

## SUMMARY OF 2008 MYANMAR (BURMA) MISSION

Burma, a former British Colony, received independence in the early 1960's and established a Democratic Government which was quickly overthrown by a Socialist, strongly Buddhist Military Junta, which nationalized most properties and continues to rule today with the leaders becoming wealthier and the masses becoming poorer.

All foreigners were quickly removed from the country approximately 45 years ago, with the country being approximately 90% devout Buddhist. Buddhism is a requirement to be taught in all schools. The approximately 2% Christians were left without much support. Although the Government does not openly persecute Christianity and other religions, they certainly have their way of discouraging other religions. Example: Bibles are not legally allowed to be imported into the country and not to be printed in the country. Christian organizations, even health care teams are not allowed into the country, but with HTI not having Christian in its name, as our founder, Dr. Robert Miller, purposely planned, we have been allowed in the country.

Our host, which I cannot name for safety purