose love and prayers have helped shape my life. At age eight, after a year of determined insistence on my part, I was baptized, not because I thought it was essential to my salvation, but because I knew it was what Jesus asked believers to do and I wanted with my whole heart to obey Him fully. As a teenager I was placed in a loving Christian foster home and had the privilege of serving the Lord in many different lands after graduating. I met Pietro in South America and we were married in 1996 in Italy. I am passionate about discipleship and mentoring, equipping future leaders, and leading the wounded and marginalized to know and embrace God's power, redemptive healing and restoration.

Together

We are the blessed parents of six amazing children, two girls and four boys, and our oldest three children already have the call of missions upon their lives. From a young age, when asked what they wanted to be when they grew up, the answer was and continues to be the same: missionaries. God has given our family and our sending church a passion for Italy and for the Italian people. Our joint desire is to serve the local churches in Italy, to encourage and help to equip them to fulfill the Great Commission through practical discipleship tools and training. Our vision is "Italian churches effectively fulfilling the Great Commission": local churches empowered to effectively be, and make, maturing disciples of Jesus Christ. ■

"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

—Matthew 28:19–20