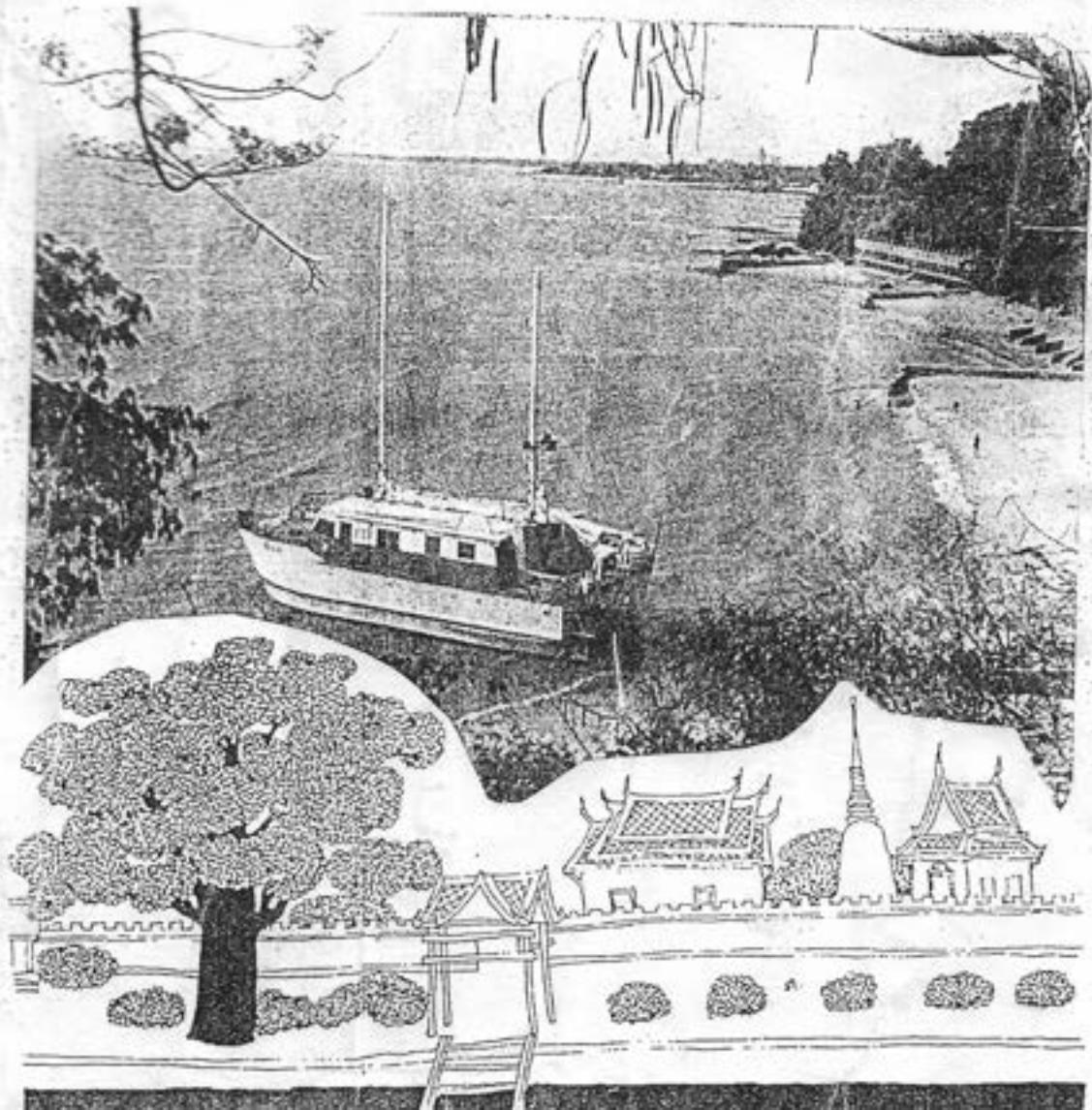


Thailand Adventure with the Noah Boat



Thailand Adventure

with the Noah Boat

This book is written to bless my friends and family. It is a home, self-published, true book by the author. Permission is hereby given to reprint or quote accurately what may bless you. Publishing commercially or for profit will need my permission.

Blessings in Jesus Name

Duane Klepel

Published January 1, 2001

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Oakdale, MN 55128

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Our responsibility: guard your heart, guard your family, guard your nation
Spiritual self defense SSD



-by-

A Love relationship with Jesus
Standing on and using God's word and
the Holy Spirit as a foundation.
Knowing our authority and having power
from following God's Word and the Holy Spirit.

Our strongest weapon:
God's love in us, flowing out to others

According to Hosea 4:6 God's people are destroyed for three reasons (paraphrase) My people are destroyed for:

1. lack of knowing my Word,
in such a way that it brings action,
2. by rejecting that word following instead the Enemy's ways,
resulting in self destruction
3. Forgetting God's Word.

Copy 20

Dedication

We want to dedicate this book about our Thailand Adventure to the seven (or more) godly, elderly, women whom God has put in our lives. These are women of God, women of prayer who prayed for me and my family continuously for 25 years or more. In the case of Joyce's mother and my mother they prayed before our birth I am sure.

Gladys Johnson now age 98, is still young at heart. We met her about 1971, just before our Israel Adventure. She is now living in Minneapolis so we can go there when we need someone to agree with in special prayers. These are powerful prayers to the pulling down of strongholds. Such was the case during this recent election of 2000.

Ruth England in her 90s now, from Rich Hill, MO. the Lord put in our life when we returned from Israel in 1974. This was in response to my prayer for prayer partners and a prayer meeting while we were living Joyce's folks there in Missouri. I met Clay England, Ruth's husband, who is now with the Lord. We formed a prayer group together with Ed and **Nora Lyons**. Ed is now with the Lord. Other people joined us. From there two years later, we were sent out and ended up on our Thailand adventure for 21 years. We still get together with these folks sometimes when we visit Joyce's folks in MO.

My mother **Esther** is 89 years old, here in Minnesota with us, together with my older sister Ardella who helps care for her. We also acknowledge **Joyce's godly parents** who pray for us and with whom we can still enjoy spending time together.

With special mention of my godly wife **Joyce**, who spent a lifetime of prayer for me, family and friends.

Our special dedication to **Ann Eng** of New York City, whom we saw last a few years ago on our return from Thailand, when we went through Bulgaria to New York City. At her and her families' request we stayed in her home. Ann was in the hospital for the last time. We met her first when we were newlyweds on my first teaching assignment at St John's School in College Point, NY (Queens borough). Later on our way to our first missionary trip to Israel and again on our return 2 years later we spent time with her and our friends there at St Johns. Later on our first furlough from the Thailand Adventure we visited and stayed in her home. From then on she felt led of the Lord to do something to help support missionaries like us. She established Lifelight Ministries and raised money from bake sales, food sales, and donations for missions. Wilhelms together with other friends, pastor and people in the congregation helped her with this. From this Ann sent needed monthly support, not only to us but to other missionaries also. Until the time of her departure she continued to produce inspired art work, this in spite of being declared legally blind. She wrote inspired encouragements to go with her art work and in letters she sent to us on the mission field. Her married daughters, Fay, Yvonne and Celeste have had a part with Ann. We look forward to spending time in eternity with these friends.

HILL TRIBES

Government policies seek social integration of about half a million Karen, Hmong, and other tribal groups scattered through rugged highlands.

GOLDEN TRIANGLE

To fight a deadly narcotics trade in Thailand, Burma, and Laos, Thai officials try to deter opium cultivation within their borders by substituting crops such as coffee and kidney beans.

0 KILOMETERS
0 STATUTE MILES

Mineral resources in red
Other products in blue
▲ Refugee camp

DRAWN BY ROBERT W. LARSON
EMPLOYEE OF THE GEOGRAPHIC
NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

BURMA

Andaman Sea

THAILAND

Vietnam
LAOS

WATER PROJECTS
To mitigate water shortages in the northeast, catchments divert runoff into small holding tanks.
Hydroelectric plants fail to meet demand, and power must be bought from Laos.

Danube Range

REFUGEES

Thailand has strained to accommodate 580,000 people seeking sanctuary from upheaval in Vietnam, Laos, and Kampuchea (Cambodia). Some 200,000 others displaced from Kampuchea crowd camps along the border.

KAMPUCHEA

Phnom Penh

Ho Chi Minh City
VIETNAM

NATURAL GAS
Asia's longest undersea gas pipeline has begun to tap an enormous offshore field in the Gulf of Thailand, which may eventually generate half of the nation's electricity.

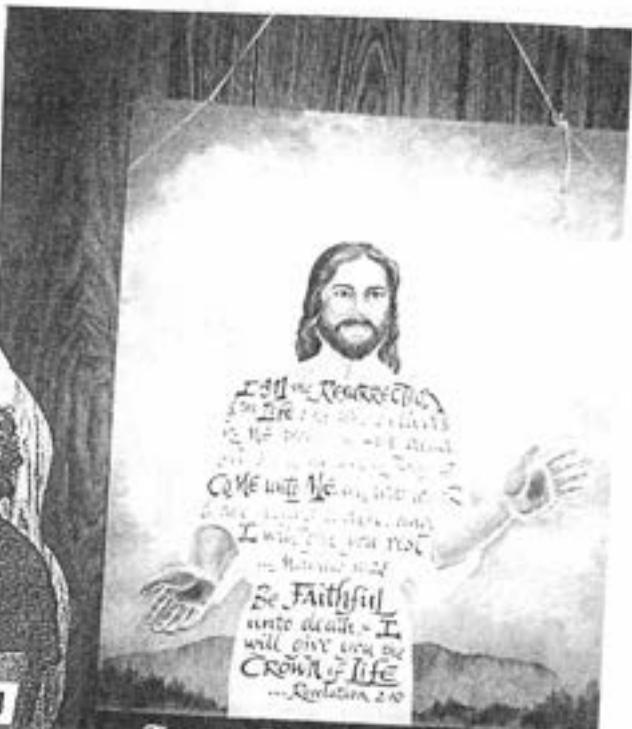
Gulf of Thailand

TOURISM

Second largest revenue source (after rice), tourism brings in a billion dollars a year. The southern peninsula draws 400,000 Malaysian visitors annually.

MALAYSIA





JESUS CHRIST, Son of GOD,
LORD and SAVIOR

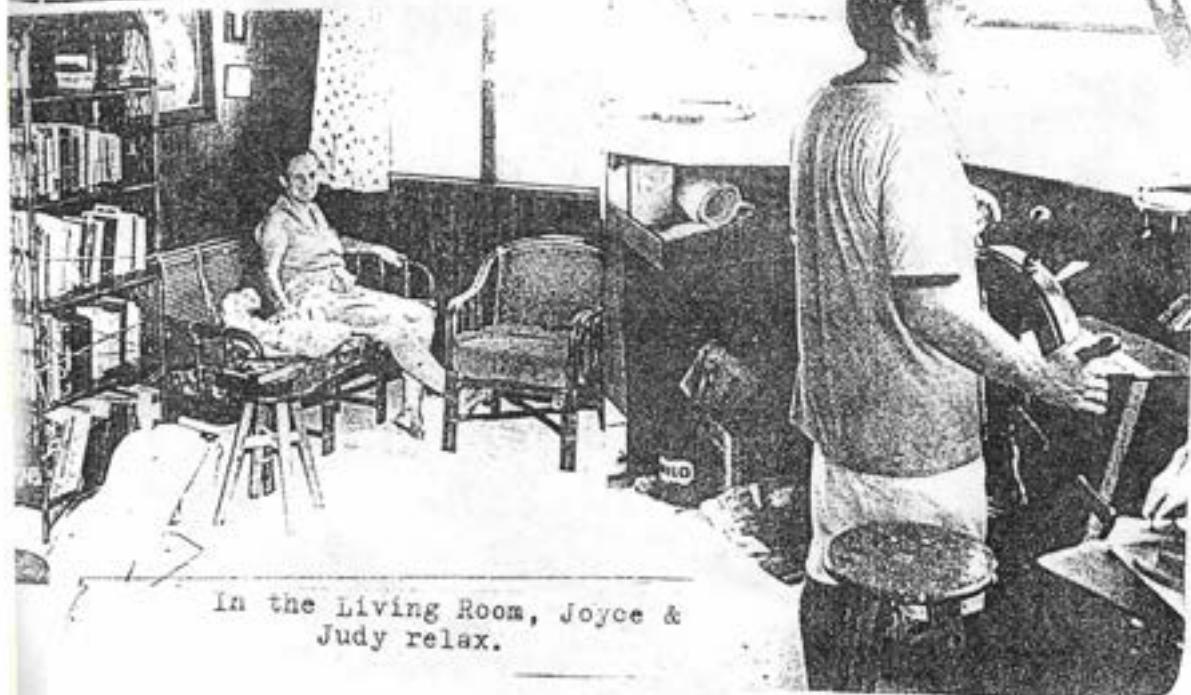




Mary holding an orphan,
She taught at the orphanage while still
in Thailand.



Bob at the chart table.



In the Living Room, Joyce &
Judy relax.

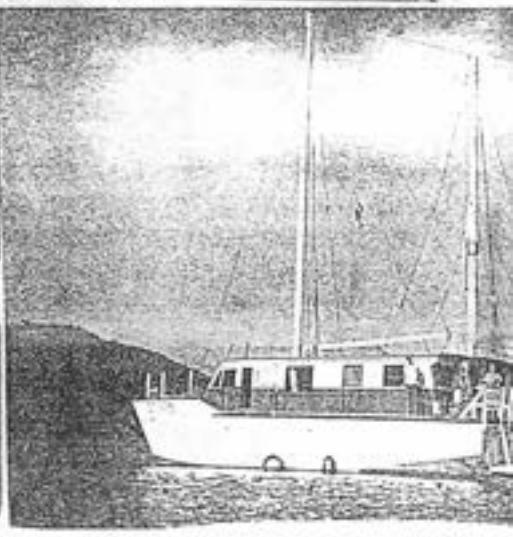


Dan & Yik



Judy at the helm

"I can handle it Lord"



Dan





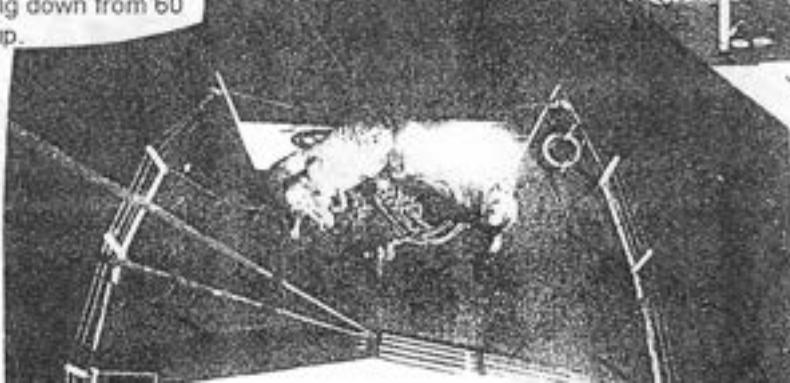
Henderson family and other
friends aboard



Bob's up the mast,

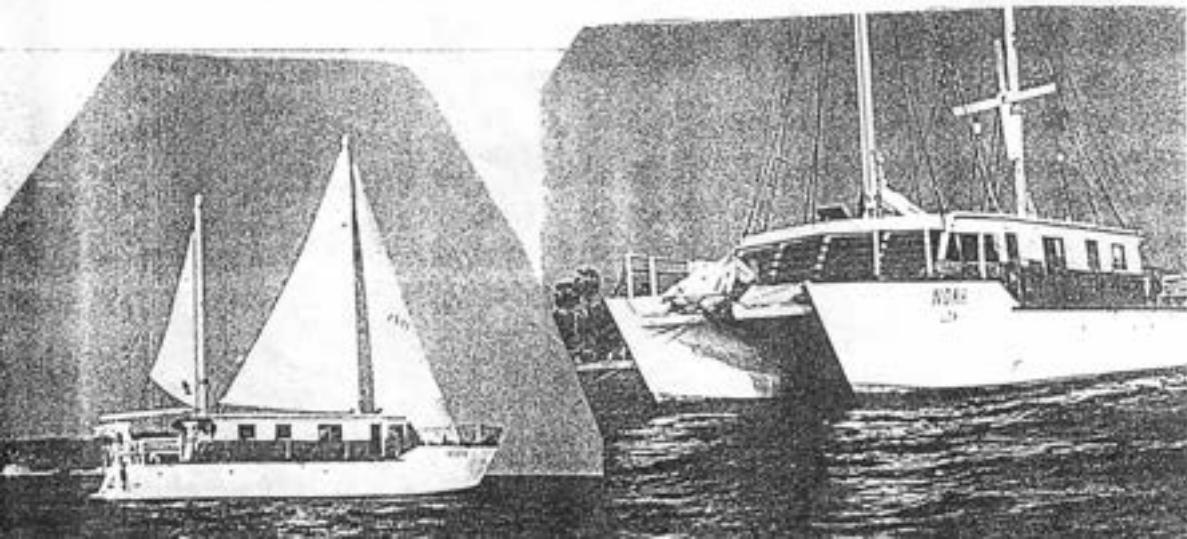
looking down from 60
feet up.

Joyce & Judy





Klepel Family
(Duane & Joyce)
Dan, Mary, Dawn, Bob
1979



THAILAND ADVENTURE

By Duane Klepel

Table of Contents

1. "There will be an interruption in your plans"
2. "Stay here and make a mission"
3. Teaching in the Temple
4. "I want you to build a boat like that"
5. Bamboo Trap
6. House on Poles
7. "Are all the animals in?"
8. Church Born in an Abortion Clinic
9. Babies from Heaven
10. "Are you sure the devil didn't tell you to build it?"
11. "What do you do with a foreign skeleton?"
12. Bad Luck
13. Pirates and storms
14. Boat's Name Change
15. Made in Thailand (Judy's birth)
16. An arranged marriage
17. Bible School Starts
18. Asleep in the Storm
19. "What About Your Children?"
20. Foster Children
21. Rejected
22. Troubled Years

- 23 Selling the Green Field
- 24 Gored by an Elephant
- 25 "Cut it Up!"
- 26 Bamboo Lamp
- 27 Joyce's Insert
- 28 Mountain Man
- 29 Abducted and Sold
- 30 Building in the mountains
- 31 Build it Again
- 32 A Son from Bulgaria
- 33 Reverse Culture Shock
- 34 Unconditional Love

Thailand ADVENTURE

WITH THE NOAH BOAT

by Duane Klepel

The real life adventures of an American family as a set of "unusual" circumstances brought them to Thailand. There they built their own "Noah boat" and stayed for 21 years, living and raising their family among the Thai people.

This is dedicated to the glory of God and to the encouragement of His people and would-be missionaries. And to those who may skeptically think "God isn't personal, or doesn't care about me."

1. Psalm 105:1 and 2 "Oh give thanks to the Lord call upon His name. Among the peoples..talk of all of his wondrous works."
2. Psalm 139:16 &17; Your eyes saw my substance being yet unformed, and in your book they all were written, the days fashioned for me, when as yet there were none of them.

Chapter One

"There will be an interruption in your plans"

"I want you to build a boat like that" was the thought that went through my mind as I was standing on the beach in Pattaya, Thailand. I was looking out at the bay full of Thai boats that looked to me somewhat like the Chinese junks I had seen in pictures. These were used for tour boats, and fishing boats. It was a very hot "winter" day early in 1978. The boat that especially struck my eye, anchored out in front of me was a Thai version of a catamaran twin hull design. Apparently they used it to transport tourists to the island six miles out. "Surely the devil is tempting me" I thought. "Missionaries don't build boats."

But the thought persisted and I realized that this was one of the things I never desired to build and the thought of being out in the sea like a bobbing cork frightened me. But so started a 20+ year Thailand adventure with the Noah Boat. A story which hasn't finished yet.

We arrived in Thailand January 1977. My wife Joyce, age 38 and me 39. We had our four teenagers with us; Mary age 16, Dawn 15, Dan 13 and Bob 12. Actually, we weren't planning to go to Thailand, we were on our way to Australia, where we would most likely continue our teaching careers and do free lance missionary work. Thailand wasn't even in our itinerary. We were to go from the USA and revisit Israel, on to India, Singapore and Sydney,

Australia. Southeast Asia was one of the last places I never wanted to go. In fact, way back in 1959 when I graduated from teacher's college in Seward, Nebraska they asked me what my preference for placement was. At first I said I would go anywhere. I felt that was the answer I was supposed to give. But they said "No, tell us your real preference."

To this I replied "I don't like big cities. I prefer a small rural setting in the Midwest where I grew up. If I go overseas, I would never want to go to southeast Asia." I guess I was thinking of masses of people, steaming jungle and the Vietnam conflict. My first teaching assignment was to be a teacher was to New York City. As it turned out It was a wonderful experience and we still feel part of their church family. Now here we were here with the same anointing and blessing in southeast Asia.

The decision to stay in Thailand came in response to a definite conclusion that it was the loving desire of Jesus for us. From my experiences and mistakes through the years, I knew that if Jesus wanted me to follow him here it would be good for all of us involved; my family, myself and others. It would not be easy, but the best for all of us. I even broke out crying after unscheduled problems en route here. There was such heat in Bombay, oppressing confusion, dirt and smells! Finally we got to our scheduled south India stop, to visit a small church and pastor's family there. I was appalled by the dark Hindu temples and oppression Christians were under, but admired them greatly for their stand for the Lord. Their pastor would walk bear footed for many miles as he preached at a few different village churches. Along the way ,insults would be hurled at him plus a few stones. During the church service stones would bang on the tin roof. The floors were dirt and we sat on woven mats on the floor. The walls were of mud brick and only two feet high, poles held up

the roof. They would sing pray, preach and worship the Lord with all there heart. Our friends had arranged for us to stay in a small hotel in Trivandrum. The Indian food and curries were extremely hot and burned our mouth and stomach, but such love was shown to us that it overwhelmed us. After 10 days there we tried to travel onward from India to Australia as our itinerary said. But due to airline strikes and political unrest we ended up routing through Sri Lanka and wanted to get onward to Sydney. But we were informed the only available way was through Bangkok. We would have to forget Singapore, we just wanted to get out of there. But things started happening at the airport, almost like the Lord was trying to tell us "Slow down and listen!"

At the airport in Sri Lanka we met two orange robed monks who were on their way to Europe. They had no shoes and apparently they hadn't been in Europe in January. Out of love for Jesus, we gave them our new pair of shoes. Although I didn't recognize it there was an anointing come on us for Asia. We arrived in Bangkok mid morning and I was all eyes to see the strange sights. Most of the airport workers were in military uniform, construction was going on and women wrapped from head to foot with cotton scarves, were carrying buckets of cement. It seemed no one spoke English. I thought "We'll only be here a few hours." We headed for the Quantas airlines counter to book an onward flight to Sydney. "Sorry, all flights are full" was the response. "But we will put you on stand by, a flight goes out at five p m this evening." So we waited there until five p m and sure enough they called our name and said there were six openings! Just the number for our family. "Praise the Lord" we said as we all struggled with 12 pieces of luggage, plus hand carry bags and two guitars. They tagged the bags for that flight and sent them down the conveyor belt.

Then the clerk began to process our tickets and asked for our passports. After a brief examination she looked up and said "Where's your visa for Australia?" I explained we didn't need a visa because in the USA we had checked with the Australian embassy and they said it was okay for American citizens to go in to Australia for 30 days and do other processing there. "No," she exclaimed "You need a visa. You can't go without a visa" It seemed the rules were different here in Asia. No amount of argument on my part could change her mind. "But" I explained "our baggage is already gone."

"Never mind" she said. "You can retrieve it." She called a Security Guard to go with us. Down the steps raced my two sons and I with Security Guard following us. Along the conveyor belt we ran until we reached our pieces of baggage. Grabbing them off the belt we began to transport them back to where they had been piled up all day. We asked the guard to watch them. Then we were returning to where Joyce and the girls were waiting. As I approached I saw Joyce talking to a young man. I felt Jesus was saying to me "Tell this man I will give him peace." I asked his name. "Peter" he replied. He was an electrical engineer from California and had been in Thailand for three years as a Buddhist monk. But I noticed he was now wearing regular clothing even if his hair was still very short. I asked Peter "Have you found peace?"

"No" he said "That's why I am at the airport now. I'm on my way to India to study under a guru."

"Peter, Jesus said to tell you He will give you peace." Then I shared stories of young people we had met who had done just what he was doing, but after all that they found Jesus and true peace. At the same time my mind was saying "What about us,

Lord?"

Peter said "You need to get a hotel, either the Atlanta or the Malaysia (found out later they are hotels young folks and hippies gathered at.) Yes, the Atlanta. I'll call and get a reservation for you. I'll get a taxi for you." He seemed to be able to speak Thai well. While he was doing that we turned to get our stack of baggage. Gone!! all gone? I asked the guard standing there "Where do our suitcases go?" Ether he didn't understand my English or else he had no idea either where it had all gone. From his gestures I assumed he didn't know.

I rushed over to Lost and Found Department and found nothing there. But I felt the Lord speaking to me assuring me "Don't worry about your bags. I'm taking care of them for you."

Already Peter had the taxi waiting. It was a small Datsun and that was a challenge to get all 6 of us together with the guitars and hand carry bags stuffed into it. We had no choice but to believe the Lord and go on in faith that he was indeed taking care of things. When Peter closed the taxi door he said with deep conviction "I see you have found peace." I didn't know we were displaying great amounts of peace, but I guess amidst the uncertainty and change, what he saw was Jesus' peace in us.

Off we roared out of the airport, into the dusty, dirty oncoming traffic seemingly without lanes on the highway. It led noisily to the heart of Bangkok. The heat was oppressive. The noise and weaving in and out of traffic caused us to blink with awe. Finally after going this way and that we turned into a small soi (street). On the corner was a sign "Calvary Baptist Church, end of this lane." Ahead we could see a cross at the end of the street, what a welcome sign! "Lord, you are in control" we thought. The taxi pulled up and stopped in front of a small, three story, ill repaired hotel. It was

adjacent to the church property. Someone was in front of the church and he waved to us. We were so tired we just checked into the simple, single room and sprawled out to sleep.

The next day we got up to face all of the new sights, sounds and smells. Sure enough, right next door was the church. We went to the church and met the America pastor. . It seemed this church was part of the headquarters of the Southern Baptist, they had been doing a lot of missionary work before and during the Vietnam war. Many of the foreign workers, military people stationed here, expatriates and Embassy workers attended this church. The Baptist also had several Thai churches in Bangkok and throughout Thailand. Their missionaries worked in these churches. I explained we were en route to Australia but got stuck here a few days till we got our visas straightened out. He welcomed us to join them and much later we met the missionary who waved at us when we first arrived at our hotel. Was it the Lord saying "Welcome home?" I didn't care to even think that thought.

Although in our hand carry bags we had all the clothes we needed for this hot sticky climate, we thought of our missing suitcases. They contained all sorts of winter clothes, including snow boots. Using the church phone we contacted Quantas airlines. "Oh, we are so sorry" they said "Your bags were sent to Sydney. We'll return them on the next flight." I suppose since they were tagged for that flight the Lord had someone(an angel?) notice it and had someone grab the bags and put them on that flight. Now they were apologizing and told us when they'd arrive. The church offered their driver and van, I rode along. Our total luggage was received with apologies and no custom problems. "Wow, Lord" I thought "You sure were taking care of them. We couldn't have handled all that stuff till now."

The next day I went to the Australian Embassy, for what should have been a routine visa procedure. They turned me down! I couldn't believe it. "No, you can't go to Australia."

"What's happening, Lord" I was thinking as I returned to the hotel. We were on the 14 day transit visa and it was non renewable in the country. Yet over the next few days we kept getting encouragement from people we met and the Baptist people saying "Stay here and do missionary work." Jack and Gladys Martin, missionaries during the Vietnam conflict, befriended us. "Help us at the student center" they suggested. "There are students from the universities who come to study English and love to talk to Americans, especially young people. You'll get a chance to share Jesus with them." We accepted although I was still thinking in terms of one or two weeks, and found that teaching was very rewarding and the students loved us.

Then we began to travel around Bangkok, it was a novelty and challenge to jump onto public buses which barely stop to pick you up. We'd hang on to straps overhead, standing in the bus while he drove very fast and wild, weaving through traffic. We'd jump off while the driver gunned the engine and started off again. People were packed thickly everywhere on the bus and on the sidewalks. Hastily set up selling booths blocked the sidewalk, offering all sorts of food, clothing and trinkets . Because of the jammed sidewalks often you were forced into the street to get through. When you could use the sidewalk you had to watch your step carefully since open drain holes, and protruding concrete blocks were in unexpected places. Awnings and poles were hung low threatening to hit you in the eye. This forced us to really be in contact with the people, being pressed almost eye ball to eye ball in the highly populated city of Bangkok.

"We'll only be here a few days. Might as well make the best of it and hand out the most tracts I can." I had to do something about the visa deadline fast approaching. I purchased return tickets to the USA. "Just made a mistake" I thought. Even as I did this, I felt the Lord's gentle calling "Would you please stay here?" I also thought back to when we were leaving our hometown in Rich Hill, Missouri we were stopped by an elderly friend, Ruth. She said "The Lord spoke to me last night and told me to tell you that you'll get to Australia sometime but not now. There will be an interruption in your plans."

Chapter two

"Stay Here and Make a Mission"

Until now I hadn't seriously considered that word. "Stay here, Lord? What would I do?" The answer was "Same thing you did in the USA; teach , build, share Jesus. There aren't many Christians here. Live your life here, they need to see with their eyes, a Christian family."

"How will I get money, Lord?"

Answer: "Live your life here and I will pay you. When you go out you won't go out empty. You'll have the best of the land."

A few days later a complete stranger, a man from Singapore, walked up to me on a Bangkok street, pulled out his wallet and handed me some money saying as he walked off "Jesus said to give this to you."

"Yes, Lord" I thought.

"I guess you can pay us."

Another question I asked the Lord "What about the children's education and their safety?" There were all four of them in their teen years.

The Scripture He impressed on my mind was "No evil shall befall you, nor any plague come near your dwelling." Psalm 91.

Throughout the years that followed that Scripture gave us parents a rock to stand on. For example, when our teen daughters didn't return on time from teaching at the orphanage it got dark. The devil gave us the worst suggestions. We had that word to stand on and say "NO EVIL SHALL BEFALL YOU!"

"Hi, Dad, sorry I'm late. Lots of work to do and had a hard time getting buses home this late." I said "Thank you, Jesus" No evil has befallen us the last 20 years, it's still true.

The question of our children's education...the Lord knew we already had the answer to that. Both my wife and I are trained teachers. My level was junior high and high school, the ages our children were. We always felt strongly about family staying together and children not being sent away from family to school at a young age. Although the word "home school" hadn't yet been coined, we did just that, taught the family at home. Another scripture that kept coming to me was "all your children shall be taught by the Lord and great shall be the peace of your children" Isaiah 54:13 Our family walking down the street warmed the hearts of Thai people and they'd wave or say "Hey, you!"

Entering a shop to buy things clerks loved to try and talk to us. The Thai language was used almost 100% of the time, but shortly our teens picked up just of the normal questions the Thais asked

and learn a reply.

The Lord had answered our questions and reservations and we knew he was asking us to stay in Thailand. Joyce and the children agreed. We canceled those hastily purchased tickets back home and booked train tickets to Penang, Malaysia. This was easiest and cheapest way to meet the Thai requirements necessary to get a three month visa. I still was telling myself "That's probably long enough" and that we were still en route to Australia.

God's anointing and grace was evident, an exciting challenge, even though I felt that old reluctant "stay home" attitude at times. The train to Malaysia rattled on a day and night through southern Thailand, stopping in several small villages to pick up and let off passengers. Through large open windows sellers would poke their merchandise of grilled chicken on sticks, pastries, vegetables and things I didn't recognize. At once point, after day and night travel, the train stopped in a small town and we were herded out of the train into lines which led to the desks of uniformed officials. Some of the uniforms were different than the Thai uniforms. This was the border checkpoint, and we were now entering Malaysia. From fellow travelers we had been warned to make sure that they put all of the necessary endorsements in the passport. They would stamp you "out" of Thailand and "in" to Malaysia. Sometimes they tricked you, we were warned, then the officials upon the return trip, use that lack of proper stamps and signatures to try to get a bribe from you. Besides the heat, there was a lot of tension of the unknown. Finally we boarded the train again and after some hours came to our final destination of Butterworth. These English names reflected British occupation during World War II. We asked the fellow traveler what the next step was. You board the ferry which takes you to Penang, a large island, there you will go to the Thai embassy to get your 3 month

tourist visa to Thailand, by applying for it the first day you arrived and then the next day you could pick up the finished visa

Upon arriving in Penang we noticed a very clean city which had large drainage curbs

along the well paved streets. We felt we couldn't afford a large, expensive tourist hotel, but in their shadows were many guest homes, Chinese in style. We located a reasonable one, with a large room and bathroom down the hall. The next day we took the bus to the Thai Embassy and applied for a visa. The bus even had a automatic token machine and every one got to sit down in a seat, a great contrast to Bangkok. A day later we picked up that visa and now we needed to retrace our steps back to Bangkok.

Upon arriving back we settled back in our routine of helping at the Student Center and we felt a little more secure. We rented a simple apartment nearby with two rooms, a bedroom and kitchen-living room. Our meals were mostly fried rice (Cow Paht) and simple foods purchased at the numerous sidewalk food stalls for only 40 or 50 cents each (10 baht). Bread was available some places in Bangkok and we'd buy it when we saw it, "ca nome bun" they called it, inferring it was something like cake. Riding a bus or walking was the only way we got around but it was good preparation for us to relate to the average Thai person.

One bus trip to the heart of Bangkok, Chinatown, was to buy some kitchen equipment and dishes. A large percentage of people and businesses in Bangkok are Chinese. They speak Chinese. We stopped at a shop with lots of plastic ware. "Cereal bowls, that's what I need" I thought. But we didn't see any cereal bowls. What I didn't realize was that they don't eat cereal for breakfast, it wasn't even available. Finally we sighted some plastic bowls, just a bit large but they would do. We bought them, and other items, for the

kitchen. Later I noticed that our guests would look at us a bit perplexed when we offered them food in these bowls. Now we can look back and laugh at ourselves realizing these are the bowls they use to dip water out of the tank to bathe and dip water for flushing the toilet.

We began to live in and learn Thai culture, what a shock! Everything seemed so different! Hot steamy nights, it never did cool much and probably got down to 90 or 85 degrees, and the days were hotter, combined with noise and pollution. There were lots of unusual smells and we couldn't understand a word the people were saying. Even the traffic was reversed, driving on the opposite side of the road than we were used to. Little 90 cc. motorcycles without mufflers, were buzzing everywhere. Weaving in and out of the traffic, and occasionally resorting to the sidewalks made danger. We knew even walking or crossing a street was hazardous and decided to look in every direction except up when we crossed a street. We tried to make this a habit so we wouldn't be looking the wrong way and get run down. Besides that there were a good number motorcycles and some cars which didn't seem to care which side of the street they were on. There were numerous taxis without meters and they were always stopping to offer to take us somewhere. When we did want to go we would have to try and bargain first, or you would get ripped off, we were warned. Of course trying to bargain while speaking a language you didn't know was difficult, especially because you couldn't explain where you wanted to go. I tried drawing a map once and that didn't work. Then I had a map of the city and tried to show them where I was going but it seemed the taxi drivers never had the concept of maps and many had never learned to read. Then there were the noisy, single cylinder tri-wheel taxis with the driver up front in a single chair in back of the front wheel and handlebars. The backseat for

passengers was located over the back wheels. A cloth roof stretched over the rig. This was a Bangkok sahmlor (three wheeler). They were affectionately called "tut tutts." I guess that was because of the popping sound of the single cylinder engine. Riding them was cheaper than a regular taxi and they could squeeze in and out of traffic better. There were also some of the "human power" rickshaws, however most of these had the same 3 wheel format with peddler up front and a double seat in back. Now that I had some understanding that the Lord wanted us to stay for a longer time I really got busy trying to hand out as many tracts as possible and trying to save every drug addict I met in the hotel where we first stayed. After some real bad experiences and being exhausted from all my self effort I was at the end of myself. Then it was as if the Lord was up there looking down on my beat up soul and saying "are you dead yet? Good! now we can get started".

But the Lord's grace covered it all and gave us a inner peace and joy. Three months later we had to make a second trip out to Penang and still no prospects of going to Australia. Sleeping each night with four teens in the living room, parents in the bedroom was becoming tiresome. We were somewhat prepared the year before coming because we had slept in friends' houses and traveled before ending up in Thailand. After a few months we were given a bike and I decided to ride it to get used to traffic being on the opposite side of the road. I even started riding it across Bangkok to teach English. Next to our apartment, in a small apartment, lived an American woman with two small children. She married a Thai man, Tony, and she was glad to have Americans to talk with her. Her husband was often not home. She related her deep distress and marriage problems. Her husband had met her while he was temporarily in the USA and they got married. He brought her to Thailand. In the years following family pressure and Tony's free night life style made her miserable. It seemed he wanted her to

return to the USA, which she and her two children later did, with her dad's help. Tony offered to help us get a job or visa, none of which he was able to do. He finally asked us to remodel and repaint a small shirt shop he was opening in Siam Square.

Now the Lord had told us to trust Him for money, but my faith was still short. I thought doing that job would be okay so Dan, Bob and I, worked a week on that. The shop sign advertised a famous French brand of shirts, Tony proudly showed us the shirts and labels which read "Made in France." thought as he explained to us they were made in Thailand. I had some second thoughts about this association with Tony , and trusting a man instead of God to provide. We hadn't agreed on a price for the labor and I realized pay in Thailand was lower than in the USA but I didn't know how much lower. (The average worker at that time earned \$4 per day.) One day when the job was almost finished he took us out to lunch and gave us a 500 baht bill(in USA that was \$25). "That's a purple bill you know" he said as he gave it to us. I thought he was giving us our lunch money, and thanked him. Right then I made the decision not to take the money for this job for my conscience sake and afraid of government as well for the threat they made of punishing people who worked without a work permit.

As I wrestled with these thoughts I heard the Lord ask "How much do you think the job was worth?" Thinking that the wages are lower than in the USA I calculated for the three of us the wages would have been about \$200. But I didn't tell anyone, even Joyce, about my thoughts. The next Sunday after church pastor handed me an envelope. "Someone gave me this to give to you" he said. Opening it we found it was \$200 cash. "Lord," I said "You really can pay us."

Still it was hard to trust for this miraculous income. A few times I

would take on English teaching jobs for pay but soon quit them because my conscience and God's promise wouldn't allow it.

Then the desire came to drive a car. I didn't realize the value of even junk cars in Thailand, which was about \$1,000. I thought maybe I could pick one up for \$200 and the boys would help me fix it up. Just before leaving the USA we had sold our station wagon at an auction for \$200 but the check bounced. Now in Thailand we recently had our first visitor, an American friend, Clay. He was traveling through on an evangelistic trip and stayed only a few days. Before leaving he handed us \$200 and said "The Lord told me to give you this." Well, thank you Lord Jesus."

On our frequent trips to the Student Center, as volunteer English teachers, the bus we rode passed one corner where we noticed an old VW van sitting. It looked like it had been there a long time, dirty and neglected. We decided to check who owned it, and discovered a policeman now owned it. He took it as part payment for a debt. Yes, he would sell it for only \$200! Beyond the deteriorated condition of the van there was the problem of no title and no license plates. But we agreed to buy it.

From time to time we'd go with missionary Jack Martin on the prison visits he regularly made to Bangkok's largest prison. Once we were there standing just outside the prison bars in the visiting hall talking to the prisoner on the inside. After a time a man standing beside us (he'd also been visiting with a prisoner client) turned to us and he seemed moved by the compassion of Jesus love which he saw coming from us. He introduced himself and said he was a lawyer and gave us a card. He was our new friend and offered his services if we needed him. When the car deal came up I thought of him and gave him a call. "Could you help me do a car transfer?" I asked.

After asking me some questions about the owner and the car he said "Oh, I think you have just been taken. You lost your money. Police often do deals like this." But I replied The Lord Jesus provided the money and said "The car would serve Him well". So the lawyer agreed to check it out. Not long after I got a call. "I can't believe it" he said. "It's all on the level. Your deal is okay. I have your title and plates. Your God must have helped you." He never charged me for his services. Later he called me to his home and I met his family. Their little boy was sick and I prayed for him before leaving. The next morning we received a call "My boy is better your God is able."

The sad looking van was towed home and we went to work on it. Rust, broken doors, transmission slipped out of gear and a motor that needed work. It seemed even the nuts and bolts were worn out! But later it stood there repaired and ready for us to try. It even looked presentable with its new paint job.

By that time we had moved out of the small apartment into a two story home, on a small street not far from the church. This was a special answer to our prayers for a home. It happened one Sunday after church as an elderly Chinese widow introduced herself to us. She was not a member of that church, but she had come special that day because she felt the Lord would have her meet a foreign family who needed a home. We were overjoyed and praised the Lord who knew our needs. Her price was only about \$100 per month. Mrs. Sutsuwah, the owner, was an amazing lady.

She had come to know the Lord as a student in one of the Christian boarding schools begun by the early Presbyterians in Thailand. By the time of the Japanese occupation of Thailand she

was a young woman running her own Christian school. Government pressure came to close Christian schools. She refused and got away with it, while other Christian classmates under the same pressure reneged, she stood firm.

The compound where the home was located was near the end of a long, narrow lane. Inside the walls amidst beautiful flowering trees, stood three homes, the larger of which she lived in. The other two were built for her children. Since they were married and had business and life in other parts of Bangkok, they decided not to live there. She decided to rent out one of the houses. Her heart's desire and prayer was to rent it to a missionary family.

As an educator she was also in the process of writing a curriculum and book on teaching Thai to foreigners. She was glad to put her theories and practice on us. Amidst her busy school, social and business schedule she systematically taught us. This arrangement was great except for the fact that Joyce and I studied with our four teens who quickly out paced us and left us in the dust. They quickly learned basic Thai, speaking, reading and writing. We often asked the kids "What did they say?" and they'd be our translators.

Mrs. Sutsiwah's house and ours faced each other. We often observed activities of her faithful workers. One drove her car and one worker was her middle aged maid. The young driver kept the car washed and polished ready to go. The maid went about her home duties cheerfully waiting hand and foot (literally) on her mistress. We saw her manicuring fingernails and toenails and wash the hair of her mistress. The maid would sweep the yard each morning. Beautiful large fragrant flowers fell from the white Frangipanni Tree, along with a few twigs and leaves. The maid also prepared the food. "Chop, chop, chop" we'd hear to knife on

wooden cutting board as she cut up the meat and vegetables into small pieces.

One morning while I was sitting trying to do my Thai homework and puzzling over the strange language, I heard the maid doing her routine duties. "Sweep, sweep, sweep" and then into the house for "chop, chop, chop." But the chopping stopped suddenly as she ran out the door, over to the gate and just in time she swung it open and her mistress' car drove in. Though I never heard it, she apparently heard the car's horn beep when it drove along the long lane approaching the gate. What a picture of the faithful servant Jesus taught about. Actively serving her mistress and doing her duties faithfully she kept her ear tuned and could quickly respond to the mistress' return. May I also be living my life this way and be ready! I thought of Jesus parables that emphasized we are to be faithful stewards, working diligently yet always watching for his return. Luke 12:22-48

Living in big cities always makes me feel closed in and uncomfortable. But God's grace was sufficient in crowded Bangkok. "Why don't you take a break and go to our camp on the sea at Pattaya" a Baptist missionary said. We saw green trees, grass, rice fields, open spaces....it seemed like dream to be in the country. We hung onto the seats of the bus speeding out of Bangkok. The white sands of the beach and waving palm trees with sea breeze blowing on small cabins seemed like a bit of heaven. When we returned to Bangkok Mr Hill, leader of Southern Baptist mission, suggested we see Mr Acharn Charan who is the head of the Evangelical Fellowship of Thailand. We came to this smiling, sincere, humble man of God and he said "Why don't you stay here and make a mission?"

"A mission? We are just a family, we don't plan to stay long. But

then I realized again it was the Lord opening the door and asking us to stay in Thailand. Later on the arranged day Acharn Charan personally took me to the Thai Buddhist Religious Department and spoke to the leaders. We spent most of that day arranging the legalities to become a mission. I had to choose a name for the mission. Thailand National Institute for Christ . (In the Thai language that is literally : Christ for Thailand.) was what I chose. My desire was to see a school begun to train nationals in Christian fundamentals similar to Christ for the Nations in Dallas, Texas. I respected that school deeply for the thousands who went forth from there, having their lives enriched and prepared for what God had for their life. We appreciated the strong missionary emphasis.

After the second visa trip out of the country, to Penang, Malaysia, we got our missionary visa, renewable yearly. We no longer had to leave the country for visa. Our family was involved at the Student Center teaching English, learning Thai and trying to share Jesus with those we met. Since we had the VW van fixed we made a second trip to the church camp in Pattaya. Keeping the old van running was a challenge but we learned a lot after a few breakdowns. While relaxing at camp we met a missionary who said he'd been here 12 years already. "Twelve years" I thought. "Is the Lord wanting me to think of longer term here?" I was till telling people we weren't staying here very long. "Learn the language and live by faith" he admonished me.

Chapter 3 teaching in the temple

During the brief stay at camp the Lord seemed to encourage me to work here in the Pattaya coastal area. Later back in Bangkok two things happened. First, the missionary in charge of one mission said to me "Pattaya, have you ever considered Pattaya? We have two small churches there started by the GIs during Vietnam conflict and they need a missionary." I didn't respond much but the words went deep into my heart. About the same time after church one Sunday, an expatriate said to me "There's a Buddhist college near Pattaya that asked me to come teach English, but I can't go. My wife and family are here in Bangkok. Could you do it?"

I assured him we'd think and pray about it. Putting these thoughts together we decided to check this out. We needed a place to live. We thought of the miracle in finding the house we'd lived in for nearly a year. "Lord, if you want us to work in Pattaya would you please again give us a house to live in?" we prayed. We arrived in Pattaya Sunday in time for the church service, at the pastor's rented house. It was located just off the Beach Road on a lane just one block long. At the end of the lane the mission had already purchased a lot and the church foundation was just being laid. We were warmly greeted and after the service a young woman came to us. In a brief conversation again a miracle happened. She said "My mother and I own a compound with three homes, right next to the church site. I have been praying for a missionary family to rent it.

She lived in Bangkok and helped her mother (who wasn't a

Christian) with the family business of selling Belgium Crystal Glassware. They wanted someone to rent their empty home in Pattaya. She had come especially to that Pattaya church with this thought in her mind.

We looked at the house, the largest of the three in the compound and it was \$100 rent monthly. The only disadvantage we saw was right under the bedroom window roared motorcycles, busses, truck and cars on the Pattaya back road. We told her we'd pray and let her know. We needed to get out to the Buddhist college five miles from there, for an interview as English teachers. Arriving on campus we noted the temples and classroom building. We were warmly welcomed by an elderly, white bearded man. First he took us to see a special hill tribe folk drama that was in progress on the lawn in front of one classroom building. The king sent this hill tribe drama group around Thailand's villages, schools and temples to promote good feeling and acceptance of the border hill tribe people by the Thai people.

They wore colorful native costumes. Their dramatic dance told stories of things from their culture, hunting, fishing, family life. During the performance I looked up at the row of classrooms in the building behind them. I felt like Jesus himself was standing there and saying "I want you to come here and teach." After the program ended we followed this kind elderly, man to his hut on campus. He had books and more stacks of books on the desk. The hot, salty sea air that came from the seacoast, filtering through the lattice type walls came past those tall stacks of books. His white haired wife warmly greeted us and served us glasses of water. When we sat and talked he invited us to come teach English to the monks. He invited our whole family.

"Yes, we are teachers" I said. "We'll volunteer our teaching, but we

are also missionaries and we like to teach about Jesus."

"Good" was his warm reply. "Good, come and teach us about Jesus in English" said Mr Manas. The doors opened wide and we knew this is where we belonged. We moved to Pattaya and became good friends of elderly Mr Manas.

Later we found out why he was so open to Christians. He told us of a near death experience in which he found himself going down and down into darkness toward hell. In that desperate situation he turned to Jesus by saying what he knew, part of the Lord's prayer. Upon doing that he began to arise to lighter and lighter realms and recovered to good health. We had many wonderful talks with this man. he assured us the head monk in charge of college also appreciated Americans and Christians. The whole family taught a regular schedule of separate classes to the orange robed monk, students who were mostly in their twenties. We taught Bible stories in English and other conversational English. As they studied the Holy Spirit would work with the word and several received the Lord and left the monk hood, one is even now a pastor. What a blessing to be part of what God had done, only He could do that! The time we spent with monks led to friendship and gave us opportunity to ask questions about their life and religion.

One of the older monks of a high rank was named Pra Maha Soontorn (Pra means Lord or teacher Pra Maha is even higher ranking). He had an intense interest in English and could speak it pretty well. I asked "How long have you been a monk?"

He replied "Fourteen years."

"Have you read all of Buddaha's writings?" I asked

"I believe so" he replied.

"Did he ever claim to be God?" I asked.

"No" was his simple, honest reply.

"Did he ask you to pray to him?" I pushed on.

"No" he answered.

"Did he ask you to make images of him?" I continued.

"No, he was against images" the monk replied.

On different occasions we watched while monks chipped away at stone to make an image, or we watched them melt down donated brass pots and pans to melt and pour into waiting clay and brick image molds. During the time of casting the image a special ceremony was conducted. Strings were strung out of the mold and circled the surrounding area in four directions. Prayers and chants were said inviting various spirits by name to come into the image. People generally respected and feared the image. This fear was shown by the numerous shrines and spirit houses (the size of a large bird house on a pedestal) that adorned almost every temple, school, government office or business. Each home also had its own little spirit house in the he corner of the property. Each shop had a spirit shelf. Rich homes devoted a whole room to images and religious things.

People feared these spirits as dangerous and powerful,hoped they could manipulate them to advantage for better "luck in their life." Many hoped they would help give the winning lottery number. At that time the Bangkok Post newspaper ran an article

"Every Thai Home Has a Guardian Angel." It talked about spirit houses and spirits involved. The people would faithfully put daily offerings of fruit, rice and incense into the spirit house. They would say a brief prayer to the spirits. The article described how one spirit looked. It said there appeared to be a person's head cut off, with entrails dragging out and would come to kill children. Another spirit would sit on your chest and rob you of breath. We thought "With guardian angels like that who needs enemies?"

Parents often threaten their naughty children saying "If you don't behave the Pei (spirit) will get you." This isn't part of the Buddhist religion but rather comes from old, anamistic beliefs. It's been combined to make their own unique form of Thai Buddhism. It gave us opportunity to hold out the hope and help Jesus is. He gives the power over evil spirits and to cast them out in His name (Luke 10:19). We had experience in this and found it very useful in our lives and in others' lives. Joyful and busy days were ours, with a schedule of helping the local church, teaching monks and meeting tourists and making new Thai friends.

Pattaya was one of the R and R ports for the US Navy of the fifth Fleet. Their ships would anchor offshore and several times it included the Midway Aircraft Carrier. Hundreds of sailors flooded the beach, many ended up in the bar and doing wrong things. We tried to contact ships ahead of time and have the chaplain put up an invitation for the Pattaya church and our house. One young sailor upon visiting our home just wanted to "sit on a chair and look out the window." You can't do this on a ship! Many were still teens, one of them named Richard, clung to us and soaked up home life and Jesus love we offered. He opened his heart for counsel and encouragement and became a lifelong friend. He has gone on to serve the Lord and is one of our supporters

The Midway Aircraft carrier had a very active group of Christians, with regular fellowships and worship meetings. Several times we were invited to go out and visit the ship. On one occasion when we went out in a little Thai fishing boat the water was very choppy. The waves threw us in all directions. But as we approached the carrier, it seemed just to sit there like an island, solid and not moving at all. Boarding ladder was extended down near the water, with a small platform. But getting on was very dangerous

because first you were going up fast in the Thai boat, past the platform, then just as fast went down.

The trick was to jump off at just the right moment. Sometimes my life would feel like that small boat, tossed about one moment up and the next moment down. How could I become like the big ship, unmoved by the same waters? I was reminded that it has much more mass and sinks much deeper into the water. So I knew if I wanted my life to be stable through tests and trials I needed to go deep in my relationship with Jesus and His Word.

Once in the lobby of a Pattaya hotel we were posting invitations to the English worship service at Pattaya church and we overheard a woman speaking Hebrew. A few years before we had lived in Israel. We wanted to meet this person. Our daughter Dawn spoke the best Hebrew and she began a conversation with the Israeli lady. Her family came to Thailand because of her husband's temporary work on a contract with the Thai government. They'd been here for some time and couldn't find a home to rent. "Oh, we'll pray to Jesus and He'll help you find a home" I said spontaneously. By that time her husband joined us and they graciously agreed to our prayer. The next day we got an excited call from them. "After you prayed we found a lovely home right away, and its close to yours." We were friends and were able to share the good news with them. It turned out he was an Israeli military officer and in his unit had one of the few Israeli believers. He was very impressed by that believer's life. We even knew the family of that believer he admired. Praise the Lord!

After a time of silence he looked at me and said "Yes, that's it! I don't have many gifts from the Lord, but I have money. I'm going to give you money to build that boat. He did that over the next few months, a \$1,000 at a time. A total of \$5,000 was deposited in our US bank. Arriving by mail were preaching and teaching tapes from leaders in the Holy Spirit and Faith Movement, he was the one who sent them. Praise the Lord for His wonderful works, surely the Spirit fell on the man that day. I'm sure his son was praying for him. In a letter from him I saw a picture of his sailboat and a letter telling of some plans and their hopes for possible mission trips and work in retirement using their boat.

Now there were no more excuses, miraculous wonderful confirmations began happening..both big and small. Naturally we wanted to build the boat close to the place where we lived and it should be near the sea where we could push it in easily when finished. Inquiring about boatyards and lumber I checked out several places. I talked to many people. Often these conversations led to opportunities to share the gospel. The best lumber they inform me, comes from the Thai Lim Boat and Lumber yard in Chonburi. But he is expensive and hard to deal with. Now Chonburi was

20 miles north of us, towards Bangkok. I needed to check it out. The evaluation of Mr Thai Lim seemed right. He was a Chinese-Thai businessman and he quoted prices that made me think he was seeing dollarsigns in his eyes when he saw Americans and foreigners. I thanked him and left.

"That's out of the question" I thought when I drove away. But after some weeks of checking out more places and prices I felt the Lord saying to me "Go back to Mr Thai Lim." My mind didn't like that idea. I felt the gentle pull of the Lord and obeyed. After a brief conversation Mr Thai Lim said "I've never seen a boat like that. I

want you to build it here. I will give you a free spot to build it and even make a new shed over it for you. You can use my heavy tools, jacks, clamps etc. when you need.

I knew now the prices he was quoting were wholesale and cheaper than any others I'd heard about. He had changed. I knew only God could do that. So we agreed to buy and build here. "But 20 miles away, how inconvenient" I thought. Later, I realized the wisdom of the Lord and stood amazed at His way. Along those 20 miles people traveled from all the coastal villages on their way to Bangkok. It was the only highway along the east coast and extended all the way from 'Cambodia (south) along to Rayong, turning north hourly from Bangkok along the 200 miles coastal highway. How else could we have met people from all those villages but by simply riding the bus those 20 miles. We did meet them and the people were fascinated by these foreigners (farangs) my sons and I, getting on the bus with work tools. They were happy to receive our tracts and witness.

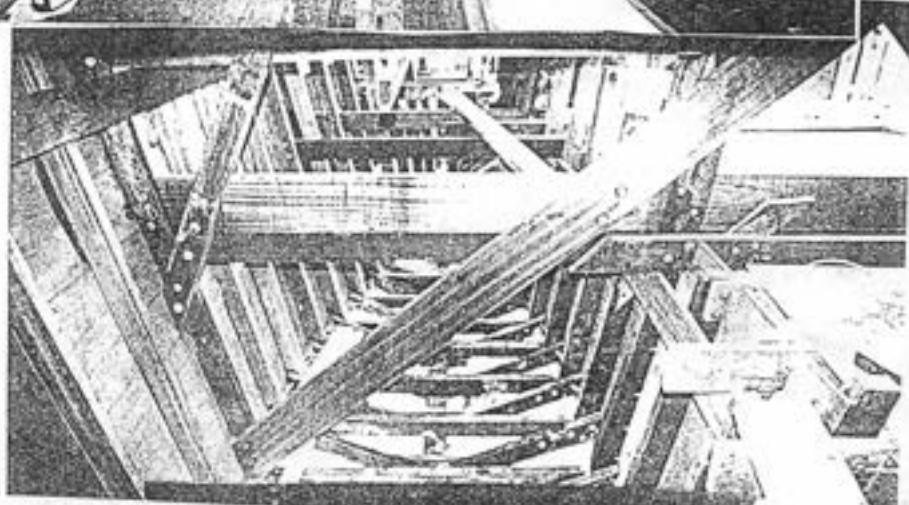
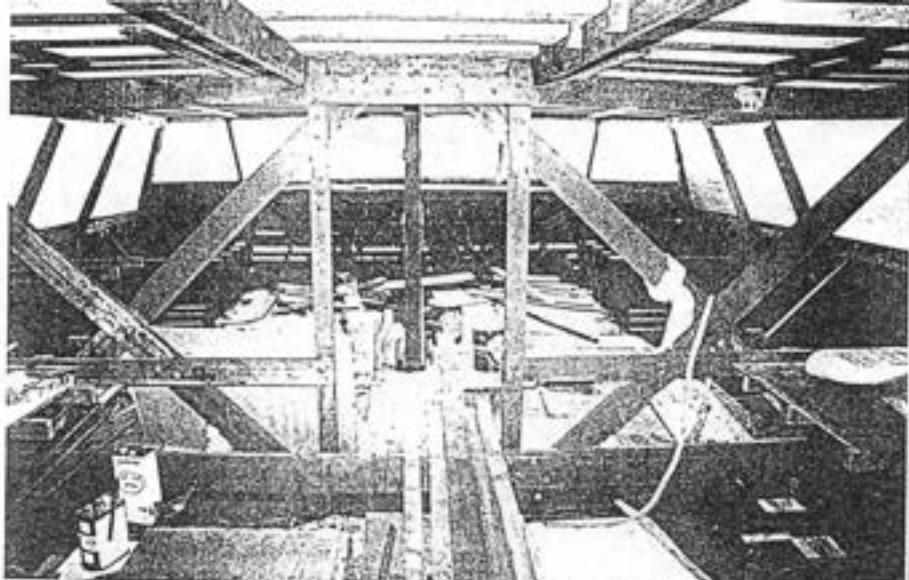
Most of that 200 mile highway was narrow with only two lanes and broken shoulders because of heavy trucks and busses. Traffic would speed along in both directions and dust would fly. Busses would lean as drivers swerved in and out, often they raced each other just for fun or to get ahead so they'd get the next customer standing alongside the road. The most common busses were appropriately nicknamed "The Orange Crush" because those accidents resulting from this situation were quite tragic and most drivers filled themselves with caffeine type stimulants. Some used drugs. A few were drunk. I remember one time we were on a bus and the driver seemed absolutely crazy. After several near accidents and hardly being able to keep from sliding out of the seat, I'd had enough. Everyone on the bus seemed to be fearful for their life. With great difficulty I made my way up to the driver

"Stop!" I shouted angrily. " You are going to kill us all."

There was no response from the driver, but the people were giving me strong looks of disapproval. I realized in their eyes, all anger is wrong, even if the cause was right. After that I resorted to praying and used our spiritual weapons when I rode the bus. On a few occasions we'd get off the bus and try another one. "Look at the faith they have," it seemed the Lord was saying. I looked at many sleeping people around me.

The amazing thing about this all was that the only stretch of the coastal highway that was made into a double lane highway, was those 20 miles between our home (Pattaya) and Chonburi, the boatyard. Praise the Lord! At least we didn't have to face head on traffic. Now I also realize the only goal wasn't just to build a boat, but because of that God would get us out into the places where he wanted us to meet people. He was calling His sheep. We were using the tools (gifts) He had given us. Those tools were a love for design and building. It was also a way to keep me in Thailand. I felt the Lord was saying "When you finish the boat you can go home." I told our boys "Let's get it done in six months." (Some people may recognize that some projects like that we really never get finished.)

Another of the many good results from boat building was the training of our two sons. I would have been too "religious" thinking we had to spend all our time evangelizing and neglected teaching skills to the boys. I wanted to save souls, but the Lord said "Build a boat." It was a perfect father-son project and they were just the right age for that. The skills they learned they used later to pay for their college. There was plenty carpentry work for them to do building homes to earn money for school they found. The boys still use these skills and pass them along to their children.



Construction 1978





Bibles for monks



A service in pattaya church



Monks visit boat



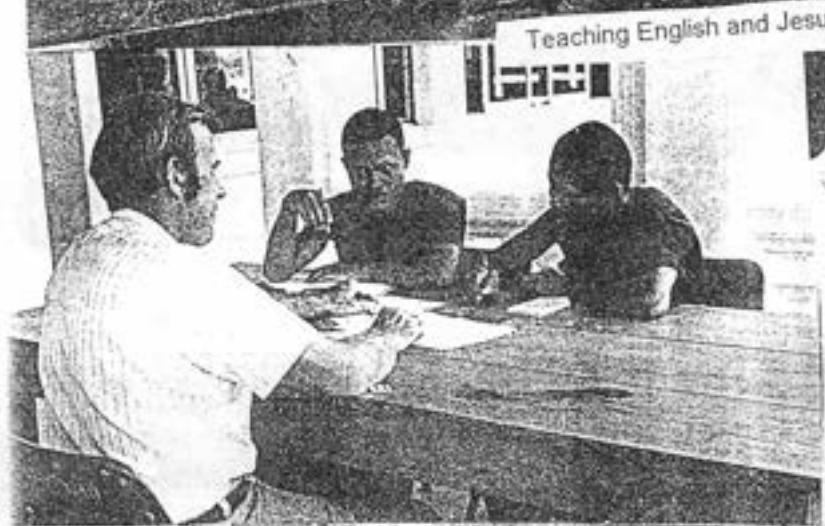
teaching monks about
Jesus and English



Mr Manas
Head of English Dept.



Teaching English and Jesus to the monks



This monk accepted Jesus & he's helping us work on the boat.

planks. The typical Thai boat hull resembled the old Chinese junk type fishing boats. I watched in amazement when they built their boats. There were no drawn plans. The massive keel timber rested on wood blocks, a front bow timber was bolted on and at the rear the even more massive stern timbers. The master builder just drew the lines on the thick, wood slabs. Ribs were cut out and bolted to the massive keel timber. Planks of the same wood were carefully fit and pegged on to cover the boat.

Our construction was different, We used plywood as a cover. The hardwood was for 2 x 4 ribs and the long, 8 x 16 inch keel and other framing. How shall I do it all? I prayed and asked for wisdom. At each point I felt the Lord's anointing, blessing and guidance as I'm sure Noah felt way back then. As I stood looking at the big keel timers I was praying "How do I fasten the ribs in?" I didn't just want to bolt them on the top like they did. A picture came into my mind "Cut rectangular holes in each side and fit the ribs into these. Then cut a slot at the right angle just under the ribs all the way along to receive the plywood skin. Only carbide tipped saw blades could be used in this dense wood, regular ones would dull with the first cut. When bolting or nailing, holes always had to be drilled first. The keels were six inches by fourteen inches and fifty feet long each. They were made of timber bolted together. These weighed about a ton themselves. The heat and humidity were so oppressive it seemed such an effort to just pick up your saw or hammer, nevertheless use it.

In our research and observing boats , getting an idea of good boat construction, we heard of a large trimaran being worked on and we went to see it. An Australian man (Thai wife) had purchased it and was working on it. Inside the boat I was talking to the owner and asking questions. He was deeply interested and convicted, as I was sharing Jesus with him. But suddenly I felt a firm hand on my

shoulder. Someone grabbed me and I turned to look.

I saw an angry, cursing man saying "Get out of here, we don't want any of that stuff around here." He escorted me out of the boat and out of the yard. That was my first meeting with Ken. He was an ex serviceman who decided to leave his Canadian life and remarry a Thai. Ken seemed like a hard, hurting man. But the rough talk and manners really was hiding a tender and concerned heart I found out later. Ken gained considerable experience building a trimaran and was the one we were usually referred to when we needed to know where to buy something. Ken and his boat building friends would often exchange stories about this Jesus family building a large catamaran.

We kept to our schedule of work and step by step, week by week, the boat took shape. Finally, the ribs were covered with two layers of marine grade plywood. The end result was a craft that weighed 32 tons. We had many opportunities to share the hope of the gospel, both with those who came to see the boat and with the boatyard workers as well as the owner and his family.

"Boom" an explosion interrupted our work one day at the boatyard. I dropped my tools and ran to the site. A man near the welding tank was holding his hands over his blood covered face. The oxygen gauge had exploded because someone put oil on it. He was groaning loudly in pain and shock. I put my hands on him and said "Look at Jesus. Think about Jesus" and prayed for him. He calmed down and began to relax. They put him in a car and rushed him to a hospital. He returned before the day's end and was still peaceful, back on the job with hardly any noticeable damage to his face. He told me when he thought of Jesus he felt calm and healed. Praise the Lord for confirming His word with signs following.

After eight months the owner was wanting us to finish and take the boat out because now was the high tide time of the year, the only possible time to get the boat out. If we didn't do it now we'd have to wait another year. The boatyard was on the highway and the only way to the sea was a small canal five miles long which finally led to the big river that emptied into the Gulf of Siam. Boatyard workers and others often said to me "How are you going to get that boat out of here?" I was also concerned, but I had assured them and myself this was where the Lord led me to build it. Some boats built here were as long, but none so wide as the catamaran. Often there was no water in the canal at all, just mud. Many kinds of crabs and crawling fish were in this mud. Now high tide time of the year was still here, we were rushing to get the hull done and get at least one engine functioning and one rudder ready. (Each hull was to have one rudder and one engine.) The cabin could be finished later when the boat was in the water.

The engines were also a miracle. One day just a few weeks before high tide, I felt the Lord say "Your engines are ready, go to Bangkok and get them. Mazda Engines."

There is an area in Bangkok where they sell used truck and car parts and engines taken from junk cars in Japan. I'd never been there before, but several people told me about it. Arriving there I saw blocks and blocks of narrow streets lined with open, small shops stuffed with used car parts and engines. These covered the sidewalks and extended into the streets themselves. Black grease covered everything. The very first shop I entered had two Mazda XA diesel engines from Japan. These were originally used in a six wheel Mazda truck. He started them up and they sounded perfect and the price was right at about \$200 each.

"Seems right" I thought, "but I need to check around." I did that but

found nothing so good as this. After while I returned to the first shop and bought those engines. We rented a truck and driver and rode with him 60 miles back to the boatyard. "These are excellent engines, you won't have to overhaul them" was the comment of the boatyard mechanic. Hastily we put them in place. We were able to connect only one of them to a shaft and propeller because our time was up.

One day Paul stopped back. He was Ken's friend. He was from Seattle and lived in Thailand. Paul was an agnostic and ridiculed openly any idea of God. He was a man who had helped install diesel engines in other boats. By way of the grapevine he heard we got our engines in. "I hear you got your engines" He said. I told him the story how Jesus told me it was time to get them and the kind to get. Paul knew since I was from the USA I didn't know much about diesel engines, only gas engines.

"Come and see them" I invited. Paul went up the ladder and across the boat and under the hatch below the bedroom. When he saw them he paused and then said "Do you know what engines these are?"

"No" I said, not understanding exactly what he meant.
"These are Perkins diesel from England. They make them for Mazda. This is the same block that they use in their famous marine engines and all the marine accessories will fit on those engines." Paul was greatly impressed as was I! The Lord knows how to reach each person.

Chapter 5

Bamboo Trap

It was already time of the highest tides of the year. The boatyard owner Mr. Thai Lim certainly didn't want us to wait until next year to launch, but we were still bolting things together. The boatyard owner graciously helped us jack up the boat and put the rails under and mount it on the trolley, ready to roll into the sea. As Mr. Thai Lim had promised, the use of the heavy equipment was free, and he even added the labor of his workers to our benefit. Praise the Lord! The boat was pulled along the tracks by means of winches and cables and rested finally at the top of a ramp where the two rails sloped downward into the end of the dry canal. It waited there for a few days to be ready for the next highest tide. There was a lot of concern as to whether it would get out or not. Finally, the day of the launch came, and I thought of renting a boat to check out the channel but there wasn't time. "There are three walk bridges across the canal" they told me. "I don't think your boat will fit between the posts."

But what could we do? The time was up. The boatyard owner allowed some of his boat workers to go with us until the canal reached the river. We never had this experience with boats till now, and we felt totally dependent on the Lord. down the river the boat went, into the canal. Yes, it floated and at just below the intended waterline. It looked sleek and beautiful, newly painted hulls, deck and cabin. The tide was going out as we started down the canal and we needed to make it to the sea before it got too low and we would be grounded. We started the engine from time to time and only briefly since we had only a barrel of water near the engine where cooling water could circulate. It tended to overheat. There was no reverse gear to use for braking, we hadn't modified the truck transmission yet. But the engine was hardly needed

because now the water was flowing swiftly downstream, carrying us with it.

Ahead of us we saw the first walk bridge coming up. The poles looked very close together and we needed to stop. I shuddered to think of 32 tons of boat hitting those poles. How can we stop? One of the helpers said "Throw out an anchor, snag a dead tree here in the channel. Throwing an anchor directly into the mud seemed useless since it would just slip through the mud.

So he threw out an anchor just right to snag that tree. "Crack!" The dead tree bent and snapped off.

"Oh, now what?" Just in time the anchor caught some brush and trees and we stopped just short of the bridge poles. The slowly releasing the anchor line we came to the opening and just barely squeezed through. The boat fit so tightly it scraped some of the paint of two side trims on both sides of the boat. Like a birth, we just squeezed out. Two more bridges were ahead, they were about the same width, the same situation. The last one had a diagonal bracing board sticking out into the passage way. We had to cut the board off flush with the post in order to get through.

The channel was lined with occasional fishing shacks amidst a type of palm tree that looks like palm branches sticking straight up from the mud, rising about 15 feet. They used these leaves to weave thatched roof tiles and to make mats for covering walls of their huts. Large mango trees abounded. Finally we arrived at the river. "How would the men helping get back?" I wondered. It was no problem for them though. They said "Start the engine." They grabbed the temporary tiller (fastened to the top of the only rudder) and headed straight for the mud bank on one side of the canal. I was apprehensive, but we hit the bank and stuck into the deep mud. We shut off the engine, they said good bye and slipped over

the side of the boat, jumping right into the mud and sank knee deep into it. It didn't seem to bother them. They slowly moved forward and disappeared into the palm branch forest.

There we were alone, stuck in a mud bank. We put out an anchor but it was hardly needed for the boat wasn't moving. Darkness came. We settled down for the night. About 9 pm "Pop" we heard and up came the boat, out of the mud since the tide had risen again. We swung out into mid channel partly in the river. The "anchor" had held, it seemed so different now to be moving about in the same boat which during it's building had always been steady. We wondered what to do though, it was dangerous for us to be mid channel without lights on the boat .

Dan and Bob noticed fishing shacks lining the one side of the channel. They rowed over in the dinghy and talked with the men, coming back with good news. One of the fishermen would accompany us tomorrow and help us get to Pattaya with the boat. Pattaya was 20 miles down the coast. We had no map or any idea of the rocks ahead, the boat was hardly ready for the sea.

Early the next morning a Thai fisherman came on board. He was very experienced since he had his own fishing boat. He was also very clever in doing things in simple and crude ways. So after looking the boat over we raised the anchor, started the engine and went out down the ever widening mouth of the river until we were in the Gulf of Thailand itself. We stayed well within sight of the coast but couldn't be too

close to shore itself since it had very shallow water. The shoreline from one to three miles out will be totally dry during the lowest tides of the day. But at the high tide those same places will be four to ten feet deep. Our boat needed three feet of water to float.

Our fisherman friend decided there was a better way to guide the boat than to stand on the back deck holding the two by four tiller, his view blocked completely by the cabin. He asked for a rope and cleverly tied each end of it to the tiller, strung it in both directions around the cabin to the front deck and joined it. He sat down leisurely, leaned back and enjoyed the scenery while he guided the boat. He could steer by simply pulling the rope in either direction. Meanwhile we were frantically trying to keep the engine from overheating and keep all the hastily put together things operating. Our throttle consisted of a long cord tied to the engine throttle lever and then led up and out of the hatch to the driver. Several times we had to stop the engine to let it cool, or to repair something. During this time it drifted.

Because the water was shallow the whole coast was planted with numerous bamboo fish traps. Bamboo poles 20 feet tall were pushed into the sea bottom. They were arranged in a large circle 100 feet in diameter. Fish nets were attached to the poles and the only opening for the trap was on one side of the circle from which a line of poles extended in a long line, thus guiding the fish into the trap.

Our engine again overheated, we shut it down and were drifting. "Oh no," I yelled, as we were heading right for one of these traps. We heard "Scratch, scratch" as a bamboo pole bent under our boat. We were caught in the trap. This was so new to us, we were trying to remain calm. The Lord gave us grace and it was an awesome adventure. While waiting for the engine to cool we were wondering how we would get out! After what seemed a long time the engine was cool enough, and we had decided on a plan, we would have to try to motor right over those poles. Hopefully they would bend and allow us out as they did to let us in. The danger seemed to be that our prop might snag the fish net or poles.

Thankfully, the engine started and we did motor out of the trap, the propeller didn't snag them! From time to time we stopped our duties and had time to look at the wonderful sights of the distant, passing tropical shore, with mountains in the background. Just before dark we beached the boat at Pattaya, at the road which led to our house. We made it! Praise the Lord!

This was the advantage of a catamaran. We could pull onto a beach, let the tide go out and it stood firm and dry. Other monohull boats tipped on their side during the time the tide was out. Our boat was still a bare hull and cabin with none of the inner rooms finished, nor was the mast and sail rigging in place. "We need a convenient place to work on it" I thought to myself

Chapter 6

A House on Poles

We met the right people, they knew a house for rent next to theirs, only a few villages up the coast. That house was on poles in the water. We could tie up to it and easily work on it there. The Lord has his way of getting us into the coastal villages where he wanted us, we realized later. The house on poles in Oa Udom was a good transition for us from living on land to living on the sea. When the tide was up there was four feet of water under our house, and the only access to the land was a board walk from house to shore.

We were doing what we could to share the good news with villagers. Mary and Dawn would hold Good News Clubs for children. Children were more ready to respond than adults who were polite but resistant. The boat was as big (or bigger) than the house which it sat next to. It was handy to run an electric cord across the distance to run our power tools. The front of the boat faced shore. We ran an anchor line down to the beach from each bow of the catamaran. The back of one side of the boat was tied to a house pole, the other side to a small worm eaten pole originally used by the local fisherman to tie up their one-man dinghy.

We worked intently to complete engine installation, rudder cables for steering systems, and other details. We were working so intently I forgot about the stormy season coming. Suddenly, one day we heard thunder rumbling and looking west we saw over the island five miles out, huge, dark storm clouds were rolling toward us. It was so bad there was a water spout in the north end of it. I was shocked and afraid. "What will happen? What about our heavy boat tied to rotten posts?" I had visions of it tearing down the house posts and smashing into the fishermen's huts on shore.

"I rebuke you in Jesus name" I shouted, pointing toward the storm cloud. Suddenly the water spout went back up into the cloud and before the storm could come across that five miles of water, it had veered off to the north and dissipated. That was unheard of because the storm path is always straight in to the coast. "Praise the Lord" I thought, though I felt a little big headed. But the next day.(during the stormy season you can almost set your clock by the three p.m. afternoon storms) , and next storm, it looked really black. At least there was no water spout. "No problem" I thought "I'll just rebuke it like I did yesterday."

But it came closer and closer. I was still rebuking it when it crashed upon us with the winds roaring. Tall waves began tossing the boat up and down. We got off and into the house, then we prayed and prayed. I didn't dare look outside . I was figuratively "hiding under the bed". Though it seemed forever, after a short time the worst of the storm was over. Things started to settle down. I hurried to the window and next to our house was the boat still rising above the house level, then down again, but safe. It hadn't broken loose.

"Lord, " I prayed later "Why was it once I prayed and the storm went away and the next time I did the same thing and it hit us." His answer "Regarding storms I want you to learn two lessons. First, be able to take authority over it; and the second thing is to be able to have victory in the storm." I knew the Lord was referring to storms of troubles and trials that hit our lives. Those who are willing to go through the storm are with people in the storm and able to help and save them at a time when they are open for help. Hard resistant people can be won only this way. The Lord wants all to be saved. My thoughts went to people like Corrie ten Boom who suffered through Hitler's death camp with people marked for death. She was able to offer eternal life in Jesus.

We continued to work on the boat. During our boat building experience we met an American man named Jerry and wife Kay. He was staying in Pattaya and they were just finishing building an all teak sailboat. Jerry seemed to relate to Dan and Bob especially. At our first meeting I saw an empty man, trying to find purpose in life. I wanted to share Jesus with him. "Don't talk to me about Jesus" he said. But when we got to know him better he opened enough to say that in his youth he felt drawn to God, even attended a seminary to become a priest. In the seminary they never taught about a personal relationship with God thru Jesus. They taught church doctrines. His fellow seminarians weren't much help and seemed to not be able to answer his searching questions either. Jerry said he got so desperate to know God that he decided to desecrate the sacrament. He bit the bread and got drunk on the wine. "If I do that" he thought "God will kill me. Or at least get angry enough to say something."

But nothing happened. So he walked out into a life of sin and drug running. In fact that's why he was building the boat. Of course he didn't say that, and we didn't know for sure until much later when one of the boats he shipped to Canada got caught with drugs hidden on it and he was put in prison.

I was continuing with my idea of what work should be done next on the boat and had ignored an urging from the Lord that I should do the furniture. "Furniture? I need to get the sail rigging done. I can always work on the inside," I argued. Then two things happened. First, the house owner who was a policeman was caught in a dishonest deal and killed himself. His second wife (mia noi) came by the house and told us this news. She said she needed the house now and we should move out. The second thing that happened, Jerry came

back. "My rigging is too heavy for my tender boat. I can't use it and have to get an all aluminum rig. You can have it all."

I had copied Jerry's boom another parts of the sailing rig since it was the same size I needed. I now had just finished but I accepted the boom and rigging other than the mast. He gave that to a school for a flag pole. Now we had to move out of our house onto the boat and all the rooms were not finished. And I had two sets of sail rigging. Had I listened to the Lord it would have saved time and money.

We spent a total of a year and a half in Oa Udom, living in the house on poles. At one point I was getting a big discouraged spiritually because none of the adults seemed to respond. So I started telling God what he needed to do. "If you will just do some big miracle in this village they will turn to you."

Then the Lord reminded us of a woman we heard about in the village who had been in a coma for some time. Joyce and I set out asking neighbors and how to find her. We got to her house in a housing complex for the Thai oil refinery personnel. We knocked on the door and the daughter answered. She seemed glad to see us. "Oh," she said My dad isn't home. You must come back this evening. He'll want to see you." That evening we were warmly welcomed by the dad, a man in his late forties. Sitting in the living room he listened intently as we told him of the hope and help we have in Jesus. He told us his wife was involved in a car accident in Bangkok. The Dr. said she is brain dead and gave no hope. But he was keeping her alive with 24 hour nursing care, pumps, tubes and the like. We were amazed at his love and dedication to her. We said we would pray for her if he wanted us to. And we said that Jesus could heal.

"Yes," he said "but first I need to tell you something. I'm a welding

instructor and when I teach my students I must do it a little at a time. Not all at once. When you pray for her I don't want to see her jump up off the bed, I just want to see some evidence and then please come back each week and let there be progress." That sounded good to us, especially after we came in the bedroom and saw her for the first time. She looked pale and lifeless. She didn't have the normal rich, skin color of Thai people, her eyes barely open were fixed in a empty motionless stare. We put our hands on her and prayed for her in Jesus name. After a moment that seemed like eternity, her eyes popped open and she glanced around the room with a lively look. Her husband ran to get the camera, he had his first sign.

On our second visit we heard more of the story. He explained he had tried everything and the doctors gave up. He tried monks, his religion and even tried the witch doctor.

(mah do) After a few visits the mah do told him in affect "We can't help you, but some foreigner will come to your house unannounced and knock on the door. Through them your wife will get healed." I had to think about that a bit. I tried to warn him of the danger of consulting spirits other than the Lord. But I also realized that God can turn evil to good. At least that explained why he welcomed us so warmly and why he was sure she would be healed when we prayed. We tried to make sure he understood it wasn't us who did the healing, but it was Jesus. On the rest of the visits she continued to show progress until she was able to sit in a wheel chair, comb her hair and put on her lipstick. The doctors were saying she was recovering. God had done a big miracle but in spite of this he himself did not accept Jesus, nor any others in the village become believers as far as we know. Then I understood sometimes even a miracle won't convince people to turn like Jesus said "Even if one raises from the dead neither will they be persuaded." Luke 16:31

The Lord comforted us in our concern for that village. He said "They are reading you loud and clear. They are watching your life and family. They see you coming home faithfully at night, never drunk, not running with other women and your children have good morals. Even in your weaknesses and faults they see you are trusting the Lord."

Chapter 7 Are All the Animals in?

Even though things weren't finished inside the boat, we now had to live on it. We decided to sail back to Pattaya and anchor there. It would be closer to the little church we were still helping. In Pattaya the best protection for anchoring was tucked behind the hill which acted as a shield for the prevailing southwest monsoon winds. To our dislike the shore was solid bars, brothels and home of the homosexual community, the center of a large transvestite show. Men came from many countries to engage in the Four S's this is: sea,sand,sex and sun. However a witness was needed there and I guess we were it. At least one of the witnesses.

Every night about 7 p.m. we were amazed by the bus loads of Japanese men and even some women, who descended upon the nightly transvestite show. "Why can't they flock to church?" we thought. To get to the church we had to row to shore in the dinghy. Often upon returning we'd find the tide had gone out and in the dark we'd drag the dinghy about a half mile through mud and barnacle rocks. Then the water would be deep enough to row the rest of the way. The walk to church was about a mile, but it led

through those narrow bar lined streets. Our sons or I would often be approached by a pimp or prostitute. Unusual things happened often. On one occasion we were walking down the street, a prostitute grabbed my arm, and started shouting and beating me on my chest! Why did you leave me Johnny, she repeated it over and over her mind seemed in total confusion. Our heart went out to these abused young people most of whom were under the control of their "owners", however many were lured in by the hopes of wealth and the "good life" their life was often short, and controlled with drugs. AIDS was very common and a real epidemic in Thailand, yet few responded to our continual effort to offer them a new, better life.

Once there was a huge rainstorm. It destroyed much of the beach and bar area. Some of the streets were now valleys so deep a man could stand in them and it would be above his head.

Although several boats were washed ashore and damaged, our boat was okay through the storm and it was time for a church meeting. As I walked along viewing damaged buildings and roads, I came past a bar and the owner saw me. He came out and shouted angrily "Are you happy now? You had your flood. Are all the animals in?" I'd never met that man before, but the Lord knows how to get a message around. Often the bar talk circulating around included the latest on the Noah boat and family.

The Pattaya church was given an air conditioner and we agreed to help install the necessary drop ceiling to make it efficient. One day as we worked a young American man came in. We befriended him and after exchanging information we knew he would be our friend for life. Eric said he was here looking at a potential job. He would work as port captain for an oil company, installing pipelines in the Gulf of Siam. He was a committed Christian. "I wanted to come and see if it was a place I would bring my family. I just decided I

wouldn't take the job when I saw the church sign and came here. Now I've changed my mind."

Eric and his family had lots of good times together with us. The hull of a ferro concrete boat which he had made sat propped up in his yard back in Texas. Since childhood he loved and sailed boats. Living on a boat and traveling with his family was one of his dreams. His wife Georgian led him to the Lord and his life was transformed. He was now a good dad and really loved his family. He sacrificed his dreams in obedience to the Lord and for the sake of his family.

Often he'd bring his family out and we'd sit together on the deck, enjoying the sunset and fellowship. It gave him a break from his duties at work and the burden of men under his leadership. One day I got a message from Eric "Would you come with me and help me? One of my men is at the bar with girls and he claims to be a Christian."

Sure enough as Eric and I approached the open bar this man was there with the girls hanging on him. "Oh, it's okay" he said with a slur. "Don't worry about me. I'm saved. My pastor said so." We couldn't persuade him to leave the bar and come with us. About that time I was feeling he needed the other scriptures which talk about denying the Lord.

Eric's job was finished within two years, but every Wednesday back in Texas, they still pray for us. They have a special picture reminder on the table for those they are praying for that day. Our whole family felt this type of prayer support from them and other friends back in the States. It was like the great cloud of witnesses (see Heb 12:1) and we knew without that our life here wouldn't be productive and blessed.

Very often groups from Thai churches would come and we took many day trips to the islands and back. There were several overnight trips and a few that lasted longer. It was great to explore and swim in the white sandy beaches of the islands, this was a great contrast to the water along the coast which was brown or black with pollution and plastic sacks.

Every so often while anchored in Pattaya, we'd hear shouting and look out and see a line of orange robes on shore. "It must be Prah Maha Soontorn bringing another group of monks" someone of us would say. Then we'd row in and the group of monks would come, we'd bring them aboard and show them things. Then we'd explain the gospel and present each with a New Testament and row them back, that seemed to be what they wanted. Every year the Buddhist college had a special seminar in which all temples in Thailand were invited to send representatives. One day we received a message from the he director of the college. "Could you get Bibles for all our monks?"

"Yes, I said. "But I really didn't know where I'd get the hundreds needed. Then I remembered the Gideons, an organization of businessmen who give Bibles free to schools, hospitals and motels all over the world. We looked in the phone book and I found the number to call them in Bangkok. After explaining the need I asked if we could have them right away. They said they'd be more than happy to come down and help hand them out. We met at the college on the last day of the seminar, in fact at the last minute. The return busses were waiting, ready for the monks to board. The director met us and the Gideon men opened their car trunks. All of us helped hand Bibles to monks who passed us on their way to boarding busses. Again the next year we were requested to do this. So each monk

stuffed his Bible into his saffron robe and they returned to the north, south, east and west of Thailand to their various temples. Who but the Lord could have arranged something like this?

I remember when we first bought our old VW van, I felt the Lord saying "This car will serve Me (the Lord) well" I thought that meant it would be a good car and run good. But looking back what it meant was that it would break down in all the right places, even when I was too busy or insensitive to stop and take time to share the Gospel. After we moved to Pattaya we took it to a sign painter who painted signs on all four sides in Thai and English.

On the driver's side it said "Sin brings death, but Jesus gives life." Rom 2:23 condensed. On the other side it said "Come unto me all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Matt 11:28,29. On the back it said "I am the way, the truth and the life. No man comes to the father but by me." John 14:6 On the front it said "Jesus loves you". It did serve the Lord well! One day, for example, the boys and I were driving alone on our way to Chonburi to work on the boat. As we passed through Bang Pra village, the gentle voice of the Holy Spirit was urging me to stop and meet the people and share the good news. But my mind was intent on getting "to work" and I thought "Next time I'll stop."

Dead! The car went dead just as we were at the edge of the village leaving. Thankfully it rolled to a stop in front of a gas station. We checked the problem, it was a bad generator and dead battery. They could charge the battery in the station now and I could repair the generator later. "I'm sorry Lord I'll try to be more obedient and stop when you ask me to."

The boys and I took all the tracts we had on hand and spread out in different directions, meeting people and giving out tracts. By the

time we had covered some of main street our tracts were gone and there was much of the village left yet. By now the battery was charged and we went on our way. Some weeks later the US Navy's midway Aircraft Carrier was anchored in Pattaya Bay. We contacted the chaplain and there was a large group of sailors who really welcomed our offer to come visit our house. Some of them also wanted to see the boat we were building. We piled into our van and were riding along. I was laughing as I told them the story about this car. "The Lord said it would serve Him well" I said. "That means it breaks down in the right places." By now I had a new generator and full battery so I didn't expect anymore problems. As we passed through Bang Pra village I was telling the story of what happened a short time ago. Then sure enough, smoke and the smell of an electrical short filled the car. We rolled to a stop in front of that **same gas station!**

Quickly we opened the rear engine compartment and pulled off the battery cable. The main wire leading from the battery had rubbed through its insulation and shorted out, draining the battery. We taped it again and had the battery charged. "I forgot" I said, "The Lord asked us to do this village and we didn't finish. The last time we ran out of literature and we only covered a little of it."

"We'll help" the sailors said. So now besides my sons and I, we had a van load of sailors to cover the village, handing out tracts and enjoying every minute of it. The people welcomed the chance to meet these foreigners and gladly received the tracts. After an hour or so we again headed to see the boat. Note: 18 years later and we still are working there, Jesus is still finding His sheep.

That was one of the last trips the car ever made. It was totally worn out and we couldn't drive it any more. Its final breakdown was at

the boatyard where it sat in a prominent place next to the office. "Come unto me all you who labor" it said like a sign board. After sitting several months the boatyard owner said "Please move it." We decided to sell it for junk. Mr Manas at the Buddhist college where we taught heard that. He said "We'll buy it from you and fix it up." I assured him it was not repairable, but he insisted and paid junk price for it. We towed it there. "Leave it right here, we'll take care of it from here" they told us. There it sat for months in the very center of and in front of the college entrance, like a billboard with its Scriptures painted on all four sides. Many monks walked past there every day. Visitors coming to the college also walked by. Highway traffic could also read the signs.

After six months the college board got a bit disturbed. "What is this doing here?" When they determined it was unrepairable they sold it to some mechanic in town. "I can fix it" he said. But soon he gave up and abandoned it in an empty lot on main street down town next to the Post Office. Again it sat for a long time, like a billboard with Scriptures on four sides. It's hard to count the people and traffic which passed it daily. On Sundays it was near the big weekend market, always thronged with people, yes, that car did serve the Lord well.

We continued to work on the boat and had many opportunities to share with the workers and Mr Thai Lim, the boatyard Owner. "Could God forgive if a person killed someone? he asked me privately one day. Once he showed me the pistol he always carried in his glove compartment. He is a rich businessman. "Yes, God can forgive any sin" I assured him. "if we repent and ask for forgiveness. God forgives us because Jesus paid the price on the cross."

Chapter 8

Dow Tahn Church, Born in an Abortion Clinic

There was a Thai Christian nurse who occasionally attended the church in Pattaya. She seemed attracted to our family. Perhaps it was because she came to know Jesus through the GIs who were here during the Vietnam war. These GIs had started a church and a whole Christian Center near the air base in Sattahip. Her village was close to there, about 15 miles south of Pattaya. When the Americans left Vietnam and Thailand, the small congregation near the air base was divided because some members needed to move to the resort town Pattaya to find work. Now there were two small Thai congregations. We were trying to help and encourage both. The nurse asked us several times to come to her village and hold meetings. So we started doing that. Usually we held meetings in her clinic, mostly children and some youth would come and now and then a few adults. We held the evening midweek meetings there once a month. later, we met more often. After two years something happened. A local carpenter had a dream in which Jesus revealed Himself to him and showed him he was to lead the youth by music. He played in a band and was gifted in music. Others accepted Jesus as a result of his testimony and the group was growing. One evening when I went for the weekly meetings he told me "I want to build a church."

"You already have a church" I said. "People are the church." "Yes, I know that. But we need a building" Tawney continued. I knew they had no money and I only had 500 Baht (US \$20) in my pocket. I gave that to him and said "I'd like to give the first gift for it. Sorry, it's all I have now."

Tawney started immediately and in two weeks he finished building.

The cutest church I've ever seen! One of the members had some small property there and let the church use it. From his collection of used lumber, posts and old doors he had built a building large enough to seat about 25 people. It had a dirt floor and the roof was covered with palm leave, thatched roof tiles. The building fit into the village perfectly and matched the other buildings. But the most unique part of the first addition to the back of the church was a small tree he simple left in the church and built around it, letting it grow.

Now that the church had its own little building it no longer met in the clinic. It was many years later that we found out this nurse had performed abortions there. We couldn't have imagine it and she had no knowledge that it was wrong until the Holy Spirit began to convict her. She told us that her elder dad living there often would say "Where are all the children? "Often I am awake at night and I hear many children crying."

The the nurse had such guilt she hardly wanted to face us. But we could assure her that Jesus forgives even murder if repented of and God turns evil to good so that even a church was born there in that abortion clinic. Praise Jesus for His Grace!

The village witch doctor got healed and saved. Others came to love the Lord and the Holy Spirit kept moving while he church was packed each Sunday. Tawney with his youth group and their guitars led the praise and worship. Those young people have gone on to be pillars in the church and some have gone to study at Bible Schools. Most of the people in the village were very poor. One man who came now and then had a body car repair paint shop, but he had to quit because he became very sensitive to the strong smelling paints and thinners. This left him without a job to support his family. My son Dan had been working on (literally

building a car), a completely rusted out small Mazda pickup. The coastal salt air can rust cars in a short time. Even the chassis was so rusted it was unusable. So Dan started buying pieces of chassis and welding them together. Now it stood complete and ready for paint. "I'd love to paint it for you" said the poor body repair man. "But I can't."

Dan said "I'll pray for you to be healed so you can." The man was healed, back into the business and still is working. Dan's bright, yellow, little Mazda stood as a testimony to that. Each of our children were so blessed and anointed and the love of Jesus shone out of them. People always wanted to talk to them.

Chapter 9 Babies from Heaven

The anchorage at Pattaya was protected from the predominant southwest, monsoon winds most of the year. But now the winds had shifted to the north and northeast during the cool season. Now the boat was tossing about and it was annoying. "Splat" went the pot of rice Joyce had been cooking on the stove. Upside down, right on the floor! "We have to do something" we agreed. After asking the local fishermen where a good winter anchorage was they told us "Laemchabang". It was a small fishing village about 10 miles north, nestled right behind a high ridge of hills, forming a

peninsula and guarding the water from the strong north winds. What a relief and how beautiful, with tall hills to one side and palm lined, white sand beach lined with small huts. The water was perfectly calm, a contrast to Pattaya.

Of course, twin hulled catamarans didn't pull into this village every day, in fact these folks had never seen such a boat. It stirred the curiosity of the villagers and they were anxious to meet us. Foremost of these villagers was Joe, that's the name this Thai man liked to call himself. Joe and wife Daeng had property and a small restaurant on the beach. he was a real wheeler-dealer type person, and loved Americans and their money. He was trained in training police cadets and anything else he could find to do that would turn to cash. Once he offered to do our Thai driver's license for 1,000 baht because he had connections in the police department. We politely turn him down and went there ourselves and got them for 200 baht. As we got to know Joe and Daeng we shared the gospel with them. Daeng especially opened her heart to Joyce, she was not happy in her marriage. " We have been married fifteen years already, and have no children and my husband runs around with other women a lot."

"We'll pray for you" Joyce and I said. " and Jesus will give you a baby.": We prayed and within a month she was pregnant and it was then we learned it was physically impossible for her to become pregnant. She told us now the many examples where the doctors after examining her informed her of that fact and also of her attempts through her religion to get help. In fact, her brother was the head monk of the big temple in the village. She even tried the witch doctor. Nothing happened.

"This baby is from heaven, from Jesus" she would tell everyone during her pregnancy,

she was one very happy woman. However, about five months into the pregnancy she got quite sick. After the doctor's exam he announced "I'm sorry, your baby has died. We have to remove it." They arranged a date for the operation. She came home from that exam and came crying to Joyce. We were sorry to hear that but we got angry at the devil. "Devil, you can't do this." we said. "This is a baby from Jesus, you can't steal it." We prayed for her again. In the next days she improved and by the day of the scheduled operation she was feeling fine. The doctor noted the difference and re examined her and said "Your baby is fine!" What a joy at the little boy's birth! We were invited to dedicate it, that lovely little baby boy who looked just like his dad. Daeng had no more children , but they were happy with little "Boss" but I called him Josh, short for Joshua (both are nicknames)

Their home was always open to us now. Though several people were saved and baptized through their testimony and in their home, Joe and Daeng encouraged that a lot, they themselves resisted the invitation to receive Jesus and be baptized, as far as I know.

Babies from heaven- The Copper Man

Engine cooling was still a problem and we decided "keel coolers" were the answer. This is simply 12 feet of copper pipe resting along the outside of the keel, or alongside the boat. These pipes lead to the inside where fresh water for cooling the engine is circulated. Copper pipe was needed. I thought "They must have it someplace in Bangkok." The search started. Shop after shop I went to and asked "Do you sell copper pipe, or know where I can get it?" I went into the shop to ask those questions but often they'd look me up and down and see my shirt and say "Jesus. Who is

Jesus?" I had forgotten on my pocket was a pencil holder and it said in Thai and English "Sin equals death; Jesus equals life" (That's Romans 6:23 condensed)

Since my early high school teaching days, many years ago, I felt led to wear that type of message. I noted people often use tee shirts to say the most vulgar things, or advertise beer or movie stars, why not be so bold as to declare Jesus, the One whom I love and am eternally grateful for. He is man's only hope. Even in a crowded bus I'd often see a person twist his head and look around other peoples' arms and heads in order to see what was written on this foreigners pocket. It also was a help when I wanted to get angry for being ripped off. I'd remember to keep my cool because of the sign. That little sign opened so many opportunities but I often forgot I had it on.

I thought only of what I wanted to buy. Then they'd call my attention to it and soon we'd be talking about Jesus. I'm sure the Lord had His way of getting me around to His lost sheep.

One day I was going shop to shop looking for that copper pipe and finally I was directed to a small, winding, narrow shop-lined lane. There, inside the shop I saw copper pipe of all sizes, all types, from floor to ceiling. At the counter was a Chinese looking owner. He looked me over as I entered and I walked up to the counter. I was about to tell him what I needed, but looking at my pocket he spoke first. "Jesus, who is Jesus?" he asked. After some time of telling him about Jesus, he shared his heart and feelings.

"I'm not happy. I have been married 12 years and no children," he said. When I heard this I felt the compassion of the Lord and I said "I'll pray for you and Jesus will give you a child." Right then we prayed. His

wife wasn't in, I never saw her so I left the shop and walked down the street trying to carry four nine foot long copper pipes and a bag of fittings. That's no easy chore! Especially trying to cross a Bangkok street and board a bus!

After installing the pipes on the boat they worked perfectly and seemed to be the answer to our engine cooling problem. I was happy about this and during the next year all but forgot about the copper man. A year later I made a big mistake. In the dark engine room, while changing a battery, I accidentally hooked it in reverse; positive to where the negative should be. I didn't discover my mistake till the next morning. But even worse, I discovered it had caused the copper pipe to be eaten by electrolysis. The pipe surface was eaten and hundreds of tiny holes left. It was totally ruined. Where was that copper shop?

Back to Bangkok and I retraced my steps of a year ago, trying to remember where that little street was with the copper shop. After I found it I walked into the door and there was the same Chinese owner, smiling at me. "What's this?" I asked when I saw a baby in the small reclining chair. "This is my son" the owner proudly explained. "This is the one you prayed for." I never did meet his wife, but he was one happy man.

I have to explain I don't have the confidence or faith just to pray in "shot gun" fashion for everyone to be healed or other miracles to happen. Unless I know it's the Lord's leading and it is He who is prompting me to do it, I don't pray for miracles. When that's the case I'm sure it will happen and I need only to get myself and my fears out of the way and pray in faith.

Sometimes I feel pushed by people into praying for someone's

healing or problem, but I don't have a clear leading as to the Lord's will in it. Then usually nothing will happen. I believe that's why Jesus was 100 per cent effective in His prayers, He always walked in the Spirit and knew whether to rebuke the devil (spiritual cause) or rebuke the fever (natural or physical cause.)

I learned something about that way back in early days as a teacher. Besides our regular church we were attending a helping a little "Jesus People" group of college students. The Lord was moving among them mightily. They were sold out to Jesus. College students, high school students and even a hardened socialistic professor were saved and changed. After one of their meetings I was standing next to their young leader and various people wanted to talk to him. A mother of one of my high school students came. She said "I hear you believe God can heal." Her son had attended that church and was touched by Jesus.

Then holding out her wart covered hands she said "I've tried everything short of major surgery to get rid of all these warts and nothing works. Will you pray for my healing?" The young leader Brian, paused a moment, reflectively and sighing said "No, I won't pray for your hands. The Lord is trying to show you what your spirit looks like. If you repent and come to Jesus your hands will be healed."

A week later we were again at the meeting and she was there with her farmer husband. She held out her smooth skinned hands and said "You were right. I repented and came to Jesus and my hands are healed. Praise the Lord."

Just before answering the call to a foreign mission field I was listening to a teaching tape. I had been going through trials and tests and was honestly getting upset with God. The tape was on

forgiveness. The parable of the Unforgiving Servant was studied. He had been forgiven a great debt but wouldn't forgive the small debt someone owed him. He was delivered to the tormentors. I wanted to make sure that I had forgiven everyone and asked their forgiveness; my wife, mother, dad, kids, friends, enemies. I was trying. I felt the Lord say "I want you to forgive me." "Lord" I exclaimed, "You are perfect, you never hurt me."

"Yes, that's true, but you felt I have."

"Oh, Lord, you are so good" I thought. "Of course I forgive you. I understand you are just trying to help me the same way as a coach. I tend to get mad at the coach who is only really trying to train me in the best way."

The teacher on the tape had given an example. "One day" he said "I received a call on the phone. The woman was unknown to me. She wanted to request a prayer for healing. Before he answered her he stopped to check in with the Lord. He said to her "I believe the Lord is showing me you have someone you need to forgive. If you forgive that person you will be healed." Slam! She hung up.

Some weeks later there was a lady at his church service. "Remember me?" she asked. "I'm healed" He never had met her so she said "I'm the one that angrily hung up on you. But I began to think about it and knew the Lord was right. I needed to forgive that person. I did and I'm healed."

These lessons helped me understand a little bit about why some people are healed and some are not. But I try not to judge or accuse of sin. Only try to check in with the Lord and have His heart.

When we first came into Joe and Dangs village we anchored and some of the fishermen began to ask us "Are you going to have a party at Christmas?" All they knew (maybe from the GIs) was that at Christmas (New Years) there were lots of drinking parties. The Thais love parties and the men drink profusely. Every evening you'll find them doing this at their late supper time.

We pondered it awhile and we said "Yes, we are going to have a party. We'll have special food, but no whiskey. We'll tell you the true meaning of Christmas." We thought this was a great idea and there seemed to be something special about Christmas time in Thailand. Although most of the Thais had no idea what Christmas was, they seemed at this time to be especially warm and open when you talked to them.

We wrote about 100 invitations and started to hand them out in the village. "What are you doing that for?" someone asked us. It's not necessary. We all know about it and we are all coming. Just have enough food." As in most Thai villages, was typically, whatever came to town they'd all turn out. Sometimes it was a movie or traveling elephant show or whatever. The day came for the Christmas party. Early in the morning we were busy preparing food. On the back deck appeared a drunken fisherman who had rowed up in his little fishing boat. He was saying wrong things, and making wrong looks at our teen daughters and was not in a mood to be reasonable. "You have to leave" I said.
"NO, I won't" he replied.

"IN Jesus name you are leaving" I said.

"No" he said.

"In Jesus name you must leave now" I said.

"No" he insisted.

"In Jesus name you must leave now and you can't come back unless you change your heart."

"I'm leaving" he said and we followed him to the back deck and watched him get into his little boat and row away.

We spent the day with final preparations and evening came. We brought the boat close to shore and the tide went out leaving the boat standing dry. People could come on board by climbing up the ladder, to the front deck. Everyone scrambled up that ladder, even old grandmas and the little kiddies. People were everywhere. The boat was packed and the food disappeared fast.

Then with the help of the Pastor Lek and Sunday School teacher we had our program and did the best we could to share the good news of Christmas. I noticed in the crowd a man holding his little daughter. I had to look several times to convince myself that Yes! It was the same man, who had given us the problem in the morning. He had changed his heart and he had returned. Jesus came! What an evening!

It was so peaceful in that protected bay that each winter for several years we'd return there for the season. After the Bible School started we'd bring student outreach teams to this village. Joe and Daengs' house was open to us and they'd invite others to come. There was an anointing for baptism after learning of Jesus and accepting him. The village people, grandmas and youth included, would run into the sea with great joy and dunk under the water and come up happy and praising the Lord. One old grandma told us of a special dream in which she saw Jesus. He talked to her. When her relatives heard of her new faith and baptism they took her away and put her in an institution.

Several times Joe had groups of young police cadets there along with the higher ranking teachers of the cadets. The first time I'd

take the students they'd be shy, they hadn't been on many outreaches from Bible School. I'd tell the story and give the invitation. They saw an anointing and positive response and after that I could step back because they wanted to do the teaching. Once while one of our students was teaching the cadets, I was standing next to one of their teachers, a young police officer. He listened intently and said "Could God forgive if I killed someone?"

"Yes" I assured him, "because of Jesus."

"If God really could forgive I'd become a Christian" he said with deep emotion. " You see I have killed several people for hire."

Chapter 10

"Are You Sure the Devil Didn't Tell You to Build this Boat?"

The warm tropical waters of the Gulf of Siam have some of the most prolific marine growth in the world. Sea urchins, Jelly Fish, Sea Cucumbers, beautifully colored fish, uniquely shaped Box fish, Blow Fish, clams, oysters, crabs, tiny Sea Horses, shrimp, squid and wood boring , and tunneling worms and barnacles.

The most notorious are the barnacles. They grow on anything in the water. Their small, cone shaped shells have razor sharp tops which can easily gouge a piece of your skin should you brush against them or stub your toe on a barnacle covered rock while walking to the boat at low tide. Every six months all boats must be repainted under the waterline with the best anti-fouling paint you can get. After only four months some growth begins but by wire brushing or scraping it, you can get by for two more months. After that it's a loosing battle. Barnacles help keep the ocean clean, they keep growing on trash until it's too heavy and sinks to the bottom. As you cruise along far from land, suddenly you see bamboo poles sticking out of the water. Are you traveling over hidden, submerged rocks? No, there is 50 feet clear water under you. The barnacles just grew on one end of the floating pole, and that end being heavier caused the pole to assume a vertical position.

We could delay no longer, six months had passed and the bottom of the boat was fouled with barnacle growth. "I'll help you" said David. I appreciated that offer since our boys were off to college. David was a young missionary from the USA with his wife and two small children. He was having a hard time. "I don't know what's wrong with me" he said. " I can't stand it here." He was

experiencing some type of oppression. "I have been in Korea and served in Vietnam , but I can't stand it here." I appreciated his honesty. He did not put the blame on others or his wife or mission leaders or even the Thai people. Most young missionaries will blame their mission or others in their severe culture shock. Often missionaries or Christians visiting Thailand would say they felt like there was a thick, dark cloud of oppression all around them. It especially affected husband and wife relationships. If they didn't know about spiritual warfare and how to come against this oppression, through the power of Jesus, it often would get the best of them. It seems all missionaries go through various stages when they first arrive. There is the honeymoon stage, everything is great and exciting. That lasts from a week to six months. Then all the strange different culture and surroundings begin to get to them. Squat pot toilets, no tissue in the bathroom, trash thrown around, smelly garbage, strange odors, oppressive heat, laid back people, traffic going the wrong way, reckless drivers, phones that don't work or no phone at all, and often no refrigerator. Getting cheated at the market, pigs heads hanging next to the fruit you wanted to buy and missing the folks back home and unfamiliar surroundings take a toll on you.

The reaction to all this will soon either make or break a person. More than half missionaries will return home. This is true of all denominations and missions I have observed. Very high percentage don't even make it the first year. They all come with the call of the Lord and long term interest. Perhaps this is the case for a short term mission trip first, before making a final commitment.

So the new missionary David, offered to help me. There we were under the boat scraping barnacles. The tide had gone out and the boat was sitting high and dry near the shore, but the race was on to get all the barnacles scraped off and the boat sanded and

repainted before the tide returned. There was a lot of underwater surface on a 60 foot twin hull catamaran. Lying on our backs in the mud of the beach which smelled like sewer, we scraped the barnacles off and they gave an offensive odor. If you aren't wearing heavy gloves your hand is sure to slip a few times and you'll loose some skin. To add to that, the hot, humid air is irritating. After sometime of this David shouted across to me "Are you sure it wasn't the devil who told you to build this boat?" David was having a hard time. Soon after I noticed a man who came close to the boat and looked intently at it. I stopped my work and struck up a conversation with him.

"What is this boat?" he asked.

That opened the door to a lot of stories, how it was the Lord which prompted us to build it and I told a few stories of miraculous provisions and happenings that Jesus did. Roy began to get convicted. He said looking down, with tears in his eyes "I have a wife in England and I've been living with a prostitute. I'm going home now to my wife and family."

David heard this, perked up his hears, came out from under the boat and joined us. David also shared with him the good news and soon we were praying a prayer of repentance and salvation, then Roy left happy. He was a changed man. After this David said "I believe it was the Lord who told you to build this boat."

Our whole family was still living on the boat and we were anchored in the south Pattaya Bay. The shore was lined with bars, beach guest houses, brothels, hotels and tourist places. Rented water motor scooters zoomed around constantly. These weaved among the boats and swimmers. There was no designated areas and tourists rented these rideable missiles.

There was constant danger around. Our boat was hit once with

such force that the pointed nose of the scooter pierced through the sidewall of the inch thick plywood. The little girl's head was severely crushed as she flew against the hard boat, especially with the added force of her dad behind. They both looked dead. The little girl's head was badly bruised, swollen, black, misshapen and bleeding.

We took them to shore as quickly as possible in our dinghy, praying for both to have miraculous healing. We didn't want the Lord's boat to be involved in things like this. They were put into a pickup truck and rushed to a hospital. The report the next day "No permanent damage. Both will be fine." That was a definite miracle. I knew for sure as I patched the hole in the double layered, thick, plywood of our boat. Also the hit was right between two of the very strong ribs. Had it been on the rib directly, the impact would have been much greater.

One day another man buzzed around the boat on a rented water scooter, obviously a tourist with a Thai prostitute riding with him. He slowed down, stopped and looked the boat over. "Do you want to come on board?" I asked. He eagerly tied the scooter to the back steps and came up. He was from England, a boat owner and enthusiast. He loved fishing. He was involved in some import business. His questions about the boat again led to stories of how the Lord helped us. He listened and seemed impressed but declared himself an agnostic, against all religion and God. He seemed to enjoy the visit and came back months later on his next trip to Thailand. He came three or four times. We encouraged him to stick with his wife. He also got that conviction. Once I received a letter from him while he was in England. It said "You talked to me about God. So I decided to give it a try. I went to the front deck of your boat and said 'God if you are real I'd like to see a big fish jump up out of the water there right now. Then it happened! I saw

a big fish jump. So I went then to the back deck and said it again, pointing to the water. In just a few seconds "Splash!" and another fish jumped up."

When I read that letter I knew that was a gracious miracle of the Lord, since there are absolutely no big fish in that noisy, dirty, polluted Pattaya Bay where all the boats are anchored. We never caught or saw any bigger than sardine size, much less see it jump out of the water!!

That man Glynn, with his wife Sylvia, later came to Thailand to do a short term mission project. He built a little farm truck from spare parts and pieces he bought. He gave this truck to the Bible School in rural Thailand. He gave this truck to the Bible School we, together with Tosh, were developing in the rural northeast Thailand.

Chapter 11

"What do you do With a Foreign Skeleton?"

Once while we were working on our boat on the beach, a well weathered, old salt of a Thai fisherman approached us. We'd never seen him before. He approached hesitantly but after a brief introduction he felt more at ease and said he came to us to talk about a problem he had. Thankfully, Dan was able to understand him. He told us that while dragging his net (the large Thai boats drag huge, weighted nets behind them, or between two boats) he netted a skeleton. That was bad luck already. Then he explained what they had to do was take a skeleton and do the right rituals, offerings and things to avoid back luck resulting. He knew how to do that for a Thai skeleton, he said. But after netting the skeleton he had a dream and in the dream the skeleton was talking to him in a foreign language. So he felt sure this was a skeleton of a foreigner. He asked us "What shall I do for a foreign skeleton?"

Dan and I looked at each other, trying to keep from smiling or laughing. We seriously began to tell the man about life and death and our hope in Jesus. We also recommended he turn the skeleton over to the police, it may be real helpful since there were many missing foreigners. Many who came to do the "girl thing" ended up missing, never found. Every so often we received a letter from a concerned mother, wife or sister, asking "Can you help me find my relative? His last known stop was Pattaya (or Bangkok). They had tried the police for months (or years) and they seem to have no idea or any leads."

We saw it happen many times. Men come, Get with a girl and soon they are out cold (drugged drink) and all their things are gone. Sometimes their life is gone and their body dumped. Men

also come to Thailand to look for one of those quiet, gentle, submissive Thai ladies, as they thought from looking at the advertisements. They may appear that way on the outside, in the photos. The men who come frequent the bars to try and come up with some sweet young one. Then if she is of a mind to marry, they find they have a "tiger by the tail." They've not only married the girl, they also married the whole family, including uncles, cousins, etc. It's often assumed money will flow freely to any in this family as the need comes. As to a gentle Thai lady, very few exist. I've seen man and wife in all out fist fights more than once. Women often run the businesses. This is true especially among the Chinese, and the men are content to let them do that.

We know many men who wanted the great life here only to go home broke and broken. Houses or things he bought were ripped off. In spite of all this, by God's amazing grace, we know of a couple cases where young unsaved GIs married prostitute, took their wife to the USA and both came to know Jesus, then returned to Thailand as missionaries.

As in every country, there are those beautiful, young ladies who are beautiful in heart also. They love the Lord but just don't seem to have an opportunity to marry a good husband. You'll find them in the church teaching Sunday School or helping other ways.

Chapter 12

Bad Luck

Often while working on our boat in the shipyard, fishermen brought in their boats for recaulking or repair. We noticed one boat especially, it seemed perfectly good but they were tearing the whole front end apart. We were curious. "What are they doing?" I asked. The owner carefully explained "I wasn't having any good luck fishing for a long time. So I went to the monks and witch doctor and found out what was wrong. They said "The cause is the bow board." They said in order to change my luck I'd have to replace it and do the proper ceremonies for the new bow board! Now the bow board is one of the first things that goes on the keel when building a boat. All of the side planking is fastened to it to form the front point of the boat. So replacing that bow board was a major thing to do. Again when the boat is finished and launched another ceremony is done. They live in fear of not doing these things just right. The term "good luck" and "bad luck" are often used in everyday life. It is even part of their farewell greeting, "Choke dee" (good luck) which is used for "hello" or "good bye." When they come to know and trust Jesus they are glad to be rid of these fears.

Chapter 13 Pirates and Storms

One thing I always feared was being at sea, tossed about in a storm. When I was a child, my mother put a picture on the wall of Jesus standing behind a helmsman guiding through a raging storm. I'd never want to be in a position like that" I thought. Of course, even worse than that was the fear of Asian pirates. Almost every day boats were attacked and people killed, most of them were Vietnam boat people trying to flee their country. Besides the "professional" pirates, Thai fishermen were sometimes the pirates. Men who otherwise were common people, turned savage when the wrong circumstances came. Bodies with spear holes, washed up on the western shore of the Gulf regularly along with empty Vietnamese boats of various sizes. This drew worldwide concern and the USA

sent money for patrol boats for the Thai police and navy. Somehow that just didn't work. The money was welcomed but the refugees were an undesired quantity for Thailand. Pirates were actually helping to reduce that problem. Our heart ached for the situation. Only a change of heart would change what governments couldn't. Only Jesus can change hearts. That's what we were into.

These were the months of the "killing fields", when Pol Pot was slaughtering thousands of his own people. In this "ethnic cleansing" he emptied the cities by his soldiers driving through them announcing "the Americans are coming to bomb this city, get out quick". He then herded the masses of people to the fields and killed them. Those who could escaped tried to flee and make the long trek to Thailand on foot, through the jungles, trying to find food and avoid being detected as they went.

All of the world pressure and Christian organizations did help the refugee situation very much. They cooperated with the Thai government to set up camps to receive the masses of sick and starving people flooding into their land. We tried to help at refugee camps on a volunteer basis and saw people die before our eyes because they arrived too starved to be saved. The Christian organizations and UN were doing all they could and there was a flood of volunteer doctors and nurses. People from many nations helped. Many lives were saved. The first to arrive in Thai camps were the victims of Pol Pot's bloody purge. But in 1978 when Vietnam came across Cambodia routing Pol Pot, his men arrived in the same refugee camps. This was a very tense situation. The hunted and the hunter had to live side by side.

When speaking of our Noah boat remember we were in the same stormy, pirate filled, waters. To make matters worse, it seemed that many people who came on board would like to tell either a story about pirates or storms. Of course, we had to read the frequent stories in Readers Digest and other magazines on the same subjects. My fear and reservations were to the point that living in port and day trips to the islands were fine but anything beyond that I didn't care to think about. The Lord was about to deal with those fears.

The tropical Thai waters also have some of the most prolific marine life growth of any water on earth. Especially barnacles and wood boring worms were vicious. The best anti-fouling paint would only last six months. After that all boat bottoms needed to be scraped of barnacles, sanded and repainted. The tides were handy in that we could pull onto the beach and let the tide go out, then race on to beat the tides' return. It was a hot, hard, smelly job for the three of us to cover the large underwater surface of the twin hull catamaran. We worked at a feverish pace and just made it,

exhausted. On one occasion the following day we decided to fiberglass the front deck. There was an unbearable heat of the day and a race to beat the hardening epoxy resin. But we finished the front deck. We were still anchored on the beach. The next morning the tide was up and we were gently swaying in the calm, rhythmic water. We were all three dead tired and still sleeping in the morning when we heard a car horn honking. A voice shouted "Ahoy, Noah."

Brushing sleep from our eyes we saw a black official looking sedan and four well dressed men. "Ahoy, Noah. We want to talk to you" they shouted across the water from the near shore. We lowered the dinghy and brought them on board. They were men on a mission. "We need to rent a boat and driver for our plan" they said. "We asked in the bars and found no one willing. They referred us to you."

"What a plan" I thought.

"We want to get the full story on the refugee and pirate situation" they said. One man was a free lance writer and photographer. One was a missionary and two others were from their US groups headquarters and were financial backers. "Our plan is to sail out to the Gulf of Thailand to the area where the Vietnam boats are being attacked by pirates. What we will do is spot a Vietnamese boat full of refugees, follow it till a pirate attacks and then we'll have the evidence. We'll return and tell the world."

"Crazy" I thought. "These men are crazy. There's a lot of things they don't know. Don't you know as soon as a refugee boat sees any possible rescue ship (especially a foreign one like ours) they'll put a hole in the bottom of their boat so we have to rescue them. That's what they always do."

"Then we'll tell them on our megaphone 'Don't put a hole in your boat'" they told me.

We asked "Can you speak Vietnamese?"

"No" they answered. After discussing it among themselves they said "We'll make a tape message."

I went on "Then they'll allow themselves to be attacked by pirates? The whole idea

is absurd" I told them. "This is our house, we live here with our family including our teen aged daughter. Furthermore the boat isn't ready for a sea voyage. We are still building it. We don't have the permanent rudder cables on. Many other things are necessary. We have never been out of sight of land. I think we will become the refugees ourselves."

That didn't phase them. The missionary with them said "This will be your maiden voyage. We will go get some breakfast and come back, you need to pray about it."

They left and as far as I was concerned I had already given them our answer. I tried also to dispel it from my mind but somehow I was getting a deep sense of peace and assurance. It seemed to be the Lord. "Nothing dangerous will happen", He seemed to say.

I don't know how I had that assurance but it was very strong. When they returned we were soon beginning elaborate preparations for our trip. A used radio transceiver and generator were purchased, a water pump, other equipment and of course food. We worked hard all day and into the night. Finally at about three am we were pulling into a fishing dock at Pattaya to get diesel fuel. We needed four barrels full. We had just finished connecting them and they weren't properly vented yet. But that would have to do. As we approached the fishing dock we could

see many large fishing boats taking on fuel or ice and unloading their cargo. It was a pitch dark night, but there were many lights glaring from the boats and dock. Our problem was stopping the boat, since we hadn't modified the truck transmissions.

The modification is necessary so that the propeller will turn fast enough in reverse to be effective. Our only way to stop was to slow down and throw out an anchor. We hoped to drop it from the back deck just in time to stop in the right place and not slam into the other boats or dock. We were all super tired, and son Dan was stationed on the back deck, Bob on the top deck, ready to relay the message. The narrow hulls of our boat slipped through the water easily and it would take a long time to stop the 32 ton craft. At just the right moment I (I thought) I yelled back from the helm "Drop the anchor, Dan."

I heard "splash" and it dropped. Then I heard an excited "Dad, Dad" as Dan came running over the top of the boat to the front deck. "The line wasn't attached." Frantically, we grabbed a spare anchor from the front deck with the line attached and we helped him up over the top and threw the anchor over the back. That timing was perfect.

After fueling up we started on our trip motoring south along the coast. The sun was just coming up as we cleared the last point of land at Sattahip. On and on we motored and when the wind came up set set sails. All that day and into the next we sailed but we never met a Vietnamese boat. One time we saw what appeared to be some old wreckage. On the evening of the third day a storm from the west blew in. Our noon sights and other attempts to determine our location hadn't worked. One sighting would put us in Bangkok, another in Vietnam. Now we were lost in the storm! However in the Gulf of Siam west is always the direction to land

since the long Thai-Malay peninsula ends up in Singapore.

With all of our pirate hunters seasick and in view of the situation, and me at the end of my "rope", we agreed to head west and find land. We all had enough. Since the storm was coming from the west we motored into it. The slim hulled boat handled the on coming seas nicely and it was quite comfortable inside. Joyce seemed to be the most at ease and served coffee and refreshments to us periodically, day and night.

If you stepped outside on the deck, the wind was howling, the rain beating against your face and the white capped waves crashing. I was concerned about the rudder cables. We motored all through the night into the storm, total blackness. In the early hours of the morning, just before daybreak, we saw lights. Now we slowed as much as we could and waited for dawn. I was concerned we might come ashore at the notorious island where pirates kept girls captive. The other problem we had was we didn't have any detail charts for that coast, and out of the waters rose beautiful pinnacle rocks and undoubtedly some were hidden just under the surface of the water. At dawn we could see the landscape and there was an island, the tidal current carried us first south and as the tide shifted it carried us north. Exactly how far along the coast we were, we didn't have any idea.

We noticed some fishing boats heading for shore. We decided to approach one and ask if he was going to port and if we could follow him. We were close enough to the boat to see the shirt less man with tattoos all over his body. He fitted the standard image of a pirate. He smiled and said "Yes, you can follow us." For the next hour

we trailed the boat, now were the pirates helping us? We came though pinnacle rocks which open into a cove inland, the city of

Chumpon. We were all happy to see land and civilization again. We dropped anchor in the calm bay and said goodbye to the pirate hunters on board. Now they wanted to concentrate on land and try to get some stories there, since this was the major area pirates came from.

My two sons Bob and Dan rowed them to shore. "We'll also explore a bit and see the place" my boys said. That left our daughter and Joyce and I. About ten minutes after the boys were gone we were boarded, several men came of their own accord and looked around. Their aggressive action caused us to realize these were the same type fishermen pirates which attacked Vietnamese boats. They opened cabinet doors to see what was inside. We remembered our strongest weapons were spiritual and began to use the name of Jesus and take the authority He gave us. "In Jesus Name you must get off this boat," we repeated it several times in English, they didn't understand our language, but the Lord and his angels do!

We told them "Everything here belongs to Jesus." They stopped rummaging through things, and we gave them tracts, Christian literature in Thai to read. After while they left. We breathed a sigh of relief and thanked the Lord for His power and protection.

Our friend Brian always equipped his boat with plenty of guns, machine guns and other weapons. He once commented "You don't need all that stuff what you have is stronger and better". When the boys returned we plotted our return course and lifting anchor set for home. It was 120 miles across the Gulf, back to Pattaya. There were beautiful, calm times mostly with occasional showers and good sailing winds. We felt the peace and presence of the Lord. "This is beautiful" I thought, it truly was our " maiden voyage and it helped alleviate my fears."

The next day toward evening we were just beginning to see some evidence of land. We were holding a compass course. The first peaks on the horizon I assumed to be islands. In fact, they were mountains far inland! It didn't seem to make sense on the chart of the coast, then the "islands" seemed to slide past each other in veneer fashion, nothing like I'd ever seen before. I was used to air charts and loved cross country flying. There you could look down and things appeared as you see them on the map. But from the position on the surface as we traveled along, everything looked different. Actually, we were on course but I steered northward to correct my imagined mistake. We ended up north of our intended port. So we had to go several hours south along the coast and it was getting dark as we approached Pattaya Bay.

Something was different! The whole bay was full of lights. Boats and lights of many sizes were floating in the water. "What's going on?" I thought. It was the annual Loy Krathon festival, the Thai atonement holiday. In the full moon in the month of November they made palm leaf boats the size of a large dinner plate. They put incense and candles on the boat with an offering of money to the "Mother of Waters." As we came close we were still clipping along at a good speed and now many small fishing boats were ahead. We throttled back as much as we could. "You keep watch on the front deck" I told the boys.

Suddenly, right ahead of us, we saw a small boat and the person in it sculling as fast as he could so he wouldn't be swallowed up by this sea monster approaching. Then a water scooter appeared, it must have been an angel. He shouted "You can't cross here, follow me and I'll take you safely to anchorage." We anchored safely in our usual place for the night. Thank God for that special Angel! The boys saw a great opportunity, all the little

Krathons floating by with money on them, just headed to the sea, what a waste! So they hopped into our dinghy and enjoyed plucking the fruit off this sea gift.

Shortly after that a Vietnamese style boat anchored next to us. But we noticed it had foreigners on board. It turned out to be some French hippie type young people. They had the boat built in Malaysia by local workers and it looked very Vietnamese. They had just come from south of Chumphon.

Their experience was worse than ours. They found themselves surrounded and boarded and the things being taken off their deck. When the pirates came below with weapons ready to kill them, they saw foreigners and backed off. Their lives were spared, but they lost all the gear on deck. They were much shaken by the experience. We stayed anchored in that bay for the rest of the season with numerous day trips out to the islands, taking groups of up to 60 people per time. These groups often would show up at our boat and they came from churches and youth groups. They had just decided they would go visit the NOAH boat. They often left an offering, enough to cover the expense of the trip out, but I was still wrestling with concern for our low income.

When I lived in Israel (about 6 years before this in our Thailand adventure) we became friends with Billy and Shelby Watson and their four children. Their family was similar to ours in age and interest. Billy financially was totally dependent on a fresh daily supply of a miraculous income. If he was down to his last dollar and someone was in need, he would gladly give it to them. "God will supply all my needs" he would say. Although I admired that faith and recognized it to be what Jesus taught, I was thinking "I hope I never have to live like that."

As long as I had money in my pocket, I felt secure. If money ran low I got uneasy and irritable. I guess that's why at 12 years of age I had my first paper route and as a young adult I worked at three jobs simultaneously; teaching full time, building houses and repairing TVs and selling them. God blessed as He said He would but much of my life was centered on getting enough money to feel secure. Many of my decisions were based on "How much does it cost? Which is the cheapest?" instead of "Which is the most economical in the long run? Or what is right and best for others?"

I was tight on most things but generous on the things I liked to do. The Lord convicted

me on this and was teaching me by what happened in my early years in Thailand by doing the boat project. Our monthly support was very low. I looked back in my records and noted "Lowest month h' yet,

only \$250" A few months later "Lowest month yet, only \$115 deposited." Yet the next month there was a special gift \$1,200 from St. John's in College Point, New York. (This is where our first teaching call was, when Joyce and I were newlyweds.) It was during

those low months when the Lord could teach us a lot about money, not to measure income in dollars and cents but in the special ways He could provide. One day we

were down to our last nickel. We had only rice but nothing to add to it and to make matters worse, guests were to come for the evening meal. No one except the Lord knew of our need. The neighbors thought of us as rich Americans who owned a yacht. But half an hour before our guests arrived, two of our neighbors dropped in bringing prepared dishes of food. "We want you to taste this Thai food" they said. It was a delicious evening meal. The guests enjoyed it also and we praised the Lord, we learned

He can provide in many ways.

Another time we were anchored out at sea and our money was gone. Bob and Dan remembered that "Just yesterday when we dived under the boat to do work and we saw four old car batteries. Someone must have thrown them overboard." They dived down and retrieved the batteries and sold to the recycler for enough money to buy food for the day. The next day money came in from another source, the batteries had tided us over.

One thing I admired about Joyce's Dad Martin, back in Missouri, was his victory on money. He worked hard at small farming and then later ran his own auto repair shop but when his wife or family needed something he would always say "Well, if you need it get it." (He had faith the Lord would provide.) He always helped the poor farmers if their car or tractor broke down. "I'll pay as soon as I can" they'd say but he knew sometimes they couldn't. Joyce's folks were also generous in giving to our mission account faithful monthly support.

"Be careful" I'd lecture Joyce when she went to the market. "We don't have much money" and she returned I'd deprogram her and ask "How much did you spend for this and that?" Or "Why did you buy this?" Praise the Lord for giving her grace. At the same time I was building the boat costing thousands of dollars and miracle money was coming in for that project. I had no trouble believing that God was supplying that, it was His project and when I first laid the keels I was already (in my mind) standing on the finished front deck looking out to sea. How was it I had no faith for the little things, but "faith for the boat?" no problem."

I received a teaching tape on "Gift of Faith vs. Fruit of Faith." The

example the teacher gave was that of a large fuel delivery truck, big tank full of fuel yet the truck stopped. It ran out of fuel. Why? Because he was running on the small tank. The small tank represented the fruit of faith in our lives. That's what God is trying to develop in us and that's what lasts to eternity. That's what God is concerned with. We may carry a big tank (gift of faith) that God gives, but that's no credit to us. In fact it can be very dangerous and make us proud. Well God had given me a big gift of faith for the boat project. Now what I needed to do was to enlarge my "little tank," my faith for the daily things and grow in fruitfulness there. (I'm still working on that.) This lesson also helped me to understand why some famous preachers and even Biblical characters could in one moment be calling fire down from heaven and in the next minute be running for their life in fear.

Chapter 14 Boat's Name Changed

We had named our boat "God's Grace" when we first built it. "That's just like Noah" many people who visited the boat would say. Noah and his sons built a boat at God's command. Besides that, there was a certain conviction about the boat that seemed to say "As in the days of Noah, judgment is coming if we don't repent." One teacher brought his class to see the boat. He and I were standing beside each other on the beach, he looked up at the large, twin hulled, boat in front of him and said "What do you think of the Domino Theory?"

Remember these were the days just after the Vietnam war and the days of the Killing Fields in Cambodia. At that moment, Vietnam was advancing across Cambodia. Pol Pot and his men were fleeing into Thai refugee camps. The Domino Theory was that one after another southeast Asian countries would fall like a line of dominoes into the Communist hands.

"Well" I said "unless Thailand repents and turns to the Lord, trouble is sure to come."

"Then I'd get mad at God," he said.

"You don't understand" I said "God's Plan A is that when the gospel comes to a nation they repent and change their ways, accept his offer of life. But if they refuse they are left helpless. Great tragedies happen. It's the devil who comes to kill, steal and destroy (John 10:10) Even the Thai religion has that principal, if you do evil you get evil. " But " I continued "in these tragic events people who are refusing eternal life will then come to their senses

and accept salvation. God turns evil to good. He wants all to turn from their evil ways and be made knew from the inside out. Jesus cleans our heart and gives us new life. Jesus said "I am come that you may have life and have it more abundantly."

"Now I understand" he said.

On another occasion a youth pastor from Bangkok brought his group for a retreat on the boat. While we were on our way out to the island, the whole group was up on the large flat roof of the boat. I was invited to speak to them. I told them nice things; "God loves the Thai people and sent missionaries here, etc." When I finished the Thai pastor turned to me in the front of the group and said "Yes, that's very nice. But this boat says if Thailand doesn't repent, trouble will come." I wouldn't have preached that strongly. But we kept hearing this "Noah, Noah" as if the Lord was trying to tell me something I wasn't getting. Joyce was pregnant then and I even thought "Maybe it will be a boy and we'll name him Noah." But Judy was born, not a boy.

Our two sons made friends with many church groups, often these groups would come unexpectedly and say "We decided to go on your boat" and I'd think "Thanks, I wish we had some previous notice." But we got used to people just showing up and we felt we could show love this way.

One day a group came (during the six months the boat was on dry dock in Naglua) and we still lived on the boat. A long ladder was necessary to get up on deck and into the boat. The youth group scattered around the boat, looking outside and inside, but we noticed one girl especially who separated from the rest and slowly, carefully looked around. First of all around the outside, under the boat, then up the ladder and looked in each room. She turned to

my son and said "Last night I saw this boat in a dream. Exactly as it is, it wasn't in the water, outside everything was the same, inside everything was the same.

Except there was one thing different.

"What's that?"

"The name. It wasn't God's Grace, it was Noah."

"Oh," I thought "That's what you were trying to tell me, Lord. You want the boat to be called Noah." I thought of the difficulty I had in registering the boat in the USA Embassy in Bangkok and I didn't want to go through the hassle again. But I did need to make some changes in the registration. "Lord, if you want me to change the name please make it easy for me to do" I prayed.

I forgot the Embassy closed at noon on Saturdays. There I was at 11:55 am at the window saying I needed to make some changes in my boat registration. "We are closing" she said but whipped out an Affidavit form and said "Fill in what you want to change, pay the cashier and come back."

I hastily wrote the changes, put in the new name and rushed to the cashier where the window was already closed. I knocked on it and shouted "I have to pay for this notarizing." The window opened, receipt given and I went back to the other window and it was closed. I knocked on it and said "I'm finished now"

Zip. The window came open. Zap down went the stamp and signatures . I looked at the clock and only seven minutes had passed. "You sure wanted the name changed, Lord" I said to myself. So we painted the new name on the boat, NOAH. My understanding of this is that we weren't Noah but these are the days that Jesus

spoke of when he said "As in the days of Noah, so shall it be in the days of the son of man. They were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage. (Business as usual.) The flood came and destroyed them all." Luke 17:27 What a warning to shake us out of our complacency, lukewarmness and to wake up the sleeping church!

It is time for a true love relationship with Jesus.

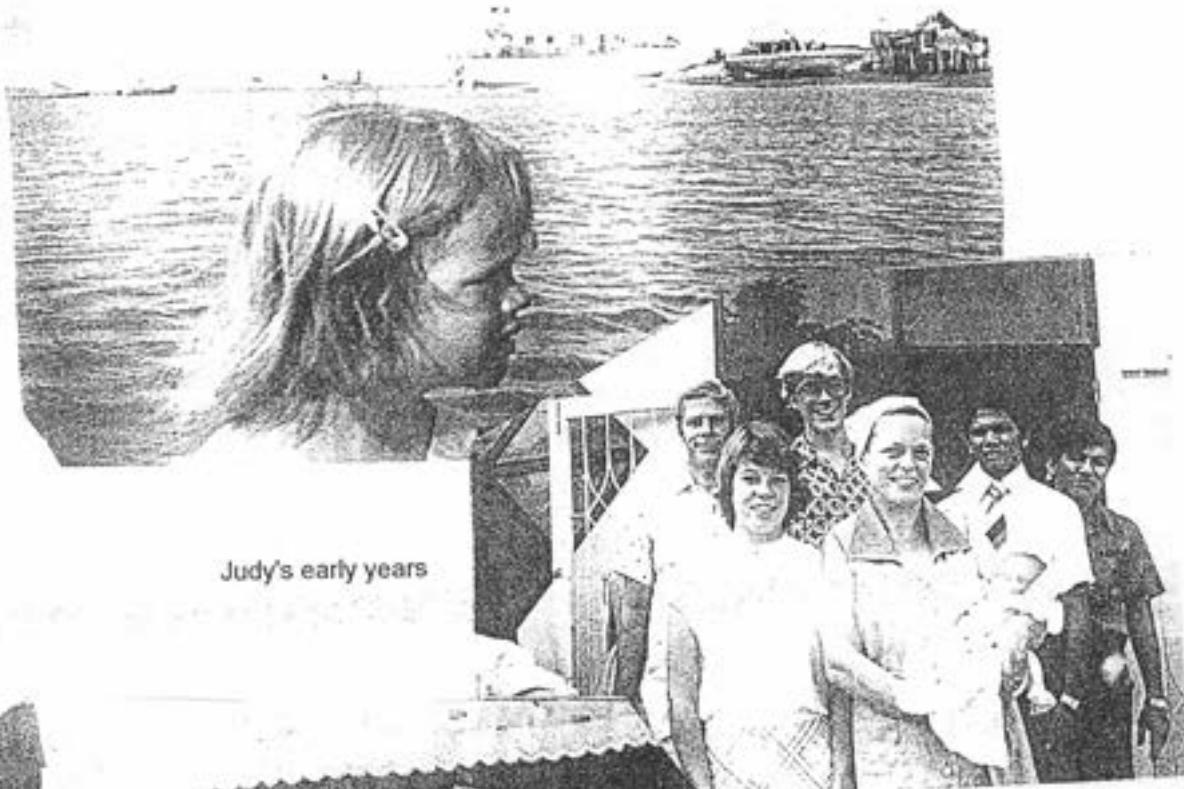
Ken

One day while still in the Nagluia shipyard, I needed some information from Ken. His home was just up the block from the boatyard, just beyond the clinic where Judy was born, and behind an empty lot next to the post office. In that same lot stood our abandoned VW van with all the Scriptures on it. The mechanic who bought it left it here, abandoned. I talked to Ken for about a half an hour and got the information Needed. "I need to go" I said as I started for the door. Just as I got outside Ken said "Wait" hesitantly but firmly he went on. "Would you mind praying for an old sailor, sinner like me?"

"Do you mean that?" I asked. He nodded and we prayed for forgiveness in Jesus and for salvation. He had opened the door of his heart. It was then I realized for the first time he hadn't said a cuss word in that half hour. That night he read his Bible into the late hours, and the next day he read too, and was a changed man.

He told me "Every morning I stumble out the front door and there on the old car I read "Sin brings death, but Jesus gives life." That had convicted him of his need for a Savior.

One thing I learned from Ken was his uncompromising insistence on what is right and true. In the Thai culture it was easy to follow human nature "Mi ben rai" (never mind or whatever) was often used to excuse anything; lying, cheating, stealing, shoddy work etc. But Ken always insisted on what was right.



Judy's early years



Judy and her friend

Made in Thailand (Judy's Born)

Life had been so exciting and we were enjoying our teens so much that relating to babies and small children seemed remote. With each stage of growth in our children we asked the Lord for wisdom and skill in being parents. We were happy with the number in our family and hadn't thought of having any more children, especially considering we had occasionally foster children. One day while I was in Bangkok, across from the Siam Square Dept. store, there was an American woman with her small daughter walking alongside her, hand in hand.

"How nice" I thought, somehow it just warmed my heart to see that scene. Only a few days later wife Joyce confided in me "I think I am pregnant." She was 43 years old and it had been 16 years since our last child, but she recognized easily the morning sickness and other symptoms. Our teenagers were surprised at the news but soon loved the thought. Nine months later there we were with the boat on land in the Nagluwa boatyard. I was fiber glassing the bottom and adding the back deck. Two wonderful events happened. Tosh and Dawn's wedding and Judy's birth. We chose a small clinic just up the block for the birth. I had always wanted to assist at the birth of our children, but in the days when our first four were born, dads weren't even allowed to watch. The small clinic seemed more like a home delivery than a hospital and soon a little red, fuzzy head appeared. I laughed and laughed, saying "We have a little....." and I laughed some more. Joyce said "Well, tell me what it is....."

I said "We have a little girl" and Judy was the name we had chosen. We didn't have a middle name yet. The nurse kept saying "Maliwan, Maliwan" Mali is a sweet, white Jasmine flower.

Then we decided to give her the middle name of Mali. At birth Judy's eyes were bright and lively. She looked at me and seemed to be saying "Come on, Dad. Let's run and play."

She was only two days old when Joyce brought her home to the boat. She grew up her first two years on the boat, and learned to walk while on the boat. We laughed when she tried to walk on land. She fell down because land wasn't moving up and down like the boat where she was accustomed to walk. The group who came on board loved to play with the little red haired child. She had a Thai birth certificate but that by itself didn't make her a Thai citizen. Their law says children born to foreign parents aren't citizens. She is American by birth.

We installed a special netted fence around the rails of the boat so we didn't have to worry about her wandering outside and falling off. Judy loved to toddle about the boat and went outside, loved to crawl and climb as high as she could possibly get. Our teen boys also liked to teach her to swim and take her along on their wind surfer.

Judy loved the water.

Do Something, Lord!

Once after an eventful six months on dry dock we were again ready to go out to sea. Our family was different now, with Dawn just married and newborn, little Judy aboard.

The boatyard used a system of branching train rails and huge plank carts with iron train wheels to move the boats about. One set

of rails finally led down a ramp into the water. Our boat was jacked up with large, house jacks and the special cart placed under it. Then with a cable pulled by a motorized winch, the cart was pulled into place. At last it was sitting atop the ramp, from there it would slowly be let down the ramp into the waiting, high tide. Large, palm tree logs formed a dock alongside the ramp. Because of the width of our boat it was a very tight situation. "It's crooked on the cart and it'll hit the poles" said the lady foreman. "We'll need to jack it up again and straighten it out."

But there isn't time, the tide is already going down. There were many of us standing, puzzled about what to do. Inside the heavily loaded boat Joyce and Judy heard of our predicament. "Do something, Lord" Joyce prayed. And at that moment we heard a snapping and cracking sound and the cable holding the heavy boat on the ramp snapped. Down the ramp went the boat, faster and faster until it splashed into the waiting sea. Beside the splash there was a cracking sound, two of the dock poles were no longer there, but snapped off completely. The back transom hit them. There the boat stood looking good, floating gently in the water. An examination of the transom revealed only a slight, small indented area where the poles had hit.

Chapter 16

Arranged Marriage

While still living on the boat anchored in the village of Oa Udom, our family would come and go and of course the young men noticed our two lovely teen girls. One day a group of young people appeared at our house. We politely entertained them, and after some time realized that what they had come for was a marriage proposal for Dawn, our second daughter. We didn't know the Thai custom, but that's the way they would propose. A group of boy and girl friends would come along with the suitor and bring a gift and ask for the girl they wanted.

When we realized what was going on of course we couldn't give our consent and Dawn wasn't in favor of it either. After that I said "Girls whatever you do please don't marry a Thai boy." We hadn't met any Christian young men and there was a great cultural difference. Both Mary and Dawn agreed. "Never mind, Dad, we'll never do that." they assured me. They were also thinking of two cases we had counseled where an American wife was miserable and finally rejected after some years of marriage and having children with a non Christian Thai husband who's habits included many other women.

So we left it at that. Our oldest daughter Mary, soon after this, returned to the USA to study nursing. She married and stayed there. We moved the boat down to Naglua and took it on dry dock to fiberglass the bottom and do other work that we hadn't yet completed. We were on dry dock for six months. During that time several significant things happened, including Judy's birth, Kens' conversion and another unusual event I'm about to tell.

One day I went to Bangkok to do banking and buy supplies. I often stopped at the denominational headquarters of the little churches we helped in Pattaya and on the coast. That day, as I walked into their office, facing me while he sat at his desk, was a young Thai man they had recently hired, he smiled from ear to ear. I was hearing loudly and clearly in my subconscious mind "This is your daughter's husband." I figuratively plugged my ears. "I didn't hear a thing" I tried to tell myself. Upon returning home I didn't tell Joyce, Dawn or anyone, I just kept denying it to myself. About three months later I needed to make a trip to the bank in Bangkok. "Today" I thought "I'll make a quick trip. I'll just go to the bank and return home." But when I was in Bangkok going down the main street on the public bus, I thought "It's almost noon, maybe the bank is closed for lunch. I might as well stop off at the denominational headquarters." So I jumped off the bus and first went into the bookstore next door.

"Did you know your friend Bruce is back?" the clerk told m.
"Oh, I must see him" I answered, and went next door to his office. Again when I opened the door it happened. There was the young Thai man sitting at his desk smiling from ear to ear. There was the voice in my heart again, louder than ever saying "This is your daughter's husband. They are going to get married."

I greeted him briefly with a quick Thai style "wai" and turned to my American friend. We talked only a short time, because the pulling was so strong on me to talk to the young Thai man. So I stood at his desk, he looked at me and asked. "Can we go out to lunch?"

"Yes" I said. Soon I was seated at the small restaurant and after he ordered the food he sat across from me and looked at me intently.

"Has the Lord been telling you anything?" he asked.
"I don't know, did he tell you something?" I asked evasively.
"You tell me first" he said.
I couldn't deny it. Looking down I said "The Lord told me you'd marry my daughter Dawn.

That's interesting " he replied. "I know you don't know me, let me tell you my story briefly. I was raised in a regular Thai Buddhist home in Lumphun, next to Chang Mai, in Northern Thailand. My older sister married a Christian air force man and they lived in the USA. She wrote to me about Jesus. At the age of 17 I went to a little Presbyterian church in our town and accepted Jesus and was baptized. My goal then was to go to America for the good life, marry an American. When I got there I lived with my older sister and her husband, they were stationed in Alaska at that time. I didn't mind the cold. They were then transferred to Texas and I went too. One day I was watching Christian TV and the Holy Spirit touched my heart, my goals in life changed. I wanted to go to Bible school. I ended up at Christ for the Nations in Dallas, Texas for a two year course. In my second year the Lord put a desire in my heart to return to my homeland and begin a similar Bible School there.

"I had dated a few American girls and decided I wouldn't marry an American since it would be difficult for her in my culture. No refrigerator, no washing machine and me just a poor pastor. To do this Tosh (as they affectionately called him in America) was willing to sacrifice his opportunity for US citizenship. He had his green card and had been in the USA 7 years already, making him eligible to become a citizen.

"I came back to Thailand and ended up working at these headquarters doing this TV show. Now I thought I had a good job, I'm 24 years old and I'd like to get married. While praying about it I asked the Lord which Thai Chinese girl I should marry. There were two perspective ones. The answer I heard when I prayed was 'Dawn'.

"Dawn" that missionary's daughter? Tosh said he kept that thought for some months. Things kept confirming this. He told me of going to visit his dad up north and asking ' Dad, "Which one of these Thai Chinese girls should I marry?"

He hadn't mentioned Dawn. His Dad had recently been saved through the witness of Tosh. Before answering the question his dad thought awhile and then, as if he had gotten a word from the Lord, said "You won't marry any of these but you'll marry a foreigner." Further more upon return to Bangkok Tosh said he talked to his supervisor, telling him that he felt the Lord was leading him in marriage to a foreign lady. This prompted a long lecture of all the negative aspects of that, then a pause, and the question "who is she?" "Dawn" Tosh replied. Now that supervisor already knew our family and Dawn. "Why that would be wonderful!" he exclaimed.

How long did Tosh and I sit at the restaurant? I don't know, but I didn't say much. We parted and I did my banking and then returned home to our boat. It was about 6 pm and almost dark. (Near the equator there is little twilight, darkness comes about the same time year round.) Dawn was just coming home from counseling session with a young Thai lady. They had agreed to be at the church all day in fasting and prayer. The young Thai lady was trying to decide whether to accept a USA serviceman's proposal. It was

complicated by the fact she was already married and only separated from her husband. Aside from the counsel and prayers they had, Dawn's thoughts were "Lord Jesus, I give myself to you. I will never be married unless you want me to." In the meantime I was in Bangkok and the Lord was arranging her marriage. As Dawn and I both returned to the boat our paths crossed and I mumbled "Dawn, I think you are going to marry this Tosh fellow."

"Oh, really?" was all she replied and no more was said of it that evening. Next morning (it was Saturday I remember) Dawn came to me and said "Dad can I talk to you? You remember what you said to me last night?" "Yes, I remember" I said as we sat down to talk.

I told her what happened in Bangkok. "I've met him only once" Dawn said. "remember when he preached at Pattaya church. I was sitting on the chair during the sermon and the Lord said to me as he was speaking "This is your husband." I thought it was only my teen hormones. (Dawn was only 17 then.)

It looked like the Lord's hand. I guess if God arranges a marriage nothing could be better. I also remembered back to our second day in Bangkok. We were walking past the King's Palace and looking at tourist sites and Dawn said to me "Dad, I feel like I'm coming home." "Really?" I thought That was beyond my wildest thought. Everything seemed so strange and foreign to me at that point. Not long after that, Dawn had the greatest desire to attend Thai school. We agreed to check it out and found it impossible for her to attend any public Thai schools because she needed to be a Thai citizen. But the Lord opened the doors in a private Thai high school. She studied her high school courses there for two years and graduated.

All her classes were in the Thai language and she came to know the Thai language and culture very well. She even began teaching

English in a Thai primary school just before this "arranged marriage."

Sometimes people ask me "How did Joyce feel about all this?"
The Lord confirmed
it in her heart by several verses she read in the Bible and she
couldn't doubt that this was the Lord's doing and Dawn was to
marry Tosh.

The wedding was to be a special with a double ceremony, one
in the Thai tradition and the other the U.S. custom.



Thai ceremony at the home

Tosh and Dawn wedding in
Bangkok Dec 27, 1980



Chapter 17 Bible School Starts

By now our oldest daughter Mary was in the States in Springfield, Mo. in nursing school. She was the first one "out of the nest" and bravely pioneered the way back to the states alone. She stepped out in faith and saw the Lord provide.

In Tosh and Dawn's first years of marriage he was working as the host of a Christian TV talk show. The government called him to talk three times and the last time they said "You can't have that kind of program on TV." They accused him of speaking against Buddhism by comparison. Actually, what happened was when people gave their testimony and told of their new joy and peace in the Christian life, it could be assumed that before that they were Thai Buddhist. That virtually shut the program down. Tosh accepted a position as assistant pastor at Pittsanalo, 50 miles north of Bangkok.

One day, in their second year in Pittsanalo, they came to visit us on the coast. "Can I see your stationary?" Tosh asked. I showed him our mission letterhead and it said "Thailand National Institute for Christ". In Thai "Pra Crit Pua Cha Thai" (Christ for Thailand.) Then he showed me his stationary and the name he had chosen years ago while still in Texas. It was exactly the same name! "I think the Lord wants us to work together doing a Bible School" he said. I agreed.

Tosh's vision, while still in Texas, was to come back to Thailand and establish a Bible School here, similar to Christ For the Nations, to train the nationals to serve Jesus. He told me he tried to do this when he came back, but twice it just didn't work out. Then he took the TV program job.

I told him, back when we knew we were to stay in Thailand, the



tying the Knot

Toshes Dad



Tying the knot

This expression is acted out literally in the folk wedding ceremony of northern Thailand. The evening before the wedding the young couple is at home for visitation from neighbors and family to come greet them. Then on the wedding day the ceremony also takes place in the home. A large feast is prepared

the bride and groom are up front sitting Thai style on a mat.

There are special decorations on both sides of that mat. The house is decorated. The guests fill the house and as many as possible sit inside the house Thai style on mats. Certain mats closest to the front are reserved for the parents and any dignitaries who come.

Perhaps the mayor or Chief of Police or School Principal will come. The rest of the mats are for family, friends and neighbors.

As the ceremony begins the father of the groom comes up first.

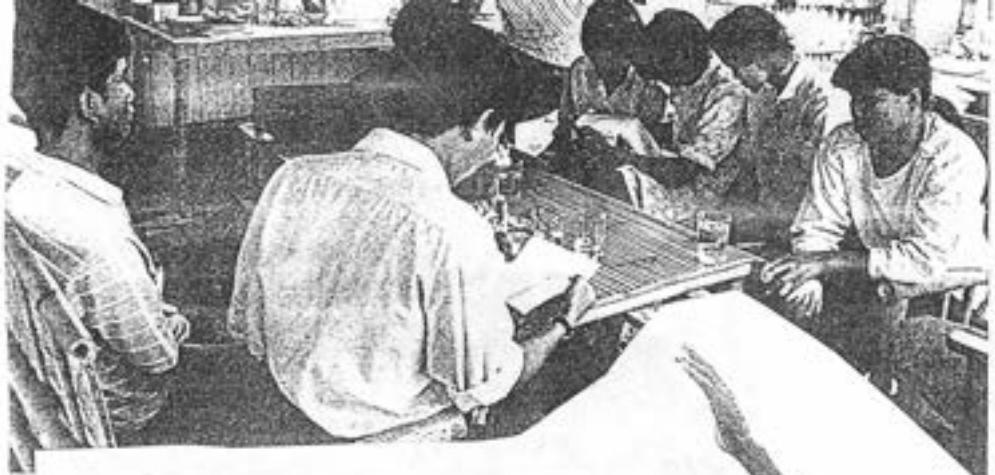
(everyone maneuvers by walking on their knees with legs folded behind, this is so your head level is not above those around you.

It's a way to show respect).

A lady is there with a little basket of strings, the father selects the first string and moves forward. The groom and bride each extend their arms next to each other, the string is tied around both wrists. The couple is fastened together at the wrist, literally the knot is tied! The father also gives them a blessing and deposits a gift in the decorated basket next to them. The groom's mother does the same. Then the father and mother of the bride, and after that the dignitaries and family, and finally everyone who wants can come up in turn give a blessing, and tie a string. In the end bride and groom are sitting with wrists tied together, a huge ball of string between them. Later the strings are removed. After this Tosh had invited various preachers to come and bless the wedding, and to give an evangelistic sermon to the guests. Most weddings the Buddhists monks would be there for this part, but since Tosh was Christian he made it a Christian wedding. For the whole afternoon then, a huge feast, visiting and festivities commenced. In the evening when Joyce and I would be happy to see them go off on a honeymoon, we found that wasn't the custom.

The reserved bedroom in their parent's home was the place to spend their first night. I guess this symbolized that now everyone recognized they were a new family and were husband and wife.

What followed then is time spent with the parents in training the new bride to be able to cook properly for her husband and to please the family.



Baptisms & Evangelism along the coast



Lord seemed to put a Bible school on my heart, and that is why I chose that name for our mission. Same name, same call, and now it seemed to be God's time. The ones God had called came together. We wondered where the school should be located. He was thinking of Chiang Mai in the north; I had a leading for Siracha here on the coast. "Let's talk to Mr Mitre" Tosh suggested.

Mr Mitre is a mutual friend and a Thai businessman. Both Tosh and I knew him before we knew each other. When Tosh returned from the USA Mr Mitre asked him to lead a Bible Study in Mr Mitres home in Bangkok. I had met Mr. Mitre because he heard of the Noah boat and came to visit. He was interested in boats because he had built his own twin mast, ferro concrete sail boat. Tosh and I visited him at his company in Bangkok. He had more than 1,000 employees and did contracts for Sanyo, Singer and others. He built refrigerators and appliances for Thailand. We were escorted to his office. Tosh began to explain about his vision for the Bible School and his need for land. He questioned Mr Mitre about the several pieces of property he had in Chiang Mai, one was near the mountain. Mr Mitre paused awhile and then said "How about Siracha?"

"In Siracha?" Tosh and I looked at each other.

"I have a beach house there and the house next to it is available for rent. You could start there."

We hadn't mentioned anything about Siracha to him. We decided to check this out. Tosh did rent that two story house, on the coast with a nice yard. It had two other buildings. There were many large mango trees and it was next to Mr Mitre's beach house. The front yard ended at a 30 foot cliff right on the sea coast. Tosh painted and repaired the house, then recruited his first four students. I was busy writing a Foundations Manual and teaching

that and other subjects. Tosh' long term vision for the Bible School was that it would be self supporting, kibbutz type situation, where students could earn part of their support by working in orchards, fish ponds or other enterprises. Now Tosh himself had to lead the way in a life of faith. He had left all those good paying ministries to follow what the Lord showed him to do. It wasn't easy for the students either. They went fishing for their dinner, literally. They liked to hunt and trap small animals. They ate lizards, snakes and almost anything that moved. Clams and shellfish were a delicacy. Once a student was sitting on the beach under a tree fishing, then he heard a noise, jumping clear just in the time, a large Boa Constrictor hurried away. It had been quietly stalking him and coiled itself in the limbs above his head intending to drop over his neck and choke him.

There on the coast, we also started a small church where we could invite the neighbors and local children. Along the property there was a fenced off walkway leading to steps that descended the cliff to the narrow beach. It seems all sorts of troubled and drug addicted people resorted to the hidden area below. Some went there to get drugs. On a couple occasions police came. All of this gave us opportunity to minister to local people in need..

On two occasions motorcycle accidents had caused broken legs and the legs didn't heal, gangrene set in. Swollen, puss filled, smelly sores came and the Dr. said the leg needed to be removed, but they refused. One of these people would limp past the Bible School, down the path every day. He agreed we could pray. His leg was healed and he was again riding his bicycle. The local crime godfather was also in charge of the care of several properties on the sea, including the house we rented. Mr Mitre had also put him in charge of that beach home so we had to deal with the man. Tosh prayed for him a lot. God

moved by signs and wonders in his life. He repented and wanted to be baptized. Since others wanted to be baptized too, I arranged a day and walked down the steps to the beach below. When his turn came we took him into the water, baptizing him in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and in Jesus name . he came up. But then he of his own accord, dipped himself several times more. Later we asked him why and he answered "You don't know how much sin I have." Praise the Lord for his repentance. That beach was the site for many baptisms in the years following.

A dangerous nest of aggressive paper wasps caused Tosh concern, this type of wasp was known to dive down and attack anyone who would walk under the tree, It hung high in the spreading mango tree just above their front door. The children played near there, many people came and went out the door. Tosh prayed for the Lord's help. One evening just after dark, some neighborhood men came and shyly asked "Could we have your nest of paper wasps?" It seems they were having their usual evening time of drinking beer and whiskey and the larvae of those wasps would be delicious with their drinks. Tosh quickly agreed. They took a long bamboo pole and tied a large wad of dry leaves and paper at the end. The wad was soaked in oil and lit. They raised this under the nest quickly. The emerging wasps were burned and the flaming nest was knocked down. Grubs were picked out to be eaten. That was the end of those pests bothering at the house.

Not long after that our son in law Tosh encouraged us to move up close to the Bible School. He had spotted a nice home so we rented it. We were already having classes and it was more convenient to live there. When we needed help we hired a student to stay on board the boat and take care of it. We often took groups out. The word passed around and churches all over Thailand



Evangelism



Dow Tahn Church on the coast

wanted to come and have a trip in the Noah boat.

It was already Nov 1982 and I had hoped our time in Thailand would be finished before that. I hoped we'd be able to go home for a furlough. I said "Lord, don't missionaries usually go home after four years?" We had been here six years already. I had sort of given up and resolved to be faithful to the Lord. This resolve came because of a previous mistake way back when I was newly graduated and called to New York City. After four years my mother wrote me about a new Christian high school opening in Minneapolis. "Lord," I thought "Four years is a pretty good length of time. I'll apply for that job." I got that job but those next two years were the most miserable of my life. Then I resolved "Lord, if you ever call me again I'll go where you want me to go and I'll stay till you tell me the time is up." After that I ended up leaving teaching and working in the Development and Evaluation section of Honeywell in their Aerospace Program. Later I returned to a teaching career.

Along about Nov. 1982 a missionary told us "You'll be home for Christmas." I thought "Slim chance of that." But Joyce started packing her bags and it happened, our first furlough! Just before leaving Thailand I was saying "Lord, in the winter?" Cold weather isn't the ideal season to visit Minnesota, especially After six years of continual tropical jungle heat and humidity. I remembered that frostbite I had when I was 13 years old living in Minn. doing the early morning paper route in below zero weather my feet were still cold, even in Thailand.

"Please do something about my feet" I prayed. The Lord was gracious. It was a beautiful Christmas at home. When we visited with family and friends it seemed we'd been there only a few days before. We hadn't lost any time and my

feet were never
cold. Praise the Lord!

It was the first time any of our relatives saw Judy, and the first time she saw her grandparents. She was now two years old. We stayed till mid June and then we returned to Thailand and continued teaching at the Bible School. We were now able to rent a large house next to Tosh and Dawn, and our yard joined theirs. We could also bring the Noah Boat right to the beach below the cliff, in front of our yard.

We were again teaching and taking groups on the boat, doing outreach and evangelism with the students. Often we took them to the villages where we'd been with the boat, wherever God opened doors.



Chapter 18 Asleep in the Storm

Now since we were again living in a house, working at the Bible school we needed to hire a boat boy who could live aboard and watch the boat. One of our students needed a break from his studies. Nutachai liked the job, and we checked on him regularly. Groups came often to be taken to the islands for a day trip. One morning we got a phone call from Nutachai "Something's happened to the boat." We couldn't understand what but promised to come. As we approached Pattaya it became obvious a bad storm had hit in the night. Boats were on the beach, some damaged and turned on their side and some shoreline shops and businesses were washed out. Even parts of streets were gone, washed away by the deluge.

"What's happened to the Noah?" I thought. The boat was floating nicely but closer to shore compared with where it had been anchored. I noticed another small catamaran beached and broken. Other boats were washed ashore. Coming on board we talked to Nutachai. He explained the boat anchor slipped allowing our boat to hit another boat with slight damage. "Why didn't you throw out an anchor?" I asked.

"I was sound asleep at the time and didn't wake till afterward" he sheepishly replied. I often wondered how Jesus slept in a storm tossed boat, Nutachai just proved it can be done. But we were thankful nothing seriously bad had happened and Nutachai continued to serve as boat boy.

Chapter 19 - What about our children?"

"Is it fair to drag your children along on a dangerous missionary life?"

Some people have thought and asked this question. "All your children shall

be taught of the Lord. Great shall be the peace of your children"

"No evil shall befall you, nor any plague come near your dwelling."

"Children are an heritage of the Lord."

These Scriptures and others seemed to be a direct promise from the Lord to us, in answer to our inquiries on the same question above.

One thing we noticed most as to what opened people's heart was to see us walk down the street with our children or stop in a shop with our children or them seeing our family life. In fact that's the direction we have had from the Lord, that people need to see a Christian family in action. Talk is cheap but examples are what they need. We felt a great peace on those Bangkok city streets, they seemed safer than Chicago or New York. We noticed single people walking after dark to the store, they weren't even Christian but didn't seem worried. Most of all we knew if Jesus called us here, we could trust Him to care for our family.

Even when we lived in the Pattaya area of bars and red light district and drugs, that's where we raised our teens, we saw that it helped our children's life to see this reality of life and to know the need for Jesus. Our concern for our children started even before they were born. Even before marriage my prayer was "Lord,

please provide a wife of your choice. I'd like to have a good family." At age 16 the Lord had put that desire in my heart. He asked me to set it aside and seek Him first , wait until the right time.

In the last years of teachers college I still had that desire. When I picked up a yearbook and looked at the underclassmen, I asked while I looked "Which one of these is my wife?" One picture seemed to stand out in a special way, I can't explain. Her name was Joyce Rahmeier. I had prayed for a wife with heart for home and family. I went to the library where they said Joyce spent a lot of time. I'm afraid I didn't normally spend much time there, I was working part time. By the time of my graduation we developed a close relationship. She still had a year of schooling left.

Joyce had a heart for missions and had volunteered for mission outreach group on campus. Although at that time I knew I had a mission call on my life, I was trying to avoid it. That summer I was home preparing to leave for my first teaching call in New York City. My grandmother who had been praying for me I'm sure, said to me "Why don't you marry that girl and take her to New York?" It didn't take long for that thought to set my mind into full gear. I bought an engagement ring, drove to Missouri to meet at Girl Scout Camp where she was a counselor during the summer months. Arriving there I got to the question quickly. She seemed favorable but hesitated. "We better check with my parents" she said. Her parents! How stupid of me. I really hadn't considered them very much. "Oh, Yes, of course." I said and we drove to her parents home. Needles to say I hadn't developed a relationship with them. Thankfully, our children have done an excellent job of that and developed good relationships with their spouses' family long before the decision to marry.

Joyce's folks pointed out she had a year to finish college and the church as well as they had committed themselves to helping her finish her schooling. Idealized I had not been considerate of the family situation and needed to back down and wait. As I headed back home and on to New York, I said "Lord, you are my first love. I will go regardless."

Joyce returned to college but we wrote often to each other. I was busy being a new teacher. I lived in a rented apartment with my roommate, also a new teacher. As months went on the letters between Joyce and I became more infrequent. I thought I must have missed God's leading. But one day about Thanksgiving the apartment owner brought me a slightly wrinkled letter. "I was raking leaves in the yard" she said "and I found this letter. It looks important." It was stamped AIRMAIL SPECIAL DELIVERY. Apparently the postman delivered it special, but no one was home so he put it in the door crack and the wind blew it into the yard. It was a very special letter. In that letter Joyce said "My folks agree we can get married at Christmas."

After our marriage we had agreed to put the Lord first and had family devotions. The Lord first, family second and work third. Mary and Dawn, our first two daughters, were born in New York City. Before birth they were dedicated to Jesus. We understood John 10:10 "The devil comes to kill, steal and destroy but Jesus came to give abundant life." We understood that "We don't wrestle against flesh and blood" and that "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal but are mighty to the pulling down of strongholds." We used these weapons aggressively in praying for our children, both born and unborn. We prayed for each other (husband and wife) with these scriptures and it was effective and averted the devil's intended disaster in our family.

Romp and Play

In college I studied psychology. Spock was popular at that time, and a lot of permissive philosophy. Yet I was reading my Bible also and it seemed to say a lot about child raising. The two seemed to be saying opposite things. For example: psychologist were saying never spank. The Bible said "If you love them, spank them when needed."

I had a choice to make, which would I follow. I decided the Designer knew more of what He was speaking than the current philosophers. I made the choice to follow Him, the Designer. He was the one who loved me and won my heart. Looking back now everyone can clearly see that the wrong philosophy produced a generation of hippies and flower children and lots of problems. In fact later a book came out in the direction of discipline which caused another man to write a book "Shall We Spank Spock?" In fact, after seeing that whole generation and the disastrous results of permissiveness, and Spock himself in a later book espousing correction, caused someone to write a book "Shall We Spank Spock?"

Anyway, love is the key and true love comes from Jesus, that's the real thing. This love would cause us to romp and play with our children, crawl on the floor, roll, play and chase or catch them. "Ella, the Gorilla, can't catch me" the children chanted in unison. They'd get caught, locked up, and tickled and giggle with delight and could only get out of the trap by pushing the right fingers to be released.

Sometimes this dad came home from teaching dead tired, really looking forward to crashing down on the bed for a rest, but children met him at the door, just waiting for Dad to play. The sacrifice had to be made and a play time began. This kind of love and relationship with children made it easy to be very firm as far as obedience was concerned. I never had to count "1,2,3" but it was obedience the first time, or a spanking. For example our two year old toddler in the front yard just off a busy New York Street knew there was an imaginary line in the front yard and she dare not go beyond or the punishment would be instant spanking. They couldn't realize their life depended on their obedience. Even teaching a toddler to swim, to kick and dig through a wall, seemed too cruel. Putting a child into the water was done in play and fun. We made a game of it, the intent was that if they ever fell in accidentally they'd be able to swim to safety.

There is an Isaiah verse which says "All your children shall be taught of the Lord" and it was very meaningful to us. I had experienced that as a teen, too. Once when I was on my paper route a mother emerged from an upstairs apartment door screaming loudly to a child below "Get up here right away or I'll kill you."

I thought "Wow, if I was that child I'd know she wasn't serious." I determined never to holler at my children but teach them loving obedience. We rarely had to raise our voice at our children, just a soft command together with "eye talk" worked. While being a teacher I had many kinds of students and got to know the families they came from. From all of this I learned to choose the good ways, the Holy Spirit is there to teach us. At each stage of the child's development we cried out to the Lord for wisdom as parents. James 1:5a "If anyone lacks wisdom let him ask of the Lord."

Knowing our spiritual authority from Luke 10:19 and having discernment from the Holy Spirit has saved our children many times and kept them from teen age rebellion. Rebellion is a definite spirit, it's not just a stage they are going through. It appears even in a small child, and in an adults too. Of course, the time of teen years is another prime time for this Enemy to strike. When rebellion raised its head we'd firmly say (not aloud) "Spirit of Rebellion, get your hands off my child in Jesus Name." We tried not to show too much aggravation at the child himself. Almost instantly things would change. I remember on one occasion I saw rebellion rising in my teen daughter as she spoke to me. So I silently but firmly commanded the spirit of rebellion to get his hands off my daughter. Suddenly she paused and a peaceful smile came over her as she said "By the way, Dad, what are we doing tonight?" and we could continue a loving, trusting relationship. We also believed in Jesus' example of leading them, not commanding them to do. We realized our child will learn more from what he sees us do than from what we say. We tried to be honest and open with them and tried to allow them the maximum freedom which they displayed they could handle, and then depended on the Lord to get that right. All of our children were out of the home by the age of 17 or 18 because they, and we, felt secure enough for them to proceed on their own life.

Home schooling

Joyce and I felt very sure that we were responsible for our children's training and we needed to send them to good schools when available. However, I felt very strongly that boarding schools were out of the question since it seemed to be the most

cruel thing to tear a child from his parents and send them away from the family just at the time when they needed so much the loving parental relationship. When we came to the mission field we had to make that choice. Thankfully, it was easier since both of us are trained teachers and the decision came very quickly to home school our children. It seemed to me this is what the Lord is saying in Duet. 6:4 where it says to talk about the Lord in your home, when you are walking and talking on the way. In the home setting, in other words.

We had a good experience in home schooling and our children were able to go on to advanced schooling of their choice. All have been blessed, oldest daughter is a RN nurse, our oldest son a pastor-missionary; our second son a computer related occupation (now working for a Canadian Bible School) and second daughter married to the Director of a Bible School and fully involved with all levels of work there.



Chapter 20 Foster Children

At different times while our children were growing up, we felt it was right to include a foster child. One young AmerAsian nicknamed Yik (it means curly), came into the world during the time of the Americans serving in the Vietnam War, were stationed or spending free time in Thailand. God turns man's evil to good and man's weakness to gain. Yik was 16, about the same age as our sons at that time. He seemed to have most of the traits of his unknown Dad, an Afro-American. Everything seemed to tickle his funny bone, he seemed to fit in fine with the family. Some Thai Christians in Pattaya had been helping him before this, along with the Pearl Buck Foundation's help. Now they asked us to take him. We took him on board our boat and into our family to become a son to us. It was just the right time in his life that he needed this sort of identity. He helped work on the boat and did his school studies with our teenagers. He also attended night school to get his Thai school diploma. Yik did gain identity during that short time as well as a relationship with Jesus. He then called himself "Morris K" and said his ambition was to be a movie star. He is now a movie star on TV and can be seen on posters advertising products all over Thailand. Once a movie magazine wrote an article on him and asked him of his parents. His answer was "Oh, they are missionaries who live on a boat." That article spoke of his high standard of life.

Another foster daughter , "Cherri," was an AmerAsian who became like an older sister to Judy. Her Thai mother at first wasn't a Christian and was a young lady (during the time of the Vietnam conflict) her mother had

gone through several disappointments. Different men at different times promised to marry her but disappeared after a child was born. This happened several times. She finally met Don, an American who was living in Thailand, and claimed to be a Buddhist. He accepted her and her five children. Most were older and some on their own already. Through miracles both separately became Christians and began to raise Cherri that way. We came to know them through the church. Cherri was about 14 then. They asked us to take her now since they wanted to get their life together.

Cherri was a very good daughter, who seemed only to want to please us and was with us several years. She had a real heart for us and I was often amazed when she would remind us of something we had forgotten to do or to take along. I prayed "Lord, may I have such a heart after you and be so concerned about your things and to please you."

That year we were heading back to the USA for a six month furlough. Cherri had to stay in Thailand as the school year was in progress. I was inspired by the Lord I'm sure, to try to get her US citizenship. She told us that her birth father was an American, named Harvey Hanson. He left shortly after she was born. Her mother wisely gave Cherry the Father's family name on the birth certificate. "All I know about him" her mother told me "is that he was here digging for gold, had some equipment and a car. He had to leave quickly, gave me the car and sold the equipment. The last letter I got from him was long ago and he was somewhere in California then."

So while in the USA, since I was from Minnesota that land of Swedes, Norwegians and Germans, I was sure looking for Harvey Hanson was like looking for a needle in a haystack. Our local St

Paul/Minneapolis phone directory had many pages devoted to that name. Even our church directory listed several. One day I was driving past a library and felt the Lord saying to stop there. I knew it had something to do with citizenship. In the library there were lots of phone books from cities in the USA including some from California. "Only a few Harvey Hansoms, that's not so bad" I thought as I paged through one randomly picked up. I selected at random about 32 addresses of Harvey or H. Hanson from different California books. It was impossible to list all of these and I'm sure California had many phone companies whose books were not in that library.

Joyce and I drafted a letter saying , "Dear Harvey Hanson, Your daughter in Thailand would like to obtain her US citizenship" and we put the approximate year she was born. Can you imagine a wife opening this letter and screaming "Harvey, what have you been up to?"

We only received two replies from the 32 letters, one said "I'm not the man." Another said the same thing, but included a list of 12 more names of Harvey Hanson. He wrote "I'm doing a family history research on our Hanson clan." We sent letters to those 12 names. Returning home one evening, Joyce said "Some Harvey Hanson called and said he might be the man. He was there in Thailand at that time, digging for gold and a little baby girl was born. He left his car with the mother of his child. But I told him I don't think you are the man." I had failed to tell Joyce all the information I knew. "That's him, what's his number?" But Joyce answered "I don't know."

From the list of 12 we eliminated some and we found which one it was and for the next couple weeks I tried calling his number, but no answer. One morning at three a.m. I awoke and the Lord was

saying "Call Harvey Hanson now." Just a few rings and he answered. After a brief introduction Harvey said "How did you ever get me? I'm never here. And now I was just on the way out the door when the phone rang."

I said "Harvey, Jesus told me to call." Harvey didn't know about that but he did tell me much of his life in that call and in several calls which followed.

"How did you find me?" He asked. "I have been running all my life in fear of past associations. I fear for my life."

"Jesus knows where you are and cares for you" I assured him. I told him the story of how the Lord led me to find him, the phone books and all. "I Guess there has to be a God, only He could do that" Harvey said. He was convicted of his past life. Born on a northern Wisconsin farm with an alcoholic dad, his mother was a Sunday School teacher. He left home in rebellion in his teen years and joined the Merchant Marines. "A girl in every port" was his theme. He even ran a brothel for awhile. Could Jesus forgive him all that?

"Yes," I assured him. "Jesus took the punishment for all our sins. If we confess, repent and turn to him, it gives Jesus great pleasure to see us restored and new." Harvey was right then fighting a battle with cancer and was over 60 years old. He was happy to hear about his daughter and wanted to do all he could so she could get her US citizenship. "I'll send the forms for you to sign and notarize and you send them back to me. When we go back to Thailand I'll take them to the US Embassy in Bangkok."

Back in Thailand we were having problems at the US Embassy. We couldn't get past the Thai clerks at the front desk. They wouldn't have anything to do with us, it seemed like a dark cloud

hung around the Embassy. A big idol shrine occupied the front area of the Embassy lawn. "What does the US Embassy have to do with that?" I thought. In the USA there was a big push to separate the government from all religion, not even allowing prayer in schools. Here at the US Embassy a Buddhist monument was center of the scene.

After intense prayer on the part of our whole mission fellowship , things began to break through. Then they broke wide open. We got through to the right people and they said amazing things like "We need to do a special program for AmerAsian, they deserve citizenship." Soon after this she had her US passport and citizenship. On our next furlough home we met Harvey Hanson, at their family reunion on the home place in Wisconsin.

Cherri later went to the USA and studied at Dallas, Texas. She never did get to meet Harvey Hanson in person, he died of cancer just before their scheduled meeting. She talked to him many times on the phone. Harvey left her an inheritance. Although Cherri had other "Dads" and a living mother, we were glad to also be called "mom and dad " and have a part in her life. Her mom and dad Don lived with her for awhile in Bangkok. Her dad Don died in 2000 and is with the Lord now.

Bea was a little girl from northern Thailand. She became a little sister to Judy. She was three years younger than Judy, we had her in our family for different lengths of time as needed because other missionaries were trying to adopt her. But when they had to leave the country she joined our family. Bea's mother was a young northern

Thai and had suffered through several unfaithful husbands. The mother wasn't a Christian and tried anything to "change her luck" in life. Often a monk or witch doctor would tell her to change her

name. She changed her name three times, but still her "luck" didn't change. Her brother and sister were now Christians and attending our Bible School. Once while traveling to the south with a new husband, Bea's mother stopped at the Bible School. They stayed overnight, but in that brief time she was led to the Lord by her brother and sister and prayed for salvation. The next day they went on their way. She had no opportunity for fellowship or going on in the Lord. When things started to go bad again she committed suicide.

Once while Bea was staying with us, Miss Ladda came for a visit. Miss Ladda used to live with us and worked for us. Beside a love for children, Miss Ladda had a gift from the Lord to pray with children and they would have a vision of heaven and Jesus. It was always

a blessing and we often did child evangelism together. Miss Ladda was frustrated however; in spite of the children seeing heaven and Jesus, Miss Ladda herself, never did have a vision. "I wish I could see heaven in a vision" she said. I suppose this kept her

humble. One visit she said to Bea and Judy "Do you want to see Jesus? Close your eyes and we'll pray." They did and afterward Bea said "I saw beautiful trees, flowers and angels. It was so wonderful. And I saw Jesus. He asked what I would like to know.

Bea's first question to Jesus was "Is my mother here?"

"Yes," said Jesus. "Do you want to see her?"

Soon a beautiful young lady came to Bea, wearing a simple white dress, but

very happy. They enjoyed a warm fellowship. Then it was time for Bea to return to earth she excitedly told us of the vision. But when

it came to the part about her mother being there, I had to think about that ,in my cold theological thinking. I assumed all suicides meant hell. I had even read testimonies about visions and in one a young man in hell expressed great regrets for all the agony he had caused his mother because he committed suicide.

But then in thinking about this case, I remembered Bea's mother did accept the Lord and repented, she never rejected that. She had committed sin and suicide, but God's grace can forgive even that I believe. Oh the wonder of God's love and grace!



BEA, OUR FOSTER DAUGHTER

Chapter 21 Rejected

Miss Ladda wasn't exactly a foster child, because she was just a few years younger than us, but she became very much part of our family. We met her in an interesting way. One Sunday morning we attended church at Siracha, near our home. Cherry was with us and after church warmly greeted Ladda and introduced this lady to us. Cherri had known her because they attended the same church in northeast Thailand, before Cherri came to live with us. Cherri was surprised to see her here. Joyce and I felt compassion for this lady and invited her to come home with us. We found out this was very necessary. Miss Ladda had gotten rid of everything in the northeast and traveled all the way to the southeast coast (down to Rayong). She was following what she thought was a proposal for marriage to a Thai pastor there. His wife had passed away. With high hopes Miss Ladda went 200 miles to his house, only to have her hopes dashed when she arrived. She discovered he had just married another lady. Perhaps it was the communication that had failed between them, or she had waited too long to decide. But now she found herself rejected. In that rejected, bewildered state she made her way back north up the coast to Siracha church to see some friends she knew there. It was there we met.

Rejection since childhood seemed to be plaguing Miss Ladda. When she was a little girl her dad died and her mother was unable to support the children, and found a gracious "uncle" to raise her. Many years later she found out she wasn't really related by blood. That man's family rejected her. The "uncle" was a teacher and administrator and she was raised in a quite isolated situation in a boarding school.

She kept to herself a lot. When young she came in contact with the Catholic Church and worked many years as secretary for them. But her heart was following a deep, inner pull from the Lord to know Him more. Her search led her through various ways to a Pentecostal church. Finally now she was in our home and hearts. In return for her secretary work we were able to give her a small salary and she gladly translated for us and taught Thai to Judy.

This is my Room

We noticed that 90% of the Thai people, everyone from a simple village farmer to the rich Thai Bangkok Banker, lived in fear of spirits and in superstitions. The spirits are real, we don't have to argue that point. "We wrestle not against flesh and blood but against principalities and powers and spiritual wickedness in high places" Eph 6:10-18

Ladda's bedroom was in one of the three buildings on our rented compound. It seemed that room was especially bothered by an evil spirit. Tosh' older brother (not a Christian) once came to visit. He quickly fled that bedroom saying "There's a spirit in there." He wouldn't go back in that room. An American missionary visiting us slept in that room, and he complained in the morning "I felt my chest crushed, like something sitting on it." He felt an evil presence. When Ladda took the room she told us at breakfast one morning "Last night I awoke and there was a spirit sitting at the foot of my bed. It was whimpering and saying "This is my room.." This didn't seem to startle her very much, she knew what to do about situations like this. She knew her authority in Christ. "I commanded it out in Jesus name." She didn't have any more problems with it after that.

Once I was trying to impress upon a Thai man the nature and danger of these spirits.

(They worship and invite them hoping for help.) I told him these stories and my own experience of feeling my chest crushed and breath leaving. Then I commanded the evil spirit to leave "In Jesus name" and it did. He looked impressed, but after a moment of silence and thought he asked "Did you ask that spirit the winning lottery number?" When he said that I gave up for a moment. "Can't they realize that the thing is trying to kill me, and would it give me the winning lottery number?" I thought.

Thai people who receive Jesus are thankful to be free from the harassment of evil spirits if they learn how to use their spiritual weapons and are taught their spiritual authority in Jesus. John 10:10 and Luke 10:19. Even the Thai national symbol resembles an eagle but at a closer look it isn't a bird at all, but one of their chief demons with bird wings.

One day we were accompanying some visiting friends on a tour of the Grand Palace in Bangkok. We had a well educated Thai guide who spoke excellent English. We noted all the statues and pictures of winged creatures, angels as he called them. I asked him

"How come if these are angels, they have such ugly faces and claws?"

He answered "Well, they are really demons."

Large, painted murals on the walls depicted different kingdoms and dynasties. All of these pictures showed the controlling demons and their action influencing different historical characters and the events shown. This helped me realize why God calls missionaries to live in a foreign country and become part of it. He

needs someone on location inviting Jesus and interceding for the people. Most the nationals are, (unknown to them) inviting the demons, our God also comes also by invitation.

Ladda was our evangelist, secretary, and part of our family. She warmed our heart by saying "Thank you for coming to Thailand, for leaving family and every good thing in the USA. Thank you on behalf of the Thai people who can now go to heaven because you came."

We heard that only twice in our years of ministry there, but the Lord encouraged us daily. For many years Ladda worked directly with us, these past years she is working with the Bible School. It's still her joy to bring the good news to her people.

Our boys were ready to return to the USA for more schooling. When he was a teen Dan's first ambition was to be a motorcycle driver, that changed; automotive things became foremost next. But one thing he knew he would never become a preacher. In fact once before we left the USA a preacher had prophesied over the two boys "Dan, you'll be a preacher and Bob you'll be more involved in business." Dan said "I know that's a false prophet, I'll never be a preacher." That was fine with us, we didn't force our children to be any certain thing. We only prayed they'd have their own close walk with Jesus and do what He wanted them to do. Dan did decide to go to Christ for the Nations Bible School in Dallas, Texas, for two years and then decide on a career.

After the two years he returned to Thailand and helped in the Bible School. He was fully in charge of the Bible School when Tosh and Dawn went to the States for 6 months. After that he returned to the USA and was traveling and visiting friends and relatives. He was in the Corpus Christi, Texas area and visited in Dan Richter's

home. This man was getting ready to build a house and offered Dan the job of constructing it, and asked him to pray about it. It was a great offer and Dan needed the job and money. But the next morning our son Dan said "Well, God has called me to be a preacher." Somehow God had spoken to him that night. Dan Richter replied "I knew it already. I just wanted to hear you say it." Our son is now a pastor and missionary to young struggling Thai pastors and churches.

Bob loved boats and the sea, and all that it involved. Merchant Marines, that's what he wanted to do. He had written an application already. As parents we felt uneasy about this type of life. "Bob, before you do that will you please just take one year at Christ for the Nations where Dan is now and then decide what you want to do?"

Bob thought and then he agreed to do that. After Bob attended CFNI for a few months he knew he found what he wanted. He finished a two year course. He got money from carpentry he did with his brother. They did remodeling and home building in that area of Texas. Bob met a lovely girl Ruth, from Canada, but she stayed only the first year of school. As a teacher in the Bible School in Thailand, I often used their courtship as an example of first love. Rev 2:4. That lesson Jesus had deeply imprinted on me as a missionary, that the one thing, the most important thing, was that I stay in love with Jesus. If that was true, all else would be right. I told the students that when Ruth went back to Canada, Bob wrote her every day. That wasn't enough. He would phone as often as he could. That wasn't enough he had to make several trips all the way from Texas to Canada, that's a long way!

In the winter, he traveled on icy roads, and had near accidents more than once. That's real love. May my love for Jesus always

be that intent. Bob, Ruth and three children now live in Canada, working at the Living Faith Bible School.

Chapter 22 Troubled Years

Some people call it midlife crisis, a kind of time when people seem to go crazy , think and do unusual things. There must be a way to avoid it, I'm sure, looking back of course. I'm sure the way is to guard our hearts and stay in love with Jesus, don't listen to the lies of the devil or cater to the desires of the flesh. Missionaries and Christians aren't exempt but rather are prime targets of these changeable years. We had such a beautiful experience and anointing of the Lord on our family that even with problems now and then the years our children were growing up were happy, busy years. But now one by one the nest emptied of children and off they went to their own lives. We were glad to see them strong in the Lord and confident of His leading in what they were doing. Now we were just looking at each other. We were thankful the Lord had sent a little daughter Judy. It wasn't big things that came between Joyce and I, it was all the little things . She hadn't changed in spite of all the years we had been married. They grew into mountain size in mind. "How can you hate the one you love?" I believe it's possible to have both those feelings, but only because of our flesh.

God renewed our love-bond step by step, resolve by resolve. We were going up the path of love and forgiveness, love and forgiveness toward the goal of one flesh and covenant love. That's

the marriage Jesus spoke about. Once Joyce said to me "I don't trust our relationship is strong enough to hold us together, but I trust your relationship with Jesus will keep us faithfully together."

Once during this conflict I was really out of it and not thinking straight at all. In deep temptation of the flesh and almost at the point of yielding I walked on the beach.

It was polluted, smelly below our rented house and suddenly ahead of me the beach and hillside were transformed. It was beautiful. The lovely landscape, pure water and clean sand was lovely. "This must be a vision of heaven" I thought. Then I heard (it must have been the Lord talking to my Guardian Angel) "Tell this man about his inheritance before he blows it." I realized I wasn't seeing a vision of heaven, but rather seeing what God promised to His faithful ones. "I will give you the heathen for an inheritance." To those who are faithful, rule with Christ, sit with Him on His throne they are His bride, He gives them an inheritance. I certainly didn't want to blow that.

That week I had to go to Bangkok for business and took seven year old Judy with me. I grabbed a children's book to read along the way. As the bus rumbled on, I read her a story of the Prodigal Son. Yes, we are all like that wayward younger brother, all have sinned. I'm so thankful for a loving Father who forgives us, loves us and takes us back home. But when I came to the part of the story where the older brother is all upset with the father's action I was struck by the kind father's reply. "You have the inheritance, your brother blew it." Yes, the younger son repented and is saved, but he blew his inheritance. Don't blow yours. Jesus in the parables emphasized often the faithful servant and the rewards that followed. We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ to receive the things done in our body. Yes, it is true that simple faith in Jesus saves us and not works. To those who are tried and

faithful God will entrust future things in like proportion. I want to have my eyes on Jesus, stay real close to Him and not loose sight of that inheritance.

Death Covenant

Early in my life I made a Death Covenant with my Lord. My flesh seemed so weak and my mind so apt to stray, I couldn't trust myself at all. I understood that from Paul's writing God is able to keep "that which I have committed unto Him." So I said "Lord I know you gave me my will but I give it back to you. Help me to will to do your will. I also prayed "Lord, if I 'm ever going to fall into wrong sexual relationships, I want you to take my life first and kill me. I don't want to bring shame on your name or my family and loved ones."

I have literally come within inches of death on a couple occasions. Once earlier in my life, I had allowed wrong thoughts to develop in my heart just at the point when we weren't sure Joyce and I would get married. But the Lord confirmed it and we were married. Only a weak, opportune moment my thoughts went wacky and I was tempted to adultery. My flesh was ready to give in, I had forgotten temporarily about my Death Covenant. I was flying cross country in my plane and my passenger was a pastor who needed a ride that direction. He also loved airplanes. He also was back slidden. There we were, two Jonahs in an airplane, headed for trouble. Back in those days I had to do a lot of visual flying, I didn't have a radio in the plane. We had checked the weather before take off. Widely scattered thunderstorms in the afternoon was the report, but as soon as we were airborne they appeared. We flew over beautiful, Pennsylvania landscape with hills, trees, winding roads and thunderstorms were getting thicker. We had to turn one way to avoid a storm, swing around to avoid the next one and soon we hadn't the vaguest idea of our exact location. All of the fields, hills

and winding roads below looked the same.

Lost! But watch out, more thunderstorms ahead! Finally we flew around one big, black cloud, through a narrow channel and into a cul de sac. We were surrounded on all sides by black, rolling wind clouds. Looking back we couldn't see the tiny opening we had entered. In less than a minute we'd be torn to pieces in this trap. We were flying quite low. In that critical moment I glanced down and below us was a long runway and we were perfectly lined up just as if we had been on a planned final approach. The wheels had just touched the pavement and the storm hit straight on. Furious, violent winds shook the plane and I had to literally fly it into the runway to keep its wheels pinned down.

The rain was so heavy we couldn't see beyond the plane's nose or the sides of the runway. We were safe but deeply shaken. Then I remembered my Death Covenant and decided to quickly get rid of any further thoughts of temptation.

Now in Thailand I still had to fight temptation, it seems doors you opened as a child or youth are not easily closed. I encourage youth to never open wrong doors. In fact, upon coming to Thailand I said "Lord, you are sending me to the wrong place, I have such trouble with my thought life." The Lord replied "Your weak points will become your strong point!" (That comes about by exercise and fighting) Once while Joyce was recuperating from the hysterectomy, we were of necessity off our normal marital relationships. I said "Lord, I know you gave me my will but I give it back to you. Help me to will to do your will."

I was coming home from Bangkok on a bus after completing my business and having a hard time with my thoughts and imaginations. The devil was there to help I'm sure. "I better wait

for the Rayong bus" I thought. "I'll not take the Pattaya bus, it always has several prostitutes and that type girls on it." So I got the Rayong bus and it had only a few people on it. I chose a seat up front and sat alone, resolved to keep my mind on the Lord. The bus stopped from time to time taking on passengers and there were still many empty seats. The next thing I knew a lovely, young girl came, deliberately passing empty seats and sat next to me. She snuggled over against me and giggled.

A man across the aisle smiled with consent. She had come in the back of the bus at the last stop, saw a foreign head of hair and was led (Directly by the devil?) Anyway, there I was with her sitting against me and looking at me. My mind went out of control, such a beautiful, willing thing. But my spirit was crying out to Jesus. I tried to get control of my flesh. I reached into my shirt pocket, pulled out a gospel tract, gave it to her. She glanced at it, shrugged her shoulders and set it aside.

She continued to make wrong gestures. Then the strangest thing happened.

In spite of the battle in my flesh and mind, the flesh wanting to go for it, I was looking at her eye to eye and she stopped her flirting look and her eyes changed to deep introspection, then to tears and deep inner search, so strong that she got up and went and sat across the aisle. She stayed in that state of mind the rest of the trip. Apparently it was Jesus who looked out of my eyes into hers with that same look he had given to the prostitute, Mary Magdalene and caused her to react the same as what I saw here. She saw the true pure love of Jesus, in contrast to men who lusted after her body, Praise the Lord!

It happened again a few years later. I was riding on a market truck home to the rural village. I liked to sit in the open back of the truck. Its bench seats were filled with local people, their chickens,

produce, kids and maybe a fighting rooster. I had a chance to relate to them and show them Jesus' love. But this time the truck was so packed I couldn't squeeze in among them. I noticed only the driver occupied the cab, so I got in next to him. Just as we were ready to start the door opened and there was a beautiful young lady. She patted me on the seat, giggled, and said "Move over." The driver smiled. There we were bumping along down the dusty, country roads and she was making wrong gestures and saying wrong things, it set my mind in gear in the wrong direction.

I had seen her a couple times before at the local village corner store. I said "Don't you have a couple small children?" (by different men)

"Oh, yes" she said laughing.

I asked "Is this your husband?" looking at the driver.

(I hoped that was why she came up front.)

The driver replied rather firmly "No, she is the local prostitute."

Then it

happened again. I turned and looked into her eyes and they changed in the same manner as had Mary Magdalene's long ago. She had deep introspection and with tears in her eyes moved as far away from me towards the door as she could. The driver looked at her amazed. She was touched by Jesus, praise you Lord. You reach down and touch the likes of us. Who other than Jesus would have such a kind, loving heart that transforms?

You can really feel at ease in Jesus' presence, like you can trust Him and be open to Him. He won't put you down because you are stupid or ask a wrong question. "Lord," I asked "Why do you have to restrict yourself to one wife?"

He reasoned with me in this way. "It's easy to say 'I love everybody in the whole world and I'm not prejudiced with anyone.' But put anyone of these next to your skin, have to share everything with them, and it becomes harder. Try it with just one, to be faithful and true in all circumstances. Then you'll find out what true love is."

I Corinthians 13 tells of what God means by love. True Love is not selfish, doesn't try to satisfy its own desires, not rude or proud, thinks no evil. Young men often tempt their girl friend with these words "If you love me you will do it." If the girl is smart she will recognize that isn't true love. Obviously he doesn't love her or he wouldn't ask her to fulfill his selfish lust. I say to the young men "Where are the valiant, true ones who set the standard of true love?" where are the valiant knights in shining armor?

There is a dangerous after affect in yielding to lust. You can read about it in

II Samuel 13. One of David's sons, He said he "loved" the girl so much and forced her to the bed, after that he hated her and despised her. That's often what happens. In most cases the boy will despise you and go on to other conquests, only Jesus can heal your broken heart. He has true love for you. Only Jesus can make you a virgin again, He said in John 15:2 "you are clean (pure virgin) through the word I have spoken to you". Praise the Lord, that's how Jesus sees us because He cleans us from all sin and receives us in true love.

Chapter 23

Selling the Green Field

The child trade is virtually out of control in Thailand. Estimates are that one million prostitutes (Thai population is 70 million plus hill tribes and immigrants) are active on a continuing, rotating basis. It's a dead end for the girls. Most of these would still be called children. An article in the Bangkok Post in recent years was titled "Selling the Green Field." It refers to the Thai idiom that Thai farmers, especially from the north and northeast, were so poor they had to sell their rice crops at a low price to hawkers while it was still green because of their needs. However the term was more often used to the practice of parents selling their young daughters even before they are old enough to be taken away and about the age of 13.

I have, more than once, been on a bus when the mother-teacher (as she is called) brought another group of young teenage girls from the slums of Bangkok, or from the north, to Pattaya. These hawkers also frequent the bus stations to meet the buses coming from north and northeast and can quickly spot single girls coming to Bangkok to look for honest work. It was very obvious what was happening, yet the police and no-one else seemed to care. You rarely hear any of the monks or religious leaders raising objections. In fact they are often called upon to bless the bars and do their ritual there. Occasionally (maybe once a year) police will raid a certain bar or area and make a big write up in the paper to

make it look like they doing their job. But most often the mafia and police were on the receiving end of the money from this illegitimate trade. Also, a big part of the tourist trade are men from all countries, Europe, Japan, Arab countries and the USA. So the government is having a hard time to suppress it.

The worst part is the moral standard is so low, often a sister will invite her younger sister to come since they can make a lot of money. More often than not you can see the young girls, at first crying and distresses, before being drugged and conditioned to the trade. When I see this my heart becomes very angry and I have on several occasions bawled out the "mother-teacher" and told her she was the same as killing the girls, and going to hell. Some Christian groups are trying to offer alternatives but so far it's a drop in the bucket.

Makeshift restaurants all over Thailand display gay Christmas lights outside and the trees announcing girls are available. When you drive through a town of any size there will be several places like this. Bigger cities and towns have blocks lined with such places. In the small coastal city of Siracha where we lived many years, you could count 30 or 40 such places. It was so in most coastal towns, except for Pattaya which has hundreds, including boys' bars and every sort of perversion you can imagine. All operate openly. Hotels offer these services too. Then there are brothels. The affect on the Thai society and family has been devastating. AIDS which was first a disease denied by the government, has now been an open concern and topic for them. In the north the probability of girls having AIDS is high. The girls in school are not even safe. Teachers have taken advantage of the high school girls with threat of flunking them or promising a good grade. Newspaper articles have been written about that, and I've known it to be true.

One foreigner in Pattaya said "Oh, never mind, there are so many girls. Can't you see there are many more girls than men?" When I checked the statistics I noted the Thai population has equal male / female ratio; birth rate is also the same. So the Thai village men are left without girls to marry and they also follow the lifestyle with the use of a prostitute. Even at our Bible School I know of at least two students who died of AIDS, resulting perhaps from their former lifestyle or by accidental contact with people so infected, or by polluted blood transplant. I have bumped into more people.....about four of our students on different occasions, who were selling themselves to pick up some extra cash.

Venereal disease and AIDS claim an ever increasing number. Only a changed heart from Jesus is the answer to this. That's why we were in Thailand, we pray they will wake up before it's too late.

Chapter 24 **Gored by an Elephant**

We have appreciated those who labored before us. Most of their stories are unwritten, but God knows and remembers. Early Presbyterians and Baptist (later Assembly of God and overseas Mission Fellowship denominations) and independent groups like ours, tried to cover the whole land and reach all Thais in all areas.

Once, under a tall, spreading, mango tree in a coastal village

clearing I was talking to one local man who was interested in our family and boat. He seemed to be warmed by news of the gospel. "About ten years ago" he said "a Mr Hill from the Southern Baptist church came here and talked to us about Jesus." Much later in our stay while driving through the northeast villages through the narrow, rocky, mountain roads, I'd stop and meet people and share the good news. On a couple of occasions Just when I was sure no one had ever been there before I'd hear "Some Japanese (or Korean) missionary came here ..." (probably from Every Home Visitation campaign.).

When we first came to Thailand we had the pleasure of knowing the Morris family . They labored among the Keren Hilltribe at the point when the Burmese were first driving Karen people out of Rangoon, Burma (now called Myanmar instead of Burma) and trying to eliminate them. Their story was written in a book called "Back Home to Hidden Valley." We were impressed by their totally assuming the culture of the Kerens. The Morris family became one with the Kerens. Besides helping them with crops, sanitation and health the Morris family led them on a dangerous escape from Burma.

Earlier in our stay here, some of the large evangelistic crusades were conducted by Wayne Crooke and his team. The interesting thing about these crusades is that they were never called "The Wayne Crooke Crusades." He never let his name be known and called them "The Free Miracle Healing Crusades." He would only preach Jesus and righteousness, that "Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forever. Some will be healed tonight." And many were healed.

One village we knew (we had been there with our boat and shared the gospel) there was a village cripple. Wayne and his team were

invited to set up a crusade in that area, southeast part of Thailand. That village cripple came, was healed and the next night the whole village hired several trucks and came for the meeting. The crowd grew to about 12,000 the last night. These earth shaking events caused Wayne (and us because we were the mission who sponsored his visa) to be called into the Religious Department of Thailand in Bangkok. We were angrily informed "there will be no more of these crusades." The Department made a whole new set of rules governing meetings saying they needed to be confined to the church. The impact of that large meeting was felt for years to come.

Once we moved to a new coastal village and the caretaker of many homes around this area (as well as the house we lived in) was open to us and the Gospel. She took us to her family, elder father and mother. They also opened their hearts. Even one of the relatives who had been a monk for many years, said he had been at that crusade and saw many healings. He knew God was real. Yes, the impact of those meetings was felt long afterwards.

We were also inspired by the brave first missionaries to China and southeast Asia.

One of the early missionaries to Thailand, before 1876, was a missionary doctor. While traveling the 89 day trip from Bangkok to Chiang Mai in the north, he took the only means of travel possible then, the elephant. Along the way he was gored by that huge creature. The result of this was a gaping hole in his stomach with his intestines exposed. By using his mirror he had to painfully sew himself up and treat himself.

Often these early missionaries experienced fierce opposition by the king of that province and some early Christians were martyred. From that the gospel was planted and grew, the Lord confirming

His word with signs and wonders. When we arrived in 1976 that same area of Chiang Mai in the north was the center of Thai Christianity

and supplied more than 90% of all pastors and church leaders needed to staff various mission headquarters and Bangkok churches.

I remember once in 1979 when Tosh was invited to hold seminar, one of the large churches in the rural area near Chiang Mai. Tosh invited me to help. After the bus trip to Chiang Mai we were met by a pickup truck. It took us more than an hour, driving on dusty, bumpy roads till we finally came to the village. We were met by the of this large country church. I was amazed to find that it's membership equalled or surpassed that of the local Buddhist temple. These seemed to be such vibrant Christians and the whole farming region and village was noted for trust and peace among its citizens.

There was a large attendance of believers there who loved to praise the Lord and were so hungry to learn from the Word of God. I couldn't imagine where all these Christians came from. Tosh told me the history. Several years back there was a European missionary who came, worked and lived several years but in all that time only one person responded. So the missionary finally left, returned home discouraged.

From that one convert it grew to what we saw today. Hundreds of Christians were filled with the love of Jesus. This brought tears to my eyes and encouragment. I had also been discouraged by the lack of response to our work. Even after 100 years of missionary activity in Thailand only a few areas have been penetrated and the government statistics were still showing less than 1 % of the population were Christians.

When we first arrived we lived in the coastal villages and 99% of

them didn't have a church nor could you find a Christian in the village. Twenty years later the largest of these same villages had two or three churches each. We were privileged to be involved to help plant three of them.

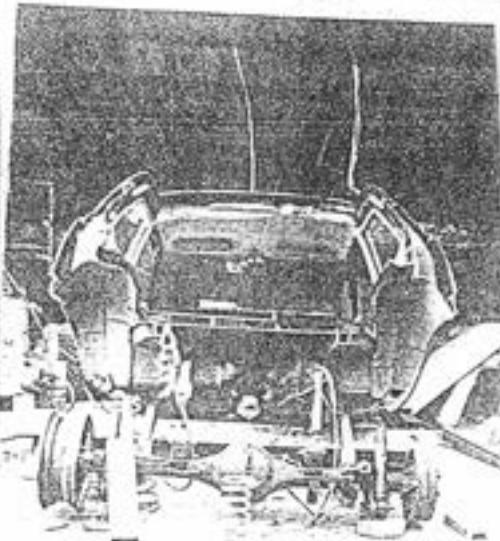


Chapter 25 Cut it Up!

In 1982 when land was donated for the Bible school, I was driving a 1969 four door Vauxhaul Victor, similar to a small Ford. We had bought it at a junk lot in Bangkok and fixed it up. We drove it several years, but the small four door sedan with its tiny 13 inch wheels definitely wouldn't make it to the mountainous part of northeast Thailand. Three rivers had to be crossed, a mountain climbed and the last part was "off road." Even a used pickup in those days would have cost about eight to ten thousand dollars. We knew for sure the Lord had led us to work in the new Bible school land but I prayed "Lord, what shall I do with my car?"

"Cut it up" was the answer I felt. "Cut it up and rebuild in suitable fashion." So the 6 month project started. The time to do it was squeezed in between teaching at the Bible school (still located on the coast near us) and taking trips to the new property. We still helped local churches too. On some occasions we could use the school pickup to take a student team up to the new land. We began weekly trips. Other times the school's pickup wasn't available and we'd take the public bus as far as possible and hire someone to drive us as close as possible to the land. Or we could get the market bus for the last part of the trip. Now and then we met with Mr Mitri in Bangkok and rode out with him. The property for the Bible school was located in the rural northeast part of Thailand. It was near the city of Pak Chong and the Kao Yai (Big Mountain) National Park, both were within 20 miles of the property.

After cutting up the car all that was left was the area around the four doors and the serial number. That was important because we



weren't allowed to originate a car.

It had to have a serial number. Big new iron beams formed a strong chassis, under which new front axle from a Toyota van and a rear axle from a Nissan. The Nissan diesel pickup truck engine and five speed gear box were mounted in place, these items were purchased locally or in Bangkok. Some parts of the car even came from cars I junked in the USA. I brought things back in my suitcase including the dash board, steering wheel and electrical system. Even the front and rear seat were transported like this. The final result was a high riding, station wagon with large tires. The thing that was so special was wherever I went people would stop and look and point at it whispering "Home built car." What made it even more noticeable was the car wore a large sun visor in front. Air from under the visor flowed between a space formed by a double roof. This helped tremendously to keep the inside cool and keep the hot tropical sun off your knees. The Lord used it to touch hearts. Anywhere I stopped there would be a small group of local men standing around it, looking under it. And in answering their questions I'd have an opportunity to share the new life in Jesus. "He can remake us." If I had driven up in a new Mercedes it wouldn't have drawn as much attention and it would have had a negative impression on these poor farmers and village people. Here was a homemade car. Maybe they could make one of those. For the last part of the trek to the new property there were no real reads, only paths across the hillside. The last 20 miles of road outside Pak Chong had roads which turned into mud slides when it rained. Once it took an hour to go 100 feet around an inclined curve. The mud was so slippery the car slid sideways threatening to be lost in the deep ravine below. After a few bad experiences of slipping off the road, we decided something had to be done to the car.

Then we discovered tractor tread tires were available which fit the

weren't allowed to originate a car.

It had to have a serial number. Big new iron beams formed a strong chassis, under which new front axle from a Toyota van and a rear axle from a Nissan. The Nissan diesel pickup truck engine and five speed gear box were mounted in place, these items were purchased locally or in Bangkok. Some parts of the car even came from cars I junked in the USA. I brought things back in my suitcase including the dash board, steering wheel and electrical system. Even the front and rear seat were transported like this. The final result was a high riding, station wagon with large tires. The thing that was so special was wherever I went people would stop and look and point at it whispering "Home built car." What made it even more noticeable was the car wore a large sun visor in front. Air from under the visor flowed between a space formed by a double roof. This helped tremendously to keep the inside cool and keep the hot tropical sun off your knees. The Lord used it to touch hearts. Anywhere I stopped there would be a small group of local men standing around it, looking under it. And in answering their questions I'd have an opportunity to share the new life in Jesus. "He can remake us." If I had driven up in a new Mercedes it wouldn't have drawn as much attention and it would have had a negative impression on these poor farmers and village people. Here was a homemade car. Maybe they could make one of those. For the last part of the trek to the new property there were no real reads, only paths across the hillside. The last 20 miles of road outside Pak Chong had roads which turned into mud slides when it rained. Once it took an hour to go 100 feet around an inclined curve. The mud was so slippery the car slid sideways threatening to be lost in the deep ravine below. After a few bad experiences of slipping off the road, we decided something had to be done to the car.

Then we discovered tractor tread tires were available which fit the

car. They were retreaded truck tires farmers used for their garden type, two wheel tractors. They were only \$20 each. Now when we came near the property we could remove the wheels and put on these special wheels. Down the riverbank, through the river we could go and up the mud bank on the other side. In fact I got a bit overconfident and one dark night we were driving with a group of students to a village home gospel meeting. We were doing okay on the muddy road but we came to a place where the two tire tracks were filled with water for many feet. We didn't know how deep the water was so we turned out into the field and bypassed it. We arrived at the house. After the meeting as we drove home, I decided we could go through there, but I didn't realize a few big tractors had made those ruts very deep. Charging in a short way the four wheels were dangling in the water but the whole center of the car chassis stuck securely in the high center mud ridge. At 12 midnight we were still digging mud and finally a tractor was able to pull us out.

The area was beautiful green, in the rainy season. But everything turned brown and dry for half a year. During the rainy time farmers would try to get in two crops of corn. Corn was a relatively new thing for them and so was dairying. Their original culture didn't include either of those. Coconut and other things took the place of milk. With the western world influence they developed a taste for ice cream. Most locally made ice cream was also made with coconut milk. The dairy industry and corn growing provided a new source of income. This northeastern area seemed to be best suited for this. They still however, planted the fields of sugar cane and tapioca. These along with rice are the major exports crops for Thailand.

The problem as always, was the middlemen and exporters who took the bigger share of money and poor farmers just barely made

it. They were still hand picking all the corn, and hand harvesting all crops. Large teams of workers were needed. The wage was 3 or 4 dollars per day. This income was enough to get them by. The government had allowed farmers to homestead up to 20 acres each on what they called degraded forest land. (Land which had once been large tropical hardwood trees, including teak) The forests are all gone now, which left the mostly denuded hills and bald mountains except for a few stands of large trees. Even in reserve areas tree cutters went in on a smaller scale to the benefit of the local government and police. The land was given for homesteading on the basis that the farmers would replant half of their land into trees. But instead every year they'd burn off the land to try to get rid of the dense growth after rainy season. Then it would be used for grazing cows, when new grass appeared. About the only trees to survive burnings were the sticker trees which grew from the roots like grass. Burn or cut off the top and the next season it was back as big and spiny as always. Long, tentacle like branches seemed to reach out up to 20 feet away from the root. As you came near you'd be snagged and gouged with a path of pain on your skin. But those roots did hold the soil from washing away.

Much of the year there wasn't any income for these rural people and they'd be forced to go to the area where there was a stand of trees , in the mountains. They'd hack out a path up the steep incline, through the sticker bushes until they located a single large tree, then cut it down and hand cut it into rough lumber on the spot. They'd carry it down the mountain then. It was usually sold to the local gov. official who got his cut.

Once while we were first looking over the new property we were making our way down one of these logging trails. We were cut and bleeding from fighting sticker bushes, but we overtook an old

grandma on one large end of a timber and granddaughter on the other end. The Bible school students with me were from the hill tribes and their life was similar to these northeast Thai people. "Let us carry that" we said. Grandma was relieved. The trail led down the mountainside to a clearing where a group of men were sitting and smoking. Their timbers which they'd carried were beside them.

They apparently were waiting for the granny to come down. Since we came helping them they welcomed us and we became friends. We shared Jesus with them.

My reasoning was this: they had no other opportunity for income, other than growing illegal drugs which a few did. But tree cutting was the lesser of two evils. Until we could offer them another source of income, what right did I have to take away their living.

Mr Mitre, the Christian businessman who gave the land to the Bible School, bought a large share of the mountain side. He also wanted to stop the tree cutting. He hoped to bring in industry and a technical school, but that takes time and hadn't happened yet. He hired watchmen to guard the forest. That couldn't be done since the guards' life was in danger. Finally the man he hired had a good thing going, he could collect wages for watching the forest and wages from others to "look the other way."

Mr Mitre hired local carpenters and had them build a small cabin. Where did the wood come from? Locally cut wood. He presented them with a toilet stool for the bathroom, they could install it. Local carpenters hadn't installed one before. In their home they rarely had any kind of toilet. When Mr Mitre returned the next week there was the stool, installed with most of it buried deep in the ground and only the top two inches exposed. It looked similar to a "squat pot" which they were more used to installing.

Another problem with the bathroom was that they installed the floor drain on the high end of the floor. Water would collect on the other end. He had them redo the bathroom.

After hacking a path into our property we decided to make the first building. Far up on the hillside stood a little bamboo hut that the cattle herders had built. From that spot there was a beautiful view of the valley below. Off about 2 miles distant was the top of the mountain range. These mountains were only about 3,000 feet high and even the highest (Kao Yai) was 8,000 feet. Building in the valleys needed to be avoided because of the flash floods during rainy season. Large outcropping of weathered sandstone dotted the mountain side. This made an excellent place to scale up and sit on the top of the rock for a panoramic view of the whole valley below.



Chapter 26

A Bamboo Lamp

Each week we would make the long, rough trip from the coast up to the mountain property with a team of students and finally we were able to leave one team of Bible School students there full time. That was a real challenge. No electricity, even flashlights often had dead batteries. The only light left in the home was a homemade lamp. This was constructed out of an old tin can filled with oil. A hole was punched in the top lid and a cotton wick burned out of this. To keep the flame from being blown out a short piece of bamboo was split in half and shielded the wick on the windward side. The nighttime was the only time we could really hold evangelistic meetings since most of these people were farmers or farm laborers who worked dawn to dusk. Near the equator sun up and sun down were usually at six o'clock. It was the same with little variation all year round. The twilight also seemed very short just as if you were pulling a curtain to shut out the light. After dark we would start across the road less fields with our hill tribe students. To them it was like home. They did just fine in the dark without any lights, but I'd stumble along behind. Soon we came to a creek. There were three bamboo poles stretched across it, a single one to hold onto, the other poles to balance on, thus forming a crude bridge. It was a real challenge in the pitch blackness. Then we finally arrived at Kamon's hut. We could see the glow of the bamboo lamp inside.

He greeted us warmly and soon we were seated in a circle on the floor. A highly decorated, aluminum bowl of drinking water was placed in our midst.

Anyone could drink from the common cup. After a time of introduction and questions

about their family we began to sing songs and praise choruses accompanied by the student's guitar. This often attracted the attention of curious neighbors who would join us. Then we taught a Bible lesson centering on Jesus and the new life He offered.

There would be prayer for the sick and for other needs in the family. Then we'd trek back over the same dark fields and obstacles. A bare plank floor was our welcome sleeping pad. The Lord greatly blessed these efforts and after two years a congregation of 60 people met regularly each Sunday morning at Mr Mitres cabin.

Some of these were village folks he hired to work for him. Others were villagers who had come to know Jesus love and grace. By now two rough, wood, frame buildings stood on our Bible School land. They were larger than the average home but similar, sitting on their posts with room underneath the dwelling; with a low pitched tin roof.

Often the roof leaked, then when the hot sun came out and blasted on it the tin popped and crackled noisily from the heat expansion. Sitting under the tin roof was something like being in a microwave oven. But we were glad for these buildings.

Now we could begin to improve the lower area making it more useful, like putting in concrete floor and walls. We also made single, squat pot toilets housed in a small, thatched, outdoor shack. The hill tribe students didn't find that necessary since they were used to going behind a large rock or jungle growth. We tried to explain the danger to our health with such unsanitary practices. Flies sat on our food before we could chase them away. Bathing also wasn't a problem for the students, but it took us missionaries a bit of time to master. To bathe we simply stood

next to the large earthen jar (in Thai "ong") and you wrapped yourself with a large cloth ("sarong"). Then remove your clothing, slipping it out from under the sarong and stand wrapped in the sarong. Then you dipped water from the ong pouring it over yourself. By this process you could bathe modestly even in daylight. This was the general practice all over southeast Asia, but especially in rural areas.

The Lord then arranged for some Christians and churches in Singapore to take an interest in the Bible School and Tosh was invited to travel there. They began to visit Thailand on mission treks. Soon they offered financial help to build more buildings and supply other needs of the Bible school. We wanted to build two new dorms and put out the word for a few local workers. The next day, early in the morning, a trailer full of men came, pulled by a garden tractor. Eighteen men in all, had come from surrounding villages. Everyone needed a job.

Eighteen men's salaries wasn't in our budget. We saw our need and a great opportunity for them to know Jesus. These thoughts won over our lack of finances.

Dividing them into three teams we went to work. One gate team built a stone wall with a gate. One team fenced in the land and one dorm crew made a foundation and fill it with rock, poured the floor and put up the concrete walls. They worked eagerly and we enjoyed this. Since they were unskilled labor, we arranged the first hour of the day to have a classroom lesson on the construction we wanted. Each lesson ended with a short Bible teaching and introduction to Jesus. They seemed to love this, they'd have a chance of a better job later. They giggled and joked as they sat on the floor mats. "We're back in school!" they joked.

The lessons also included such instruction for them as to how we







Ladda and Judy

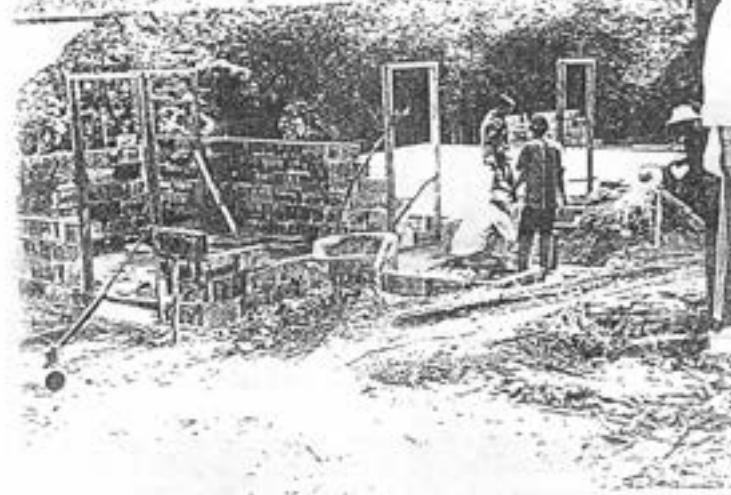
Judy's little fish

little lambs





First work crew
Building the dorm



Dorm building



Carpenter Kamol's family



mix concrete and how to do the reinforcing bars; methods of construction, plumbing, sewer systems and on. Two men seemed to already have some experience and they became the foreman of the crews. One had good skill at driving the tractor that was donated to the school by a friend of Toshes, a Chinese business man. One worker was a good mechanic, so we put him to work to repair the broken clutch on the old bulldozer. I needed to go to Bangkok that day, and the next morning he came to the class session, his hand bandaged. He seemed to be in extreme pain. When questioned he told how the heavy clutch housing of the bulldozer was suspended by chain and slipped, crushing his finger between clutch and engine. The finger looked bad. "Let's pray for it" we said "and then we'll send you to the clinic." After praying for the Lord's healing, he mounted a small motorcycle, driven by another worker, and went off to the clinic, one village away. When he returned at noon he had this to say. "When you prayed for me it felt all the pain unwrapped itself from my finger and when I got to the clinic the nurse wanted to remove my fingernail. I said 'Don't touch it, it feels fine.' She just dressed it, and it feels fine now. He was back on the job. Praise the Lord for confirming His word with signs and wonders.

All three teams worked diligently and I let word out "we can't use any more workers" because many others wanted to come. But one day I looked up from where we were working and measuring foundation for a chapel, and there stood two women. One was the wife of the man whose finger was healed and the other a very thin, dark skinned lady. "No, I can't hire you, your husband is already working. you need to be home and care for your children" I said to the wife of the carpenter. I also said to both of them that we just couldn't afford more workers and didn't need any more. The workers wife pleaded for the other lady, saying "She can mix cement and carry rocks or anything!" I couldn't imagine such a frail

lady doing these things, nor would I have wanted her to.

But I just couldn't say "No" to her. I knew the Lord wanted me to hire her. Later I knew why. "Rock" was her nickname. We learned later she was abandoned by her husband and had two small children she was providing for as well as her elder dad. They lived in a small hut with crude conditions. They had hardly any food to eat.

She assured me she could work as hard as any man but we put her to work in the easiest job we could find, sifting sand. It was this same "Rock" who came to know and love the Lord dearly and turned out to be a real evangelist. She gloried in her new life in Jesus.

Often people came to us for work, but regardless of whether we could give them a job, they had a chance to hear the gospel. On one occasion when we were short on money and needed to keep the students busy we decided to use some leftover poles and materials to construct a large storage shed. Since we couldn't buy tin roofing, we decided on a thatched roof. The students already knew how to make the roof tiles from tall grass. Several stands of the right type of this grass grew on the mountain side. It took many trips up the steep mountain side to harvest it and carry it back to the building site. Then it woven into roof tiles. It was great fun, us missionaries trying to learn this process. It was tedious and time consuming and such tiles lasted only a few years. Many homes in the village had this type roof. Little did we know that in the middle of the next rainy season, while we were in the US on a brief furlough, Tosh would decide that it was the right time to move the whole Bible school from the coast up to the new property. This storage shed would prove handy on that occasion.

Mr. Bullfrog

They called him Mr. Gope, the Thai word for bullfrog. Gope is

taken from the sound of the bullfrog which you'd hear great choruses from them, after a torrential rain. Hundreds of these frogs croaking "gope, gope, gope." The village men liked to catch them for a tasty meal. Mr Gope was just his nickname, probably because of his full face and broad chin. Perhaps from his mannerisms too. He had served in the Thai military and was a perfect sergeant type. Mr Gope also had served many years as the mayor of this village. Now for a few years his son was the mayor. Mr Gope enjoyed owning and driving a six wheel cargo truck, fitted out with two rows of bench seats in the canopied, open box. This was typical of the many market buses throughout Thailand. Thousands of these transported people in every village to the market and back. Even in Bangkok these trucks roared up and down the streets transporting people. The market bus was usually the only link between the country folk and small villages to the nearest market supply town. These villagers would buy a few day's supply for their family or for their small business of selling food. Several in the village would specialize in cooking rice or soup and various Thai dishes to sell to other villagers.

I met Mr Gope on some of my first month's trips to the new Bible School site in the mountains. My car wasn't ready yet but I could take a bus from the coast up to Pak Chong in the northeast of Thailand. From there the market bus was the only way to get out into the country. This was a great way to meet local people. You became one of them as you were riding in their type of transportation. On several occasions I rode in the cab with Mr Gope and while we rode along I talked to him and told him about Jesus. He seemed to enjoy that. When we stopped to pick up or drop off people

(some of them were even his relatives) he would stop the truck, get out and repeat to them what I had just told him about Jesus. It blessed me to hear that. Our Bible School student workers also spoke to many about Jesus, including Mr Gope. It seems Mr Gope

got tired of his aging wife and had married a second wife, a young sweet thing and she was pregnant. This of course caused great family problems and at least one of his grown sons felt sorry for his aging mother, and mad enough to threaten to kill his dad. Besides this something was going wrong with the pregnancy of his new, young wife. The Dr. examination revealed twins and one of them was missing body parts, he said.

Our students told Mr Gope that our God was able to do miracles and heal. Mr Gope had agreed to pray for the twins and said if "God can heal the babies in the womb,

I'll become a Christian." The babies were both born completely normal, as cute twin girls. Mr Gope was rejoicing and in church regularly. Even sang original esawn hill billy type folk songs. These songs were made up on the spot and he was praising the Lord and testifying to God's love and power. In this whole scene I both rejoiced and had mixed emotions for I could see God's grace and love and lives so messed up.

However, now that I am back in the USA I face similar mixed emotions with so many divorces and messed up families, broken homes among my Christian friends.

Praise the Lord, Jesus heals broken hearts.



These people were baptized
in 1993

Chapter 27 Joyce's Insert

This is a story Judy wrote for an English assignment

Each time mother and I walked to the market I dreaded facing the people who would stop and say "Oh, how cute you are" and then pinch my cheek. I didn't like it at all, and always came home with sore, red cheeks. Mother thought about telling them to quit and tried telling them nicely, but nothing worked. They didn't intentionally mean to hurt me. That was just their way in Thailand of saying I was cute.

Mother kept on praying and asking God for a solution. The Lord popped into her mind the idea of having me wai (pronounced "why").

The wai is the Thai way of greeting each other. It is done simply by placing one's hands together (as in an attitude of prayer) and bowing your head slightly. The next time we went to the market we decided to try that remedy. As soon as a lady walked up to me and said "Oh, you're so cute" and before she could pinch my cheek, I quickly wailed her. She was so surprised and delighted that I had greeted her politely that she forgot to pinch my cheek!

From then on I didn't dread going to the market and didn't have any problem with people pinching me.

Judy's Eleven Little Fish

To our daughter Judy it seemed a sacrifice to leave her comfortable home and room to spend a week at the boatyard. Mom came too, while Dad spent a special week working on their missionary boat, Noah. The Thailand days were hot and

cloudless. The boatyard crews and families went about their daily tasks. Many of the family living nearby eked out their existence from the sea. Boats of all sizes docked in the small canal which was lined with the shacks where these families lived. The heat combined with the unpleasant odor of remains of sea creatures processing, crabs, oysters, squid and fish was trying. But Judy was determined to make the best of it and every day she gathered the small children to play games with them. The children shrieked and laughed as they played the Thai version of "Duck, Duck, Gray Duck," and "Simon says....."

As the week drew to a close we needed to go to a town 20 miles away to cash a check. We went there because there lived a Thai Christian money changer we had known for many years.

When Mrs. Orowan saw fourteen year old Judy seh began to rejoice and give Judy all kinds of advice. Then Mrs Orowan went behind one of her display racks and came out with something in her hands. A bunch of small, palm-sized, wooden carved fish, all eleven decorated and painted. She told Judy something about "counting them and that they are like souls won for Jesus."

That evening after we returned to the boatyard, one group after another of Judy's "children" showed up and each time they came she taught the group about Jesus. Each group was so excited and talked about heaven as if they could see it. They ran and got others and said "You need to pray and ask Jesus into your heart."

Later the little children were around the table writing their names. These were eleven little fish for Jesus.

Mom's note: Judy has sort of "taken off" now in her 14th year and her quiet faith is expressing itself in numerous little children's

groups in the neighborhood where she holds little teaching meetings. Each day she has another group of children. It must be the Holy Spirit's time for children because they respond so well. God is "confirming His Word" with signs and wonders. By that I mean unexpected very good things happen without us doing anything special. The attendance is something we don't "work up" or have to bribe or urge. The Holy Spirit does it all, we are just there to guide and let Him use our voice and lives.

For example, yesterday she taught some new children, and when they appeared ready to receive Jesus in their life one child prayed a long time, eyes closed and later told "teacher Judy" that "I saw Jesus come into me! I saw my heart become white instead of black." Another in the group insisted she had seen a picture of (what Judy described as) heaven. Their whole demeanor was changed, as they sat there on the curb for their half hour meeting, and Judy had no doubt they "had been with Jesus." Praise God for the simple faith of children, may we be more like them and more like Jesus!

References Required

When hiring any employee always check their references thoroughly, right? Wrong, sometimes they can move above their past and walk straight forward when given a chance. The story below is true and recent, proving the power of prayer, repentance and hard work which the Lord blessed quickly.

One young woman sought a job and had two children, one only a baby eight months old. Both little girls were cared for by the aged mother, while Sonaree earned money to support all four. She had

no husband. She came to a couple Christian organizations with her story of what skills she had and the fact she had the responsibility of two children and the aged mother, but no husband. She admitted her Christian life had not been good, she had back slidden. She said she had repented and now she needed a job.

One American potential employer took time to check a reference and found the true story of Sunaree's life beside her husband in the sex industry. She did not hire the young woman. Another person interviewed her for a position of caring for infants at the Bible School. Student families needed someone to watch their children while they studied. This person (Tosh) did not check her references, but prayed fervently and felt the Lord encouraging him to hire her. On her free day, Saturday, Joyce was spending time with her teaching her English . She had a strong desire to improve her English. The two little tots interrupted a lot with their energetic play! I was fond of them however, and prayed for their future.

So four years ago she began to work and proved worthy of the trust we placed in her. She met the strain of being to work on time, caring for her youngster alone (for awhile baby stayed with Sunaree's mother). At the end of her position she left us and found another job, later met a single American missionary and they got married. She has been happily married since then.

I learned she lived in a town one hour away from us. What a joy it was to see her and learn how God has blessed his wayward lamb with a Christian husband, steady income and steady life with Jesus. Her two smiling, precious children were neatly dressed, well behaved, calm, strong , healthy, and relaxed beside their mother. A step father and their mother made two confident parents. Two faith filled parents for two growing girls, a happy



students

Evangelism



Eating Thai Style

family. Praise God for people who don't always "check the references." Check with God proved more valuable in this case.

Christmas Evangelism in Public Schools

When our eight missionary kids helped us with public school evangelism at Christmas time, they had some unusual experiences. At one school, in the middle of the afternoon, two snakes were playing on the rafters over the stage where the program took place. In typical "boy" fashion, our grandson Jesse told me "I kept hoping they'd fall down so I could see them up close. But they didn't."

Christmas evangelism found us in nine public schools this season. In one area 500 students in public school were busy listening to the play, answering the simple questions for prizes (Oh! those pretty pens!) and laughing at the puppet who asked so many questions about what Christmas really is. Some schools were smaller.

It's our fourth year for Christmas evangelism. The headmaster at one school forgot we were coming and didn't make provisions for the auditorium to be swept or teachers to line up the children. So our first sight was a coconut strewn cement floor of the outdoor building which had a roof, no walls. A raised platform was ready for us to use, except it too needed to be swept of an inch of dust, cement powder from a broken bag, and leaves the wind blew in.

Excitement was high since the school children here were eager to win prizes for answer "Whose Birthday is Christmas?" and "What day do Christians celebrate Jesus' Birthday?" We had 2 and 1/2 hours to freely explain and let the kids get acquainted with new thoughts about God and His love shown at Christmas. During the

two weeks before Christmas we visited nine public schools, reaching nearly 2,000 students. God's given us marvelous opportunity with the young people of Thailand. I praise and thank Him!

Sticker Bushes Rejoice

On this side of the denuded mountain in eastern Thailand, there are sticker bushes dotting the barren ground with their prickly gray spikes. I think of them when I see a hoary head with the typical three inches short haircut often chosen by elderly folks. Perhaps mountain people and sticker bushes have a few things in common. When an older person's hair turns gray, it becomes stiff and stubborn, a little like this bush. And the rugged, independent spirit of persevering mountain people may at times be a little stubborn too.

But the mountain folks are lovable! And I love to see them come to the small community church begun two years ago. Especially the elderly ones I love to see, because they often lead their families along the new path of faith in Jesus.

About two weeks ago I watched five elderly folks with their short haircuts (typical sticker bush style) come into church and sit down on the mats side by side. Several faces were new to me. After the praise singing, a good sermon, the preacher's announcements, and some special songs by the Sunday School kids, Pastor Man-nit said "Several of you are new here. Most of the rest of us have accepted the Lord, how about you new ones. Why don't you open your life and your heart for Jesus to live in you today?"

He called them by name and encouraged them "Why don't you

come up here now and pray for your sins to be forgiven. Don't put it off." Several began to move forward, and one old man especially caught my eye. His legs were black. "Perhaps he had been making charcoal" I thought, "and the dust remains on his skinny legs." A couple of elderly women from his village were encouraging him "Now get yourself up there" and I didn't know if it was their urging or the pastor's but he too went forward.

Next Sunday grandpa with the black legs was back. But the third Sunday he couldn't come, he had died. It was then we learned what truly happened in his heart when he asked the Lord Jesus to be in his life. His family said "Since he has gone to church he has been so free and happy. For several days he said he didn't feel hungry, he was satisfied and happy since Jesus had come into his heart. He even skipped meals, he said he felt satisfied."

His faith had made an impression on the family, and we knew that for sure His Savior had taken him home, his sins had been forgiven and he had two weeks to rejoice in that salvation. I believe the angels in heaven rejoice, and yes even the sticker bushes on the mountain side did too!

Forgiveness Heals a Family

"This is the last Sunday of those special Seminar teachings, let's go again" Mr. At heard his wife say. He had been learning about Christians for more than a year and he really believed what he heard about Christ Jesus forgiving sins. It wasn't a new idea, needing to have sin washed away! Mr. At had many things to wish were "gone" from his heart and life, many dirty deeds. For awhile he had been a crook and gangster, then this led to being friends with a Communist gang and after that his search for meaning and

direction in life led him to whatever anyone was teaching and he happened to want to hear. His own family had been going to the local small house meeting "church" they called it.

"Dad, I have become a Christian," his daughter announced one afternoon when she came home from the church meeting. But his only thought was "Well, she is trying out a new idea just like her Dad always does."

Awhile later she left the home with her boyfriend and later Mr. At's wife said "They decided to become a family. They live together now in Bangkok." Mr. At was speechless with anger and sorrow. "Why they are too young to do that, she is only sixteen and he isn't much older. I am so angry!! If they come here I would kill that young man" At stammered.

The daughter knew of her father's anger. She stayed away for many months. But during this time the wife also became a Christian and her sweet attitude reshaped At's thinking. "Why don't you come along with us" she urged her husband every Sunday. He was thinking about it.

Time and again Mr. At asked if there was some work at the Bible School he could do. He was a carpenter and could do many jobs. Finally he landed a job with us. It wasn't long after that he became serious about his soul condition. He too asked Jesus' cleansing blood to wash him.

"Duane" our Thai translator asked "Would you speak with Mr. At. He has a problem with his ulcer right now.." Little did Duane know this was to be a big changing point in At's family and his personal life. "You know we have to forgive others or else God the Father cannot forgive us our load of sins." Duane urged him to accept this

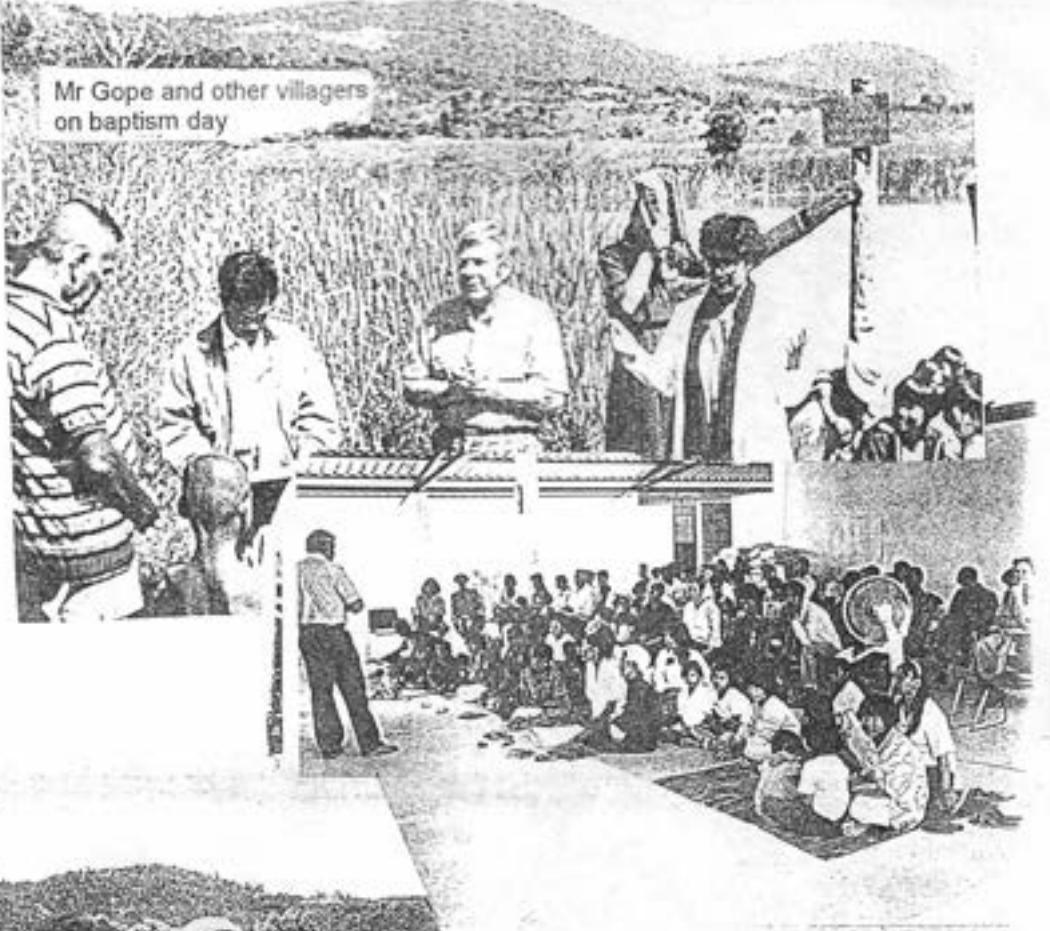


Public Schools Welcome us at Christmas



Village Folks, New Believers Baptized





Students



Student
pastors

young man as a son in law and forgive the past years' separation. Mr. At quickly agreed. In fact in just a few days his daughter and common law husband came home for a visit. "Your father is no longer angry" the mother had reported. "Let's have a ceremony for you two now. You will be married finally."

"Please invite the church to come." Mr At told Tosh. "I want them to see I forgive my son in law and I want to bless their marriage. Come to my house after church service today" he asked. And that's what happened! The couple got his apology and blessing and the church learned a great lesson about the joy forgiveness brings. The family rift is settled and Christ brought peace to Mr. At's home.

Student's Afternoon Village Evangelism

Long prayed for, long planned and it seemed so slow in coming, but the students' village outreach finally came to pass one afternoon. Local pastors came in the 6 wheel truck, ready to set out on the half graveled, mostly dirty, dusty roads. Andrea and Joyce were with them loaded in for the one kilometer ride to a village we never had visited before. I noticed in addition to the CFTI folk on board we also had two older men, church fellows and later I learned their friends and kinfolk lived in these villages, having these trusted, older men along gave the whole outreach a "stamp of approval" which was helpful.

Some Youth With a Mission (YWAM) folks came to accompany us. Their 2 pickups were loaded up and sent to another village, with other faculty members and some students. Their plan was to gather some people, do their skit and witness after that. All of their group were Thai young people in training with YWAM. They were a great encouragement to CFTI and a blessing to that village.

A second group, the one which I was with, headed to a different village. "Oh, look at that smooth road, and what are these poles for? Are they expecting electricity?" We commented on the new village. There was a definite plan to this area, a bulldozer had recently smoothed the whole area and shrubs struggled in the blazing sun and bare dirt. We learned a Christian businessman was developing this area for a resort.

Older homes were at the edge of the development, and a crew seemed to be moving poles away from one house evidently planning to make it bigger. It became evident our group wouldn't follow the YWAM method today. The faculty member with her accordion began to play and praise flowed from our mouths while the men tugged at the poles with all their might. After a few minutes the young Thai pastor held up his poster and began a rather informal story telling session, explaining about the Prodigal Son. "Uncle, this man lived in a house that looked much like yours" he began. There was instant rapport.

"Well, it's not exactly like yours, it's got a straw roof and yours is tin." He then had everyone's attention. As I glanced down to my bag of literature I noticed my tracts were printed to follow his story and the very man in his picture was on my leaflets which were later handed to listeners. None of us had planned that, but we rejoiced!!

We finished our visit and drove onward. At the next set of houses we again prayed and praised before speaking to the people. I believe this is a key. We were led in this manner and it would seem very good to follow that procedure most of the time. A crowd gathered when Andrea's accordion was heard, and again the Thai pastor, Mr Manit used the time after praise to share his lesson. Our truck driver eagerly offered to pick up these folk on Sunday

morning. Since it was a 45 minute drive I marvelled, because this added to the long bus pickup route on Sundays. Later I learned some of the folks to be picked up were the driver's relatives.

I have seen the truck leave as early as 7 am to pick up folks for 9 am service. But he didn't mind, the added time spent driving wasn't a bother, he was very eager that his relatives come to church.

Sunday morning was a big mixup. The student who had driven the 6 wheeler truck Saturday expected it was his job to drive it Sunday for pickups. He hadn't been told of the new village's interest. When I saw him hurry away, it didn't dawn on me this would spoil the plan we had made on Friday. But the pastor, Mr Manit came hurrying up to my door and excitedly explained "The truck has gone and Mr Bullfrog isn't driving it, now how will 'Frog's relatives come to church?" None of them had cars and it was much too far to walk. Duane immediately set out in our car to apprehend the truck and let Mr Bullfrog get the folks picked up. This was accomplished and ten new folks were in church afterward. It was a special lunch prepared made with vegetables that are difficult to cook. The woody outside part of this pod is steamed, then cut off and the inside cooked again with special spices and chunks of fish caught in local waters. Nearly 200 people were at church. The new building isn't too big after all I guess!!

It's our earnest prayer and desire that more outreaches can be accomplished soon and the church continues to grow in number as well as spiritually.

Forgive

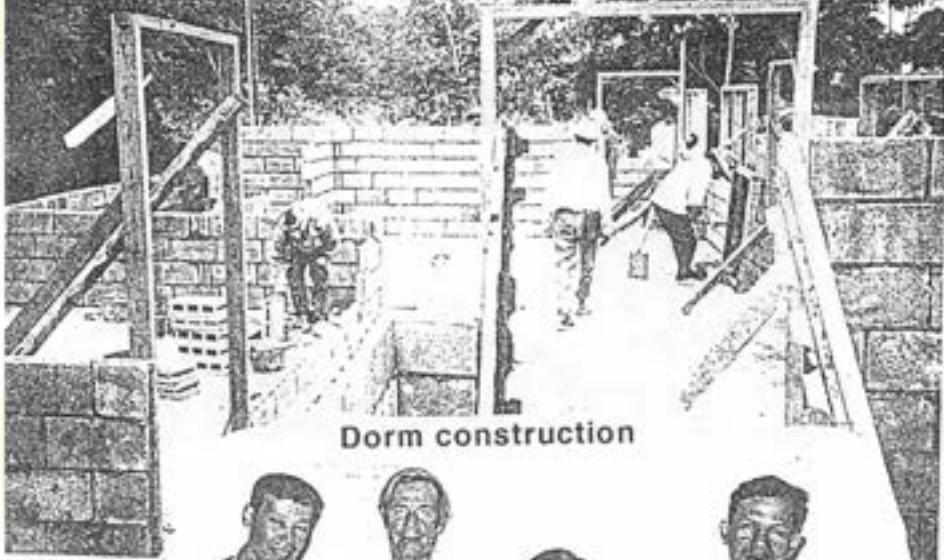
The grandmas sat together in our new church and compared notes on what they were hearing. "Yes, that's true" they nodded to each other as the seminar proceeded. They had heard the gospel for a year now, and believed what they heard. Today the subject was forgiveness.

"When you fail to forgive, you only hurt yourself. Forgiveness must be done. Forgiving is what Christ did for us, and it requires we forgive others. Daily, past and present, future and always, we have to forgive."

One grandma has other things topmost in her mind this morning. She had a big day come Monday, a day she dreaded. It all began 3 weeks ago when she was gathering wood not far from her village. From the woods came 3 rowdy boys, they were bent on orneriness. But this was not the usual school boy tricks; they were thinking of being very rude to her. When she was alone they came to her and let her know their intentions were to molest her. "Me? Your grandmother for more than 70 years?" she asked incredulously. Perhaps they only intended to scare her, but when she began to think of it maybe they were serious, and she had better get home fast. She walked quickly and they followed, still talking and rowdy.

"Help me! Help me, someone!" she called loudly as her house came into sight. Her cries brought several people to her and they helped her into her house as she began to shake. "You just wouldn't believe what those boys threatened." she sobbed. "I'm really afraid of them."

The young men disappeared from sight and the neighbors



Dorm construction



Mr. Et, Duane, Pang and Kamoon



Dan eating Thai style with his church members



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CONGRATULATIONS



Bible School
Graduation ceremony



counseled grandma to "Get the authorities and take care of this matter." She gladly obeyed and later a date was set when she could come before the judge and face those rowdy out-of-towners whose names had now been recorded.

As she sat in church waves of fear again poured over her. What if they set on her again in retaliation! But faith was stronger and she kept a steady heart, just waiting until Monday when the trial was scheduled.

"Tell me your name, your address and your age," the court proceedings began. She answered calmly. When the routine questioning included "Your religion, please?" she confidently said "Christian" which brought a surprised gasp to the assembled group.

"Now tell us the complaint" the judge continued.

"Oh, well, your Honor, these boys have done some very wicked talking and frightened me. I was going to press charges but now I think I have changed my mind. Yesterday, I went to our church meeting and we talked about how Christ forgave us our sins and He asks us to forgive other's sins. I believe I will get my peace of mind by asking the charges be dropped for I am forgiving these boys. That's what a Chrsitian is supposed to do."

The judge quickly dismissed the gathering, but the story of what this aged Grandma had said and done spread throughout the village and accomplished what two months' of sermons couldn't have done!! Praise God for "Eyes that see and ears that hear the Word of God."

Country Music.....Thai style

Every culture has its own homestyle, home brewed, mountain and folk song music. Thailand is no exception. The eastern part of Thailand has a folk song style which is often composed on the spot and therefore can easily be used as a teaching tool.

The necessary ingredients are a singer who likes to express his thoughts and emotions, and an appreciative audience who likes to encourage him on with rhythmic motions of the body and a few hand claps along the way. The accompaniment is important, for this provides not the melody but a rhythm which quickly identifies the song as being "Issan" (or phonetically "Ee-sawn")

A drum is most necessary. Asians are like their African cousins, they consider this a most powerful "mood setter." and it is indeed. There a certain syncopated beat we all wait for, that tell us a wonderful yarn is being spun and ready to be sung.

Some of the smaller churches in rural Thailand, but not in dignified Bangkok chruches, regularly have an Issan song in their service. the singer will start out with his experience such as "I was sitting on my porch the other evening, enjoying the cool fbreeze when my old friend Fats came by and we started to chat. He said to me that there didn't really seem to be any sense to life. And I told him that's just how I felt until I discovered the one who loves me totally and always, Jesus. I told him that Jesus is mankind's answer to problems...." and so on till the story of salvation is clearly taught. No poems allowed, just prose and a good drum beat behind it. It's quite helpful tyhave a tamborine jingling along too, and an old tin can the drummer can whack once in awhile. Should there be any guitarist's around, they'll be asked to contribute mostly with the beat and not much melody, but in some key they can agree on.

The guitarist main job is to fill in the choruses which come now and then to give the composer/singer time to think f his next paragraph and rest his voice a bit.

The singer won't have a melody planned but has some closed-mouth humming that we expect and a soft yodel effect that goes up and down the scale repeatedly. It's hard to put into words all the things we expect and the things we are surprised about and didn't expect. Anticipation is half the fun, the other half is the surprise. These things are all part of the traditional Issan Thai mountain music.

Many foods you try you don't particularly care for the first time. The taste grows on you when you try them again and again. The same is true of this music, try it once then try it again. You'll like it!



Chapter 28 Mountain Man

Shortly after Mr Mitre had given us the land, and we had the first building livable, on one of his visits to the property he said to us "Let's follow the path to the top of the mountain. There seems to be a village up there." The first mile of the path led through a valley, and up a moderate slope ending at a large rock outcropping. From there was a steep path leading up through the heavy, jungle underbrush and trees. It took another hour and the final ascent seemed almost vertical. We grabbed onto trees and bushes to pull ourselves up the path. Occasionally we could see out to the valley far below us, it was a spectacular view of the whole plateau below us and in the distance the big Kao Yai Mountain range. Below us was the small village, Bible School property, and small river that wound through a valley. Then we came to a clearing on a very slanted field of high grass. Walking through this we came to the top of the mountain and saw tapioca and corn fields. The man working there spotted us and came toward us. We were all smiling as we greeted him, he warmly greeted us.

This grandpa was the patriarch of the clan living there. He had pioneered this area 20 years ago. There were 5 or 6 homes in the village, all made from hand sawn timber. A ladder led to the first floor of the house. Under the house were chickens, ducks and grain storage. He introduced us to several families with young children and finally showed us one granddaughter. He seemed to have a special concern and love for this little, bright eyed, four year old girl. We looked at her and we felt pain and compassion. The girl had an extreme cleft palate which left her unable to eat

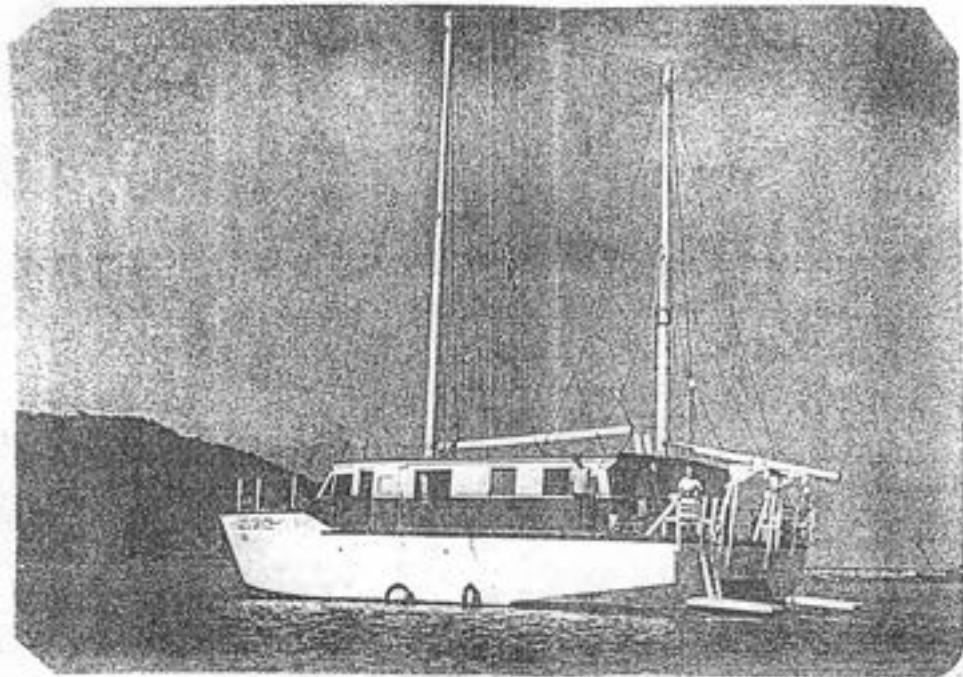


Mountain Man , grandaughter &
students



New Christians gather at Mt. Church





normally. She had to be fed special. We could feel Jesus' love and compassion for her. We had a missionary friend who knew a Thai navy doctor who made it a specialty to operate on such cases, he had just helped a little child in a coastal village. We could get the information from him, so we offered to help this little girl in that way. We made several visits to that village, taking students and sharing the gospel. We contacted that doctor and were able to schedule an operation some months in the future. When the day finally came Mother and daughter accompanied by grandma and other villagers had made their way down the mountain path and came to our door. We had only the Bible School pickup truck to transport them to Bangkok, 6 hour drive.

Mother and daughter and I started our trip. But something was wrong with the mother, she'd break out in a hot sweat and later in cold shivers. "Does she have malaria?" I thought. She was in agony all the way. I tried to sing hymns on the way to soothe her and I prayed. Two hours later we arrived at the navy hospital for the scheduled operation and the mother seemed weak. Then while still standing at the reception counter she lost consciousness and collapsed! They rushed her off to emergency room, and took the little girl to the operating room. I waited several hours not knowing what was happening and afterward the Dr appeared and said the mother had typhoid fever and would have died soon, had she not come to the hospital. But that she would be okay after treatment. The little girl had the major surgery and repair to her cleft palate. He said normally this would take two operations but he did it in one large operation. In the end we had one very happy village family who couldn't do enough to say thank you. We explained it was all because of Jesus' love in us. They were open to that and often came down the mountain path arriving early Sun morning bringing gifts of fruits, flowers or some produce. All of the supplies needed by those villagers had to be

hand carried up the steep path, about 3 or 4 miles. One day I saw a man carrying a car battery down to get it charged in the nearest village and then back up again. It was their only source of electricity and now it was urgently needed for their battery operated T V, the Championship Thai Boxing was going to be on!

Sometime later the military government forced these people off the mountain land and gave them land in a village 30 miles away. Their current law didn't allow homesteading on the top of mountains.

Weekly we would hold cell meetings in our local village. But we wanted to reach the surrounding village with the gospel. "Let's go to the next villages" I said,

so we went. We stopped near a sports field where a school soccer team was playing. We gave out some tracts and talked to a few people. Nothing really seemed to happen. I knew we had to seek the Lord and get His direction as to what was wrong.

Timing seemed to be the answer. Then it came, an inspiration I'm sure, the idea to take a program to the public schools at Christmas. "It's a great idea, Lord" I exclaimed. It was a month until Christmas. Then the Lord did something. Joyce, Judy and I were in a stationary store buying some supplies in Pak Chong. Pak Chong was the nearest large farm supply city. While in the stationary store a lady dressed in a uniform started talking to Joyce in English. When she found out we were staying in the area she asked Joyce "Would you come to my school at Christmas and do a program?" She was the headmaster (principal) of her school which was near town.

"Yes," we would come, and we thanked the Lord for the open door. That encouraged us to contact other schools and nine more schools were anxious to have us come.

It was such a thrill to be able to openly share Jesus. We had children's songs, games, puppets and prizes. Gospel story books were given. We could openly witness and even give an invitation for them to receive Jesus. The largest school had about 600 students and the children responded so enthusiastically that all raised their hands to the invitation. Usually the children sat on the floor of the meeting room and looked very neat in their school uniforms. All wore the same color uniform. The contrasting thought struck me, as I realized back in the USA children and teachers are being denied their constitutional right of freedom from the government interference in religion; no prayers, no Bible reading, etc. Yet here in a nation regarded as Buddhist, the gospel could be freely proclaimed even in the government schools. These Christmas programs were the first of an annual tradition. Even more schools were added.

We tried to follow up these with invitations to local meetings and English clubs, good news clubs, wherever we could. Some of the schools asked us to have a weekly meeting. In a few cases some of the school officials objected or were outright against us. This was the case in two of the closest villages. One was the wife of the mayor, she was also school superintendent. But through her association with us the Lord was able to touch her heart. She tutored our daughter Judy (age 14) in learning Thai language. She was deeply impressed with Judy's sincere faith in Jesus. The Holy Spirit was working on her heart to the point where one day I was at a meeting with several officials. One of them was making some negative remarks about Christianity and she spoke up in defense of it, to his surprise and our's.

Even the local temples which at first were neutral, began an open campaign against the Christians. Sunday mornings they played loud traditional music from their big temple loud speakers. They

broadcast sermons against Christianity. They said "Who will take care of your body when you die?" They had testimonies of why Christianity wasn't good. But in spite of this most of the members remained faithful.



Chapter 29 **Abducted and Sold**

Uncle Sote was of small, sinewy build. A real fighter! He had been a Thai boxer all his life and enjoyed cock fighting and lots of alcohol. He was one of the first ones in the village to respond, his heart fell under the wooing of the Holy Spirit and often he would break down crying when giving his testimony of how Jesus saved him. He and his elderly wife lived in a shack on the Mitre property along the mountainside and helped care for the land and cattle. He had a daughter who was married already, but their youngest

daughter (about 14) was still with them. On Sunday the whole family attended church in the crude cabin Mr Mitre had built. One day his youngest daughter wasn't with them, and he was crying and asking for prayer. His daughter had been stolen. But just two weeks later he was able to give a glowing testimony how when he asked Jesus to help the Lord showed him where to look. This was way in the south of Thailand, 200 hundred miles from home, in a jungle area, among the rebels. We all rejoiced at her return and she came faithfully to church.

About a year later on Sunday morning, the family was in church but the daughter had with her two of her school girl friends from the local village. I thought that was great she was bringing her friends. It didn't turn out that way. The next Sunday she was gone again. The Dad was in tears again, asking for prayer, knowing Jesus would help. The daughter had gone home with those friends and now had been missing a week. Actually, we found out later, it was the mother of those "friends" who had set the trap. As soon as she was with them they took her off to a large city and sold her into prostitution. When Uncle Sote went to that lady she shouted "Get off my property or I'll sue you."

Uncle Sote, still praying, went to the local police and reported the whole thing. Often the police are not able to help in situations like this. But the Lord gave them real insight and they knew the reputation of this woman and picked her up. They severely threatened her until she told them where the girl was. Uncle Sote and some others in the village, went and rescued his daughter out of the brothel where she was. The woman had sold her for about \$50. The daughter recovered well from her one month ordeal and went on to marry a Christian man in the congregation. They remained members while they lived in the area.



Chapter 30 Building in the mountains

The Christian businessman (Mr Mitre) had been led of the Lord to purchase many acres along the slope of the mountain. This was classed as degraded forest land by the government and only now was it possible for him to buy the homesteaded plots of the various farmers who were selling because of a threat of the government taking the land back. Perhaps these were rumors started by local officials wanting to cash in on land because they would tell the farmers the government was taking it back, but they were willing to buy it for a very low fee. They would then turn around and sell it to investors like Mr Mitre, for a huge profit. The rumor was substantiated by some national government

announcements to that affect, but nothing had been officially ruled locally. We feel it was the Lord's provision to bring the gospel to this area and it was Mr Mitre who invited us to consider part of that property and finally gave 40 acres there for the Bible school as a "first fruit offering" to the Lord. He also dedicated the rest of that large parcel to the Lord's service. He planned to build other technical and academic schools there.

He soon set out building water reservoirs, dams in otherwise barren

situation. During the rainy season the area was green and jungle like. During the long dry season it was brown and dry, large cracks appeared in the soil. Mr Mitre had bought two houses in the village for us to tear down and use the lumber. Because labor was so cheap we decided to hire a local carpenter and his crew to tear the houses down. We rebuilt on our site.

Mr Kamon was recommended to us along with his crew of 10 men. Mr Mitre's

bulldozer had now gone into action, but it took a long time for the machine to

penetrate the hard, dry, rocky soil. Large rocks were exposed everywhere and the

ground was about half rock. This rock made a good foundation, but cutting out

enough was difficult for the first foundation. Kamon and his crew thought this was a great exciting joke, and a way to cash in on working with foreigners. He would show

us foreigners "a trick or two." And easily pull the wool over our eyes. He laughed and laughed at my crude attempts to speak Thai. Yet, he nor any of his crew spoke English.

"Dtee, dtee" I would say which I thought meant "Good good." But actually saying it that way meant "Hit it, hit it." They knew what I

meant of course. But they loved to laugh and copy my mispronounced words. It was all done in friendship and they saw we laughed too. Soon they saw something more. They saw the love of Jesus, and concern for their lives and their families. They saw honesty, generosity and trust.

We had no choice but to trust them, since I and the team had to go back to the coastal Bible School each week and leave the building site. We'd spend about three days at the building site and four days back at the Bible School. We also got to share the gospel directly with these people and the students would give their testimonies and tell about Jesus love. The Lord was confirming His word with signs following. Mr Kamon awoke from his noon nap one day, expressing that he had seen an important dream. Jesus had shown him his life and he was very impressed.

On another occasion he was near his home making fun of God, he heard God could supply all our needs and he said "God, you can give me 100,000 baht right now." He was in charge of a village project and needed that much money. "You can give it to me" he laughed. Right after that the mayor called him in and informed him the government had just sent 100,000 baht for a village clinic project. So the Lord became bigger and bigger in his eyes and he was among the first to open his heart to Jesus knock. He confessed his sins and was baptized, and others followed.

One of the men on Kamon's crew was named Mr Att. His little half acre farm adjoined our land and needless to say he couldn't make a living on that much land. He had built a typical farm house with hand sawn logs, which sat on poles with shaded space underneath. The large, overhanging roof was good shelter from the sun and rain. The raised first floor provided place for their sleeping mats and a place to spread a mat for eating. Sandals were always removed before climbing a ladder to the first floor.

He was glad for the job and enjoyed construction. The

construction was done with their tools and their style since they knew nothing of western construction. It involved chipping out holes deep enough to receive the poles upon which the house was built. Att also became a Christian but only after sometime of working with the crew and hearing of eternal hope in Jesus. When he told his story, he said "Before you came here, I went through a lot of problems and became disillusioned with the local corrupt government. Then the communist said they had something better. I joined them, until I found out they were even worse". He said then we came along and he wondered "what these people would be?"

Observing our lives, working with us and hearing the message his heart was warmed and he caught on to hope. He accepted the Lord's offer. Soon however, Mr At's new faith would be tested severely. His young teen age daughter had eloped with some young man that seemed undesirable to the Dad. Mr At wanted to kill him as soon as he could. That's what might have happened in his old life. The fruit of his faith was shown by the fact instead he came on the property to visit Joyce and I. He wanted to talk about this family problem.

The Sunday before we taught on forgiveness, how a Christian can forgive because Jesus is in us. We again explained the forgiving love of Jesus' kind of forgiveness, how, when on the cross Jesus even forgave those who were killing him and how we have to forgive one another. So at a deep price to his proud old fleshly ways, and ways of the culture, he decided to forgive the young man and went beyond that to offer to have their wedding in his home. It was a glorious, simple wedding with the love of Jesus shining out. The relatives and parents of the boy were all there. He invited all of us to the wedding. We sang Christian songs and Tosh preached the good news and conducted a Christian wedding ceremony. This wedding was a great testimony to the local people of the power of Jesus to change lives.

Another fruit of Jesus kind of forgiveness followed that message. A little old lady in the village had been attacked by some teenagers, they were apprehended and at their trial the judge asked the lady if she would press the charges. She replied "Last week we learned about forgiveness, I'm going to forgive them!"

Surrounding the Bible School on the mountain property were many poor farmers. They were trying to eke out an existence on their small one to ten acre farms. one of these was a middle aged farmer, we will call him Mr A. He had recently started coming to church. He was led there by the witness of Rock, the lady we spoke of earlier. He seemed happy in his new faith and was baptized and came to church regularly. One Sunday before church, the student pastor came to our house which was near, trying to tell me something. But I just couldn't get it. I explained to him that I needed to wait here this Sunday and couldn't come, because I had to meet a Government Surveyor who was due to arrive soon. During the church time I had to go around with the Surveyor. We were so happy for this event since it meant we would get legal title to this homesteaded property. This had been a matter of much prayer and was a miracle in itself, since it seldom happened except for a few who paid large bribes. Just as the survey was finished church service was also finished, and fellowship time following was also finished. Then The church van loaded with members came by our house. The student pastor got out and tried again to explain what was happening. Finally I understood.

It was about the poor farmer Mr A. It seems his son had just been killed in a motorcycle accident in Bangkok. Mr A hadn't come to church that day, but was at home on his small farm grieving for his son. The pastor and church members were on their way to comfort

him and asked if I would come along.

"Yes" I said and followed in my old car. As we arrived on the scene we could see surrounding his crude hut a gathering of several family members and neighbors.

Mr A himself was in deep grief. He cried and he had been drinking a bit. I talked to him for awhile trying to comfort him. After a short time he said to me in anger "You foreigners don't understand" and I then stepped back and the student pastor began to talk to him. Then as I stood there, calling out in my spirit for the wisdom and the Lord's help, Jesus said to me "Baptize him by proxy for his son. When you do he will see his son with Me (Jesus) in heaven."

Somehow this very unusual thing immediately witnessed with my spirit and I felt excited God had answered my prayer. Going over to him I explained that the Lord told me to baptize him by proxy, for his dead son. I didn't tell him anything about the rest of what the Lord said. He was willing to do this and a bowl of drinking water was brought. I applied the water on his head and baptized him in the name of the Father Son and Holy Spirit and in Jesus name. Just as I finished saying words, his eyes lit up in joyful surprise and he loudly and happily explained "I just saw my son in heaven with Jesus."

His attitude changed from one of deep grieving and sorrow to rejoicing and praising God. Soon the whole crowd of mourners was rejoicing and celebrating. "Isn't God's grace wonderful !" exclaimed the pastor. Several others expressed awe and wonder at such love. It has brought a lasting impact on all of us and on the church. Praise the Lord.

Note: This was a one time event and didn't become a practice as

there is only a hint of it in Scriptures, I Cor. 15:29,30. But what a blessing to be free to follow directly, the leading of the Holy Spirit, As He deals with each situation great results follow, when we don't limit the Holy One of Israel Psalm 78:41. We can limit him also by restricting him to a narrow set of our doctrines. Of course we always taught to try the spirits 1 John 4:1-3 and to use discernment and know the voice of God. "My sheep know my voice...." praise to the Lord Jesus.



Chapter 31 Build it Again

We had been living several years at the Bible School, teaching and working with the local people and the new church established. Meanwhile, the Noah boat stood forsaken and rotting away at the dock, tied to the palm rushes in a canal in Bangkok. That spot was chosen because Mr Mitre also had his ferro concrete home built yacht tied up there. The property was the home of Uncle Pang and family. Mitre had hired him long ago to watch his boat and Uncle Pang (even though he was from the northeast of Thailand,) had come to Bangkok when a young man and could tell stories of sailing Chinese junks back in the "old days". Down to the islands he went, getting loads of rock and sailed back to Bangkok to sell them. He had many years of experience with sailboats. But to get to Pangs property was a real trek. We would take the bus to Bangkok, then a crowded city bus to the riverside of the big Chopya River which cut through the heart of Bangkok. After getting off the public bus you make your way through narrow passageway lined on both sides with temporary stalls selling clothing and all sorts of wares. This narrow path was so crowded that it was a challenge to squeeze through the crowd. Finally arriving at the toll gate, we'd pay four cents to take the public ferry across the river. It was a thrill to watch boat drivers come up heading straight for the dock, then suddenly at the right split second, throw it into reverse and put full throttle in reverse, stop just in time to touch the dock and swing around. The passengers jumped off. Worse yet was the thrill of watching the driver of the ferry you are on, try to out run a huge cargo ship coming at you mid river. You wondered if you would clear it or be run over by it! Also roaring up and down the river

were other ferry boats which looked more like water sleds full of people. It had a huge automobile engine mounted at its rear. This engine pivoted on a single rod support. The handle to the engine allowed the driver to steer by swinging the whole engine with its long shaft which angled down into the water. A spray of water went into the air as these boats with muffler-less engines roared by. Finally, approaching the other side, you'd head into a small, muddy banked channel and roar up that until you came to a dock.

People were waiting to jump on to the boat as others jumped off. After going back through the toll stile many little motorcycles and three wheeled taxis and city busses were waiting to transport you to your destination on that side of the river. Street vendors also tried to lure you with their food and wares. The road (if it could be called that) was a series of deep potholes amid some remnant patches of paving. The busses were dilapidated. As you rode on the bus the whole inside of the bus would creak and shift as everything had been broken loose from the frame from bouncing over these potholed, uneven roads. The motorcycles and three wheeled taxis could weave around the holes and navigate along the tops of the mounds, but it still made for an exciting ride as they seemed to try to do this at top speed. At times you were only in contact with the earth on two wheels of the three wheeler. Your ride ended at a temple located close to the river. Walking back on to the temple property three board walks led into the jungle, over the top of a lily padded swamp. This was the tidal ground along the river, which flooded at high tide twice a day. This boardwalk had been built because even at low tide it would have been impossible to walk in the mud. The problem was the boardwalk was only two boards wide and these boards were hand sawn, irregular and sometimes rotten.

One had to be very careful where you stepped. Many little shacks

were on either side of the walkway. Finally, after about 500 feet of balancing you could enter the gate of Uncle Pangs cottage on poles. From it a single plank led up to the boat which was docked on the edge of the canal.

In the center of a single plank had been placed an upright board to try and help keep the cats and dogs off the boat. At high tide the plank went up at a steep angle. Once when I came to the boat, I was carrying supplies in both hands; cables, heavy cans of things and it was typically hot. Temperature was 100 degrees with 100 per cent humidity. By the time I had maneuvered the boardwalk and came to the gangplank, I was sweating and my trousers were slipping down, but I was almost there with the load I had in my hand. I couldn't let go of the load.. As I came to the guard board in the middle of the plank, I tried to raise one leg and step over it, and retain my balance. But I couldn't raise my leg enough and soon I was heading head first off the plank into the water, cargo and all! As I surfaced again I heard loud laughter from the family living there. After some disgruntled thoughts I decided the only thing to do was laugh with them. I was thankful that it was high tide. Had it been low tide I would have fallen head first, and stuck my head in the mud. On two different occasions we brought the boat out of the narrow channel. It was always a challenging feat to do this exactly at the right time when the tide wasn't rushing either in or rushing out. The canal was very narrow and there was small boat traffic on it. Every so often a chain of barges would come by narrowly missing our boat.

Arriving at the mouth of the channel we entered the Chopya River. There monstrous ships came up and down with their cargo. It took about two hours to come to the mouth of the river where it emptied into the Gulf of Siam. It took eight hours to sail down to Siracha. At that time we

were still taking groups of Bible School students or church groups who wanted to have seminars. But over the next five years the boat sat most of the time in the canal in the hot, jungle environment. Termites had entered the boat. They seemed to love the untreated plywood. I'd check the boat monthly and pay the caretaker for watching it. But it was sad to see it deteriorating and rotting away.

In 1992 we were living at the Bible School, busy with teaching and building classrooms. But I started to get little hints in my spirit, about the boat. I put them aside thinking "Well, it served the Lord well. That's probably all that will happen to it." I had even tried to sell it, but that was impossible in view of its deteriorated condition. Then came our 1992 home visit. This included seeing our Texas friends, Eric and Georgeanna and Dan Richter family. During our visit to the Richter home, Dan showed us his new home and his yacht docked out front. Then he took me to his garage and opened the doors. He said "I have something for you." He showed me two beautiful, large roller furling sails. I had not told him that I had sort of given up on the boat, but had some inkling God still wanted it. "Oh, oh" I thought as I prepared to take the sails back to Thailand.

Arriving back in Thailand I was met by Uncle Pang. "Teacher, teacher" he said excitedly "you have to get your boat out of there."

"Why?" I asked him. He answered me "I sold my property on the canal. The new

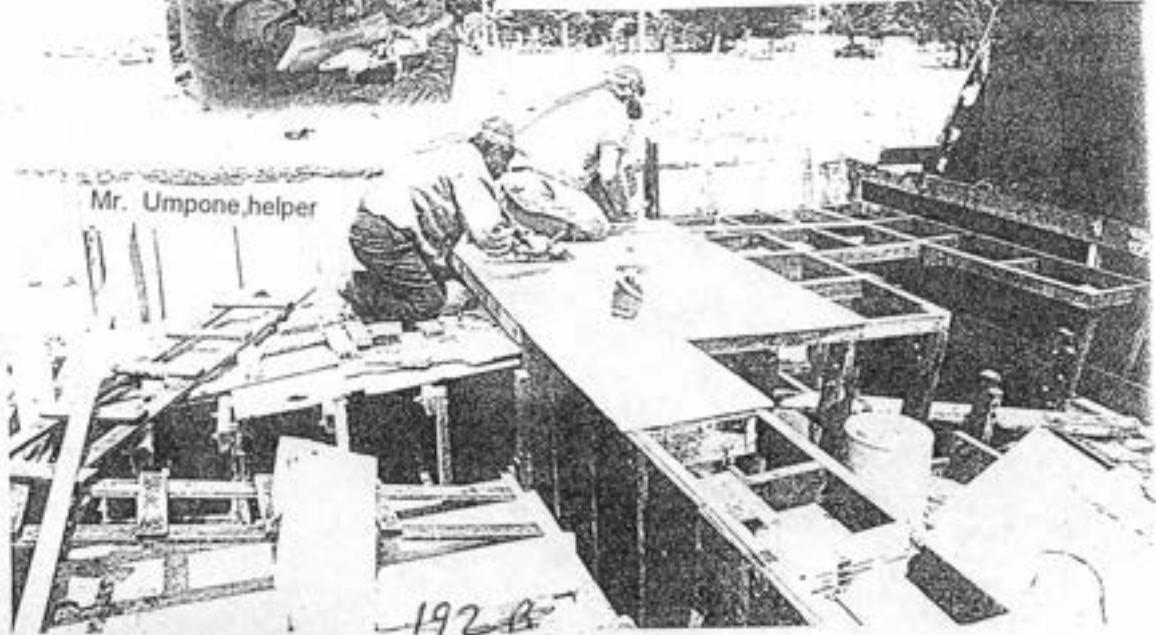


Rebuilding the Noah

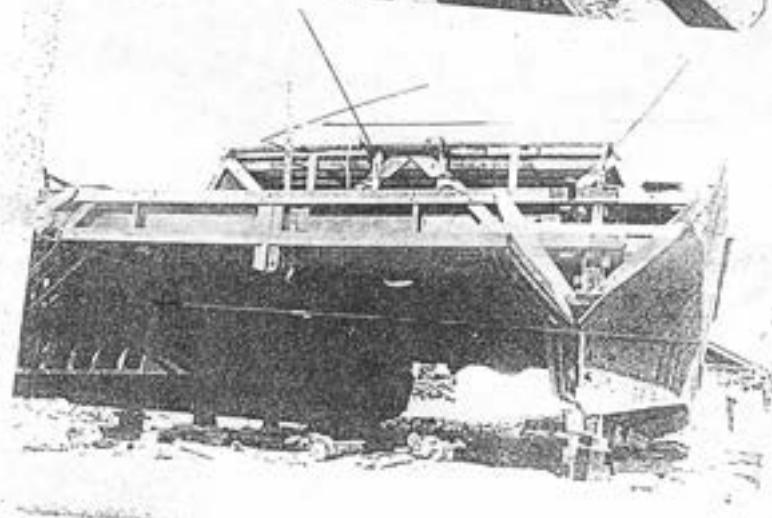
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Mr. Umpone, helper



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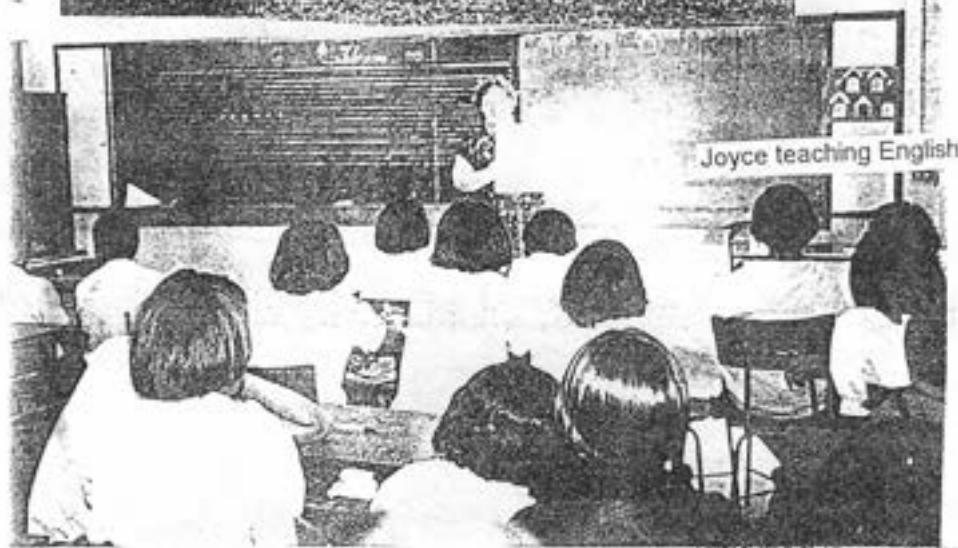
The
NEW
NOAH

60 FT
+ 27 FT
32 TONS





Our House at Sammuk



Joyce teaching English



Joyce and young students

Judy & School chums

owner wants it out. "

Now boat work wasn't an option but it seemed clear there was more for the boat to do.

In a dream I saw the coastal area near Sammuk and it seemed to be beckoning me.

I went down to that coastal area near where we had lived most of our years and not too far from the original birthplace of the boat. I checked at the boatyard. "Yes" the owner said. "You must bring your boat here .

Rebuild it here. You can use my heavy equipment when necessary and I will give you a place to do this free. There's a place for your workers to stay."

Praise the Lord! What a confirmation. I found out later when the boat was there, and the boat yard owner and I sat to talk together he said "Your God told me to do this." So he was allowing me to rebuild there free. Normally he charged quite a high monthly rate for boats to be built there and to come in for repair. We had only to buy our lumber and supplies. I still had hand power tools from the original building of the boat.

So I began to make plans to bring the boat down. The problem was the boat

had a huge hole in the side (just above the water line) where the termites had eaten completely through the wood. Who knows what other damage there might be! We needed to check it carefully and do some repairing before it could be trusted in the sea.

To make matters worse, over the years water had entered the hulls (higher than the engine) and both engines had been under water from time to time. I really didn't have any hope the engines would work, as they were locked up tight from rust. Yet I needed to use them to get out of the canal.

I thought of having it towed the eighty miles down stream but checking on that the cost was way out of my budget. In looking at the port engine I felt the Lord encouraging me to give it a try. So I drained the water from the crankcase and from the cylinders and from the transmission. I began to use the large crowbar applied to the flywheel teeth, to break the engine loose and the young Thai man I brought with me took off the starter and cleaned it up. We reassembled it and put the new battery in.

"Whoom" it started right up, ran like new!! That had to be a miracle. As it turned out

we needed that engine for the whole trip. Our plan to sail hadn't worked out.

Normally at that time of year a strong prevailing northerly wind would have blown

us right down toward our destination. The day we went however, it was absolutely calm. The sea was calm. It normally would have been very choppy and perhaps would have broken through the weakened plywood.

Several Bible School students were with me that day, and it turned out to be a ten

hour ordeal. We ran close to the shore in case we had any major problems. We were all very glad to see our destination just as the sun was setting. The next morning

the boat sunk but it was right on the shore at the boatyard. We pumped water out

and began to dismantle it for a complete rebuild. We wanted to get the boat lighter since it needed to be drug onto the shore with a cable. This boatyard had no special slip (rails to pull the boat up.) Instead a cable was attached to a truck or bulldozer and the boat was dragged on shore. After we dismantled it enough we were able to hire such a machine, but even then it took half a days' work

to pull the boat on shore. Even the boatyard owner almost cried when it finally rested in position. We jacked it up and put blocks under.

The rebuilding of the hull was a four year, slow, agonizing ordeal. We had many helpers and hired some of the Bible School students in their free time. We stripped the boat down to its ribs, discarding the plywood. We came across many large termite nests, with their trails and tunnels branching out to all parts of the boat. Then we separated the two hulls into a wider spacing. We began forming anew cabin between the hulls. This new configuration would make it even more fit for deep sea conditions.

Some of the local Christians came out and greeted us. They said "We are glad you came back to the coast! We were praying you would come back to the coast."

They invited us again to the churches where we had originally helped establish. After about a year we had finished most of the reframing. One of the helpers that I hired was a retired carpenter, who lived within sight of the boat.

He was glad to be hired since we were now reinstalling the new, treated, marine plywood over the ribs. His name was Mr Umpone. He had wonderful Christian

joy while we worked together. He told me originally he had grown up like a normal Thai Buddhist, but he had (at age 50) despaired of life and wanted to commit suicide. When he went to say goodbye to a friend, a Christian was there. That person led him to a wonderful new life in Jesus.

One day Mr Umpone and I were busy applying large sheets of plywood to one side of the hull and the sun was hot, the temperature so high on this windless day, that we were suffering. Usually there would have been a nice sea breeze

to temper things.
But as we worked along sweating, he was humming a little tune
and spontaneously
prayed aloud in the Thai language "Oh Father, it would be so nice
if you would send
a wind now. Thank you." Right away a wonderful, cooling sea
breeze started.
I stood there a moment saying to myself "Why didn't I think of that?"
I am the missionary.

Through the four years of rebuilding many other interesting people
stopped in and helped work on the boat. One was the dad of a
German-French missionary. He couldn't speak a word of English
but wanted to help while he was visiting his daughter. We would
laugh and make sign language and draw pictures and go on
with the hot , messy job of fiber glassing the roof. He insisted we
finish that day and he was a great help. Almost everyday would
bring opportunity to witness as curious Thai people would show up
and begin asking questions. Often boats would arrive at the
boatyard for repair and it seems the whole family would be
there. They would all come and sit down by our boat and just want
to hear all we could say. They were a good congregation.

Sometimes while we were busy at work inside the boat, we'd turn
around and there was a couple men standing and looking. Again
we'd take time, answer their questions and share Jesus with them.
The grand kids and daughter Judy even got to help from time to
time. Judy also was able weekly to hold a Good News Club for the
younger children. She'd play games with them, taught them songs
as she played the guitar, would do a craft and told them the
wonderful news of Jesus. From time to time she prayed with them,
to ask Jesus to open the door of their heart. "Behold I stand at the
door and knock; if any man hears my voice and opens the door, I

will come in and fellowship with him, and he with me." Rev 3:20

The first year I was mostly dissembling the boat and we were still living at the Bible School 4 hours away. Now it seemed everything was happening in reverse. Before, we were driving from the coast to the mountains and now we were driving from the mountains back down to the coast. It afforded a great opportunity to try new mountain roads and meet new villagers to share the good news. Some roads were so rough the car body had to be rewelded from time to time, lest the windshield pop out, and the doors not close properly. I often claimed the Scripture as we drove through different and new roads that the Lord has given us" wherever our foot has trod", except we changed that to wherever our wheels would turn. People seemed very receptive in these country areas. On a few occasions I'd get invited into their home.

But after some time the Lord confirmed us moving back to the coast. Judy had such a desire to attend Thai school for her junior high school years. Now that door had opened also at Sammuk Christian Academy, allowing her to study there. The Missionary Dr.Dick Worley had spent his lifetime developing that school and being the administrator. He had worked hard to train the national staff to run it and now he was ready to retire. He was glad to see Judy there and he returned some months each year to help the school. Joyce also enjoyed teaching English there, a fulfillment of some of her desires. When we first arrived at Sammuk we asked if there would be a house available, since the school was outside the town. Dick Worley showed us a house at the entrance of the school, across from the gate. It was a typical Thai house on poles, but with few improvements. To make it worse, the area flooded every rainy season, and the lower area was completely useless. We decided with some effort we could make this into quite a

convenient home.

The owner , a Chinese businessman, lived in Bangkok and at first was reluctant to let us use the home. Coming back from our furlough we weren't sure we had a home!! Joyce was praying "Lord, we are like three little birds who need a nest." After an interview in Bangkok with the owner and his wife, they looked at each other , smiled and said "No, we won't rent it to you. We want you to live there free. You are servants of God and we want to do that."

Then I asked if I could do a little remodeling. They agreed to that. Judy and Duane came down first with a truckload of our belongings. We moved into the crude home.

Soon after Joyce came, and we started remodeling. I decided that the poles could fall down at any minute since the salt water had seeped into the concrete and cracked them and some of the concrete had fallen out. The lower floor was totally destroyed. The bathroom was in bad shape, steps leading to the upper living area were like a ladder, and dangerous. What it needed was a total raising of the lower area and new steps and rooms built down below.

I started to tear into it. I wanted to put one foot of fill on the whole lower floor area

and pour a new concrete floor. Then I'd build rooms down there for guests. I went up a gravel yard located in the nearby Chonburi mountains. This particular mound was

the last of a whole mountain they had blasted down to get the rock fill needed for the coastal area. I explained to them I needed "rock fill" but none should be over fist size at the largest. Joyce, Judy and I watched in amazement as two huge trucks rolled on to the property and dumped loads while the earth shook! The largest rock was a boulder, bigger than a person! "Stop" I shouted, but it

was too late! At least they didn't dump the second truck, but said they'd bring smaller rocks.

We noticed the whole ground area was like jelly, since it was the end of the rainy season and the soil was so saturated you could stand, jump up and down and it had the affect of jumping on a water bed. "What would we ever do with these huge rocks" I wondered. I said to myself that every yard needs a big rock monument in it but sure enough just enough when I had all that mess and the house torn partly apart here came the owner and his wife. "Oh no" I thought. "What will they think?" We showed them around and told them what our plans were and they didn't say much. They drove away.

I was ready to go to bed that night when they returned and I thought "We are in big trouble now." But instead, they smiled and said "We are happy with what you are doing and we want to pay for this. They handed us \$1,000 which was the amount I was trying to squeeze out of our budget for the years house repairs. Praise the Lord.

Later they bought more materials such as tile for the floors. Besides that Christmas was coming and Tosh decided to send a group of students to help me with Christmas evangelism and moving the rock fill. Those students made short work out of those big boulders, they attacked with sledge hammers, chisels and pick axes. In one day the work of moving the rock to raise the level of the floor was done. We also had a successful evangelism outreach. Praise the Lord. It was very convenient for Joyce and Judy to walk to school. Judy had to wear a special uniform and they had very strict rules in the classroom. A large chapel stood near the entrance of the school and all the students were required to attend chapel. This was unusual since about 80% of the 300 students were Buddhists. Their parents had sent them knowing

this was a Christian school, but I liked it because of the fine academics it offered. At some point in their lives many of these students will come to living faith from what they first learned here at Sammuk.

Chapter 32 A Son from Bulgaria

By now our first four children were in their early 30s and the grandchildren numbered about 15. Judy was 16 and a great blessing to us at home and at school.

It was true that Isaiah Scripture we came to know and trust, "All your children shall be taught of the Lord." In spite of this I somehow had a desire to have a boy or two around the house. Joyce was happy with the way things were, since we were nearly 60 years old and even had foster children at different times. But we committed it to the Lord. I was thinking of maybe one or two more foster boys. I had to make a trip to Canada by myself for an operation to correct a failed cataract operation on my eye.

Thankfully, the hospital was located close to our son's home. It was great to see them again. While Bob and I waited in the lounge for my appointment, we picked up a children's book. It was an amusing story of two European boys who tore the house apart to construct a home built airplane. The angry parents in the book made them put it all back, but concluded they were clever sons. Somehow this spoke to my heart that the foster boys I was thinking of would probably be European, perhaps from one of the war torn countries there.



1997 Duane, Judy, Rosen, Joyce, in Bulgaria



1999

Grama K & Rosen "Mr Sports"



1998 Rosen becomes a U.S. citizen





Rosen and grandson David
help in rebuilding our Minn. home



Arriving back in Thailand, after a short home visit to America, the Lord impressed me that the boy also might have a slight handicap. We didn't know where to begin looking for these boys but we heard of one missionary who was beginning to work with orphans and had contacts. We put out an e mail to an adoption agency that he mentioned, stating we were looking for one or two foster boys, about the ages 12 to 14, from Europe. Perhaps there would be a slight handicap. Right away we got back an e mail from them saying "It is impossible legally to get foster children from Europe. But you have just described a boy named "Rosen" whom we have been praying for. Would you please consider adopting him?"

Adopting? At our age? We thought that surely must be impossible. But we saw the Lord's hand in this. When Joyce and Judy heard the name Rosen somehow they liked the idea. So we began 9 months of "birth pangs" of legal work and hassle as we tried to comply with all the US and Bulgarian regulations. Also began a faith walk with the Lord, trusting Him to provide the \$12,000 necessary to do this.

Rosen had been abandoned by his parents because of his extreme cleft palate, but the major repair had been done already. Up to this point, no one had adopted him.

Money came in from various sources, people in Japan who already had one handicapped child and would have otherwise adopted him, gave a \$1,000.

A gift of \$5,000 came from friends in Texas, the exact amount we needed to send to Bulgaria to cover all the fees necessary. Nancy and Terry (from the adoption agency) came to our home in Thailand to do the necessary "Home study." She interviewed Joyce and Terry was

asking me a lot of the same, long, list of questions. At one point Terry asked me "What would you think if, after some time with you, he ended up back in Bulgaria?" I answered that would be okay if that was the Lord's will for his life. Then he said "The reason I mentioned that was that I kept hearing 'Moses' when I thought of Rosen." He had met Rosen and seen him during his visit to Bulgaria but somehow he felt the Lord was showing him this boy would eventually be back in Bulgaria to bring the gospel. A few moments later, he mentioned he had to change some money to Thai Baht. I said "The only place we can do that and get instant cash, is at a money changer friend of ours down in Pattaya." She would give us instant cash for our personal check. Normally that would require a long wait for bank clearance. I wanted to explain something about this unique Thai Christian money changer. I explained she was a Christian and under very unique circumstances. She became a Christian during the Vietnam conflict through the witness of GIs. But her husband was just the opposite, in fact he was the head of a transvestite Show which attracted large groups of Japanese tourists and others. I explained in her money changer shop you would see on one side pictures of Jesus but on the other side, posters depicting the opposite. I just wanted to prepare him. I also said that she had raised two daughters successfully in such a family and she had a heart for street children. She had been very helpful to us and our missionary friends. Often when we visited her, she would come up with surprises since she seemed to be hearing some things directly from the Lord. For example, I told him, not too long ago Judy and I were in her shop. We stopped there enroute to the boatyard. That day Judy was to teach her normal Friday Good News Club for the little, scraggly fisherman children. Orowan the money changer, was busy chattering to Judy while changing the money. Then all of a sudden she stopped. She went to the corner of her shop, to the

collection of Souvenirs for sale. Picking up eleven, painted, tropical, carved wooden fish she handed them to Judy, saying "Here Judy. Her is your little fish." Judy thanked her and we went on to the boatyard. That day as Judy taught the little children and finally asked them "Who wants to open the door of their heart to Jesus today?" eleven little children responded. She had her little fish! Praise the Lord. These kids even stood up for Jesus in their school when the teacher asked them and they said "We are Christians now."

After I figured I amply prepared Terry for his money changer visit, we got into our old jalopy and roared down the busy highway, passing through several towns and arrived 45 minutes later. Terry couldn't get over the car, this home built car because along the way people would turn their heads and look out the window, or point or shout at us and smile. Soon we were in Orowans shop. As she changed the money and chattering to us, all of a sudden she stopped. She went to the souvenir corner and reached for a hand carved, walking stick. She thrust it at me and said "Here is Moses' stick." At that Terry turned to me with a big smile exclaiming "See, I told you." I remembered he had said earlier that Rosen would be like Moses. So we walked out with our Moses stick. The home study was finished and other documents were still being processed both in the USA and in Bulgaria.

The final months seemed to drag out. By June the rest of the needed money had come in and the date was set to go get Rosen from Bulgaria. We were able to purchase the air tickets for four adults, starting in Thailand and ending in New York.

Joyce, Judy and I locked the door to our home on poles and figured we would be

back with Rosen. We had even prepared a small room for him. Little did we know that this was the end of our full time missionary call to Thailand.

Rosen stood in shock as he greeted us in the Sofia airport. His Bulgarian lawyer and friends who brought him to the airport, tried to encourage him to not be afraid. I gave him a big hug and the shock began to subside. They drove us to a rented apartment and left Rosen with us. We had one week to finalize the adoption and adjust to each other. It was a traumatic experience for all of us. At first we had our own fears since there had been political unrest in the country and they had just toppled their communist led government. Also the economy was extremely poor. We were warned about many thieves and mafia. But by the middle of the week we were enjoying walks to the local market and sampling their local foods. We saw a bit of the country through Tony our guide, who was assigned to us to transport us to the necessary appointments. We also had a very emotional visit to the orphanage where Rosen had been living. We found out that the Lord had indeed given him special favor. Several families had often allowed him to visit them in their home, and had taken a personal interest in his life.

One family especially stood out. They were Christian and had their situation been different they would have adopted him. But they were praying he would be in a Christian home. Now because of the communist government when we began the application, we could not mention Christian any place on the documents lest they be rejected. Since these Christians lived some distance away, a meeting was arranged with them. They would come on the trolley and meet us at our apartment. When we went out to meet the trolley we saw them dismounting. They walked up to us and the lady held out her hand and said shyly "Praise the Lord!" and I

replied joyfully "Praise the Lord." Then she exclaimed "You are Christian. I knew it. I knew God would do it." We had a good visit and good fellowship together in our apartment. The lawyer and her husband we found out later, were Christian and very concerned for Rosen. All of these people escorted us to the airport when the departure date came. We had a very emotional farewell. The flight from Sofia took us to New York. But I wasn't prepared for what would transpire there. We thought we had all things arranged but found a great impossible hassle with customs regarding an orphan visa.

After that hassle with customs it was such a blessing to be met by our church friends from New York City. These precious friends we had known since we were first married. Our first teaching assignment was in their church school. Our first two daughters were born in New York City. A parent of one of my former students was an American of Asian background. She especially had stood with us in prayer and support all our mission years. Anne Eng had opened her home for us again. But now Anne was in the hospital suffering a loosing battle with cancer. Several times she had recovered but now it was to be different. Her home was warm and fully stocked with food waiting for us. Her married daughters and the congregation had seen to that. Rosen and Judy and I, got to visit the Statue of Liberty. There with the many tourists who should we see, but a whole group from Thailand. It turned out the official in the group was one of the heads of the Religious Department in Thailand. He was glad to be able to speak to us in Thai. We noticed several Thai monks accompanying him. Also thrilling was the subway rides. These are something I always wanted to avoid back when I was a teacher in New York, but this time I was doing it and enjoying it.

The unusual thing about Rosen is that no matter where you went

he would carefully note everything and memorize the exact return route. Perhaps this was part of a deep fear within him of being abandoned again since he was first abandoned as a child.

On a couple occasions this led to some serious clashes between us. As it turned out I had to follow different routes to carry out my objectives, so all the way he would be loudly complaining "You are going the wrong way." This happened first in Bulgaria, then also in New York. But, I believe this was the Lord's way of saying to him "Trust them." We had set a limit of one week in New York, assuming that was the time it would take to complete the necessary legal work there. But even if it wasn't going to happen that quickly, we had to hold to our original schedule. Traveling by car would be the most economical way to cross the USA to our Midwest destination. We prayed for the Lord's help and guidance. In looking at the Sunday papers I was able to pick out a \$400 Chevrolet and took a taxi to look at it. It seemed acceptable except the owner said "You sure you want to drive across the USA in that car?" But it turned out to be a faithful car. After leaving New York we visited the US Capitol from there we stopped at friend's homes along the way to Missouri. We spent some time with our daughter Mary in Springfield, Mo. Then we went to Joyce's folks nearby. Finally we ended up in Minnesota at my old home place.

As we entered the living room of the small, split level home I felt in my soul and spirit "This place is so crowded and needs a major cleaning out." Junk had collected from 40 years of living. This was the first house I had designed and built, starting when I was a teen. The inspiration I felt came from the Lord, encouraging me to make a place for my parents to live. My dad had been with the Lord for about 10 years already and my mother was 86 years old and lived with my older sister who helped care for her.

Now my mother had difficulty walking up steps and needed a

special bathroom.

As far as we knew this was only a brief visit from us and we would be on our way back to Thailand. But two days after we arrived we were in church on Sunday and near the end of the service an usher came to me, I followed him outside. There I was met by our neighbor who said "Your house is on fire. But your mom is ok." "How could this be?" I had to think about it. I returned to church, sat down quietly not saying anything to my family. I was thinking it might really shock my older sister so I thought my daughter Judy next to me, could handle this information and I whispered the news into her ear. Suddenly she burst out in tears. Telling it to my older sister she took it very calmly and said "Well if we don't have a house we will have to go out to eat at Kentucky Fried." Joyce said "Let's go!!" Upon arriving home we saw many people, cars , fire equipment and smoke pouring out of Judy's broken bedroom window. Judy had occupied and slept in that room only hours before. Praise the Lord no one was hurt. My 85 year old mom was home alone and she smelled the smoke, went up the steps, opened Judy's bedroom door. A blast of black smoke and heat met her. She closed the door, called 911, grabbed the cat and went out on the front lawn.

A neighbor had also seen the smoke and called 911. By the time we came home they had contained the fire and taken mom to the hospital for a check up. Judy's bedroom was totally gutted and the rest of the home had extensive smoke and water damage.

All of the stuff was ruined and Rosen's and Judy's things were totally burned up. If the fire department hadn't gotten there quickly the house would have been totally burned.

Lasting friends were made that day; the fire chief, neighbors and other people.

Friends and neighbors offered us a temporary place to sleep and the insurance came across speedily. The state and local fire inspectors' probing revealed a shorted lamp cord caused the fire.

The cord had been crushed by the leg of Judy's bed.

What shall we do now? Now for sure we would be forced to get rid of all the old things.

Dumpster after dumpster of ruined discards was sent out. What a wonderful show of love when friends from our local church came to help. Loren, Dave, Don even gave some of their vacation time and came on a regular basis after work and weekends.

Even the pastors helped. There were other churches from our support supporters who helped; Cornerstone sent several groups a couple weekends. Praise the Lord.

I wrestled with what to do. Tear down? Build completely new? Those were my first thoughts and first set of drawings, but that was too expensive. The final decision was to remodel and add on the special extension needed for my mom. It needed to be ground level for mom, with a special bathroom. We could live in the rest of the remodeled home. Then it dawned on us the Lord was saying "It's time for you to stay home now and take care of your mom and show special love to Joyce's folks too."

So seven months of intense labor followed and we were able to move back in. During the rebuilding we were able to live in a suitable apartment paid for by the insurance company.

Since we had not closed things in Thailand, I made the trip back alone to do that. In the year following Judy and I spent time in Thailand on several occasions. We were blessed by a reunion of family, friends and churches there who were such a part of our lives. What happened to the boat? My thought regarding the Noah boat was to sell it. We could use the money. But that just didn't work out even after advertising it two years, and I felt the Lord saying "Give it to another mission." They had expressed interest in it. So it's the Lord's boat and I believe it's there serving Him well.

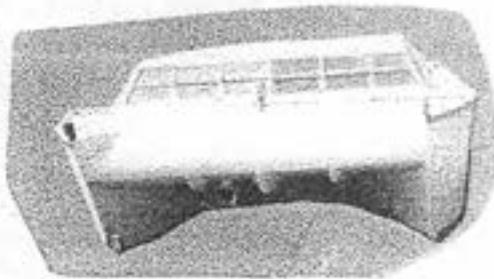
Lesson of the Ant

Once while living by the sea, in the early days of the Bible School, I learned an important lesson in an unusual way. The home we were renting had a covered patio attached to the house which I used as a car port and work area to build dinghy boats.

One day while I was doing some major repair work on our car, I noticed something unusual on the concrete floor. What was it? Some large unusual bug? I had never seen this before. I had seen several large beetles of Thailand, and unusual insects, but this wasn't one of them. Looking closer I saw that the large, wiggling, moving shape wasn't a bug at all. It was a large, jagged, piece of leaf being carried along by a leaf cutting ant. It seemed he had bitten off almost more than he could carry. I saw it first on the side of the concrete slab closest to the house. I stopped my work from time to time to observe the ant's progress. It would tug and pull, roll and make some slow progress. As the hours passed the ant and his precious load made it all the way across the patio. However, lying across the end of the patio stretched a long bamboo pole forming a barrier to further progress. When the ant reached it he laboriously pulled his load along the pole until he found a spot where a slight rise in the pole afforded just enough room to squeeze itself under. Then it went to work on the leaf. Finally it made it through. Now it was free of the barrier he continued on in the same general direction in the loose sand and sparse grass. The next time I looked I saw an unusual happening. Another ant like it came along from the general direction of its goal

and came straight to the burdened ant. As they met they tapped antennas in an apparent conversation. Immediately the leaf cutter I had been watching dropped its load and went off with the other ant! There laid the precious load! "Wow" I thought.

"It labored so long and so hard to bring it that far, then upon command just dropped it and left it there, going on to something else?" Then I felt the Lord was teaching me a lesson "Yes, we may labor hard and long as missionaries or otherwise in our lives but at God's command we should drop what we are doing, follow Him in a new direction, trusting Him to take care of the past. So this lesson seemed to apply at different times in our life, especially now that we had to suddenly stop our work in Thailand and concentrate back in the states. One assurance I have from the Lord, He never forgets our labor of love. It's impossible for us to be in two locations at one time. We can commit all of this to Him and His Word promises that He doesn't loose any one."



Chapter 33 **Reverse Culture Shock**

Now being back in the USA I, more so than Joyce, experienced extreme "reverse culture shock." I found out later that this is not uncommon for lifetime missionaries upon return to their country.

This has happened to the extent that some mission organizations are beginning to offer a special course to their retiring missionaries. The first year home was busy with rebuilding our house and all the dramatic events surrounding that. But along with that I found a great struggle and frustration in my soul. I grieved over the extreme denominational enmity between the churches. Each one was holding to its own finely drawn lines of what makes one a real Christian. It seemed they had forgotten the great common message of saving faith in Jesus and His grace. Some of these denominations drawing back to their tight lines probably resulted from the great takeover of some denominational headquarters and leadership by the humanistic, socialistic, homosexual people. These headquarters were pushing the ordination of homosexuals, homosexual marriages and allowing them to serve as pastors. Yet the people of the congregations often opposed such moves. In trying to remain pure and true to the gospel it seems they couldn't separate that from what was really wrong, and also threw out true fellowship in Christ with other denominations.

Jesus said that the world would know that He is **The One** when the Christians are one in love. John 17:20-23. He said others will know we are His disciples if we love one another John 13:34&35.

I'm sure that kind of love can never come from doctrinal agreement but in spite of differences to love each other and consider ourselves one with all who love Jesus. This we were almost forced to do on the mission field, lest we destroy the gospel work by fighting each other.

Another conflict that welled up deeply in my spirit and soul were the divorces and broken families and remarriages being common among Christians, at least as much as non Christians. It seemed

to me that relationship and family is the very heart of what comes from a true relationship with Jesus, loving your spouse and children with Jesus love at the center of the home. It became obvious to me that many Christians were in a very shallow relationship with Jesus, getting a few things from their church but as far as the practical daily living and attitudes they were in fact being trained from little up by TV and media. All the standards (or lack of standards) regarding dating, marriage, and home life were being acted out in what they had absorbed from the secular controlled media. Statistics were showing that from a child up several hours a day was spent watching TV. Most of these same Christians certainly were not daily reading the Bible and having family devotions together. We know that output equals what you program in. "As a man thinks in his heart so is he." Prov. 23:7 "Whatever seed is planted determines the type of fruit" as Jesus taught Matt. 7:16-24

In Hosea 4:6 it says My people (the Christians) are destroyed for three reasons; lack of knowing God and His word, for rejecting it or forgetting it.

I remember back in the 1950s when I was a TV repairman I would go on service calls and invariably catch glimpses of the daytime TV shows and soap operas. Back in those years they weren't quite so bold as now, but in each soap opera day by day, they'd have just a little bit of their "doctrine." The grandmother was speaking to her granddaughter who was seeking advice whether to date a questionable man. The grandma would say "Oh, in my day we couldn't do that. But its ok now (sex)".

They would hit that point regularly, almost every program and also include their other pet themes, knocking faith in God and morality and presenting pastors in a bad light and distorting views of history

and morality.

But since it was just a little part of the program Christians didn't object and each year it got a little worse and a little bolder. In the 50s there was great concern about a 10% divorce rate. But today it is more than 50%. I remember my friend Jim A. saying "The inevitability of gradualness....." This old illustration of boiling a frog applies here. Slowly heat the water, with the frog in the pan and by the time he realizes he is in danger it is too late for him. So even Christians sat there and absorbed all these attitudes yet they "believed in God" but without personally knowing Him and seeking Him daily, reading His word and building their lives on His standards. Then they couldn't figure out what was going wrong with their life and why their marriage and family was falling apart. We know that 2 Chronicles 7:14 says "If my people which are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from and heaven, forgive their sin and heal their land."

I was greatly encouraged that many Christians did turn to the Lord and in common prayer and crying out to God during this last presidential election. I believe that God heard those prayers and that is the reason why the good triumphed. In my heart I could see God laughing at the efforts of those promoting immorality, but I believe we need to continue to pray and come closer to the Lord, because we are right on the brink of falling totally into the enemies' hands. To me it wasn't a matter of politics, Democratic or Republican, actually I'm an Independent , but it was a matter of morality that dictated my prayers and my vote.

I was greatly disturbed by what I saw happening in our country, the immorality, apathy and the socialistic humanism agenda that was being pushed by the public schools to the point of handing out

condoms.

I was appalled by the lies and the twisted reporting of the "news" on the major networks. Even the PBS started pushing the same immoral, homosexual agenda. The networks spin doctors would interview their own experts and spend hour after hour trying to push their view. Millions of babies were killed while they were saying it's a choice (to commit murder).

Yet killing certain animals became a major crime, punishable by huge fines and prison. Such warped thinking bothered me greatly. The networks played violent movies and schools were barring prayer and not allowing any teaching views other than the humanistic socialistic view. Then the TV spin doctors would spend hours puzzling over why kids were shooting each other at schools-they just couldn't figure it out. Yet the answer is very simple when they kicked out a loving God they invited in the devil and all evil.

Because of our need for finances I took a job as a substitute teacher. My Minnesota teachers certificate was still valid for sub teaching at the high school and junior high level. I was substitute teaching in our local school district located in a fairly prosperous blue collar suburb. But even there in that above average school district the situation was far from ideal. The schools closer to the inner city were unbearable. They might call me before 6 AM with a teaching assignment for that day, with no time for preparation because I needed to be there by 7 AM for the high school. However sometimes it was a Jr. high or even a grade school. The need may be in various subjects from science, French, social studies, art, athletics etc. They just needed a licensed teacher. So usually about thirty students poured through the classroom door for six sessions a day, believe me that's a challenge!

In the introductory seminar for the sub teachers we were encouraged to introduce ourselves to the students and relate to

them. So, I decided to write up a single page statement called "Who am I". "Who are you?" That seemed to be a common question as students would come to their classroom and find a sub instead of their regular teacher. On that one page sheet I started by stating that I was a dad and had six children along with some of the places I had taught and my experiences overseas including encounters with pirates and life on a boat. I had hoped that this would stir the curiosity and bring some interesting, interrelating.

In my last paragraph I gave a brief testimony of my faith it said: "I have experienced life in its fullness and peace. I hope I can be a help and encouragement to you today. I can't take credit for this good life. Rather, I am like some of our current football stars. Chris carter and Randall Cunningham, and say it is "Only because of knowing Jesus". As a teenager my life was going in the wrong direction until I came into one on one contact with Jesus. I had the option of abundant life or death and hell. He was there to change my guilt and inferiority. He showered His love on me and showed me my life was precious. He called me to be a teacher. I have found him to be a source of all love, forgiveness, all wisdom, happiness, my Creator, yet a personal friend who never fails. I am here because you are important and your life is precious beyond that what any money could measure. Feel free to ask questions".

Well, that last paragraph made the difference between just surviving the day and having a good experience. I would stand at the door with my papers and usually the students came down the hall shouting and pushing each other. But as they came to the door I handed them a sheet they would looked surprised and take a copy. Some would slam their books down on the desk still shouting to each other but then out of curiosity they would sit down and read the paper. As they came to the last paragraph their

attitude seemed to change. On one occasion (when I did know ahead of time which teacher I would be subbing for) I called her and she gave me the names of the students I would have to get in control of or "all hell" would break loose. The next day in school those wild ones came in the door grabbed the sheet, sat down and read it. It happened to be a social studies class and the assignment for the day was discussion about families. Most of them were from broken families "what happens when parents stop loving each other"? I asked. After some discussion these "worst ones" were the ones with tears in their eyes. As we discussed it I know the Lord touched them. One other day I didn't hand out the paper (to a different class) that day was terrible.

Once however after a year of sub teaching I was called to substitute for senior chemistry lab class. There was no time to prepare except thankfully the first hour was free and there was a student helper teaching. So, I was busy getting things ready. When I looked up there in front of me stood a man in executive dress. With an air of authority he said "Mr. Klepel."

"Yes" I replied.

"I have to talk to you"! "have you been handing out a paper"?

"Yes, would you like one"? I replied

"I have one" he emphatically replied. He began to scold me saying I couldn't do that or else they would terminate me. "Wow" I replied, "I can't believe what I'm hearing" ! "Then George Washington couldn't teach here"!! The principal replied "That was a different day"!

I said "Maybe I got on the wrong plane coming back from Thailand

(and landed in Communist China)" Even in Thailand the Buddhist government schools and temples invite us to teach about Jesus. Here I wasn't teaching about Jesus all I was saying was that I was a Christian.

Actually he didn't accuse me of breaking any laws. He just said "You can't do that".

To this I replied " Really I'm against the direct teaching of a specific religion in the public schools, they can get that in their churches. But right now a very strong exclusive religion is being taught in the public schools. It is humanistic socialism. (You are just a animal there is no God.) Again in his reply he made no denial or apology he just said " Well that's the way it is". Along with muttering something along the lines of why didn't the social department contact you (why did I get stuck having to confront you!). A few months after that they did stop calling me.

The other conflict that arose In my former teaching career as well as my sub teaching was the issue of origins in the teaching of science. I was greatly appalled by the fact that as a science teacher you were only allowed to teach the evolutionary theory. If I would teach design and order as proven by the evidence, they would scream "You're teaching a religion". Where did the open mindedness of science go? Yes, it was gone and had become a very dogmatic religion that teaches you came from chance, your just an animal, and you're going to nothing. None of the mathematical and scientific evidence to the contrary was allowed.
Who is pushing this big lie?, I'm praying they will be rooted out and stop destroying our children!

The media over and over again kept hammering away at the lie of the constitutional separation of church and state. Actually that phrase never appears in our constitution. But the constitution

does say "Congress should make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances." ----- (US Constitution, Bill of Rights, First Amendment). Yes, we understand the forefathers didn't want a state religion but it was never meant to limit free speech or faith as a foundation of our government. As witness by all the founding fathers documents.

It seems that those of the socialistic humanist view point invaded all branches of leadership from the top of the government and government departments, university presidents' and professors, school superintendents and principals, leadership of teacher unions, labor unions and even the seminaries. At first this leadership tried to hide behind a twisted interpretation of the constitution and much social pressure and threats to make those under them comply. But recently they don't bother with that any more they felt confident that they were in control. Speak politically correct, be tolerant (meaning theirs is the only correct way), reinventing government, these are only a few of the intimidating slogans. Teacher friends of mine were harassed continually should they express any other view , their career and their retirement were on the line.

But just now (during this recent election) something really encouraging is happening as I mentioned. Christians are shaking off their apathy and taking a stand against immorality and corrupt government with its socialistic ideas. Great united intense prayer arose from God's people. Praise the Lord! Lets go on to total victory and restoration of ourselves , our families, our schools our nation. In this however I must remember "we are not wrestling against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of darkness of this age and spiritual wickedness

in high (heavenly) places." Eph.6:12

Chapter 34

UNCONDITIONAL LOVE

So did I find the answer to life with all its problems?

I have to say although it had a beginning in me, the answer hasn't been just a "one time shot", but the answer finds me whenever I stop kicking against it or avoiding it or preferring something else. That answer is God's perfect, unconditional love found only in Jesus as I abide in that love relationship with Him.

I only find peace and rest and the source to be good and to do good out of His unconditional love.

"God is love". 1 John 4:8

" We love Him because He first loved us" 1 John 4:19

"Abide in Me". John 15:4

"Remember your first love". Rev. 2:4,5

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness". 1 John 1:7-9

God's unconditional love defined in the Love Chapter 1 Cor 13.

This unconditional love is Illustrated by Jesus atoning death and victorious resurrection. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son that whoever believes on Him should not perish but have everlasting life". John 3:16

"You are clean because of the Word which I have spoken unto you" John 15:3 (You are a virgin again).

This kind of love isn't some wishy-washy, spineless thing. God hates evil and is out to destroy it and the works of the devil. Why?

Because evil destroys good. They are opposite, they cannot abide together. Alas, I have found my worst enemy is myself and my old nature. But, the more I yield to Jesus' love , the more victory I have. But then often I find myself powerless to know and do the right thing. **In unconditional love Jesus gives us a Helper, the Holy Spirit.**

"If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever--the Spirit of truth whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you." John 14:15-17

"But the Helper, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you." John 14:26

"However, when He, the Spirit of truth , has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you." John 16:13,14

"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." Acts 1:8

How often I have to repent for resisting or grieving the Holy Spirit.
"Lord, make me a more open vessel to your Spirit."

God doesn't desire me to be under condemnation, weak and defeated. But to be filled with His Holy Spirit, His love and power, living a life of victory in Him.

God has not given us a spirit of fear, (timidity) but power, and of love and of a sound mind. 2 Timothy 1:7

The people who know their God shall be strong and carry out great exploits
and those of the people who understand shall instruct many.
Daniel 11:32b, 33

May you thus be blessed
Yours in Jesus' love
Duane



As of Jan. 2001 Joyce (age 62) Duane (age 63) live in Minn.

Daughter Mary Brown (with husband and 2 daughters) live in Springfield, Mo. Has been a career nurse, along with being a mom and wife.

Daughter Dawn L. Suwararatana (with husband Tosh and 8 children) are carrying on their ministry in Thailand ,training nationals and holding seminars for churches.

Son Dan (with wife Gail and 3 children) are missionaries in Thailand, pastoring and encouraging national pastors.

Son Bob (and wife Ruth and 5 children) live in Canada, Bob is on staff at Living Faith Bible College, helping train missionaries and leaders for service.

Judy is now in North Central University, Minneapolis, MN studying to be elementary teacher, wants to teach children and help in an orphanage in Thailand.

Rosen is 16, student and loves sports, and growing in the grace of God.



222

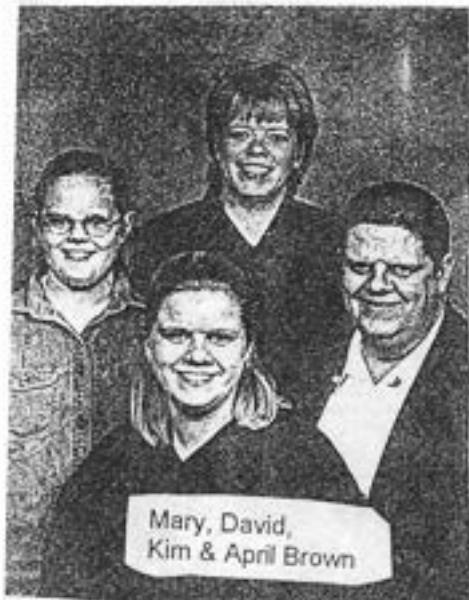




Tosh, Dawn and children
David, Sandy, Beaver, Jesse
Grace, Joy, Joseph, Joshua



Dan, Gail
Andrew, Katie & Samuel



Mary, David,
Kim & April Brown



Bob & Ruth Klepel
with children (Baby
Michaela)



Bob & Ruth's
Family Farm
Christopher, Rochelle
Joshua, Benjamin

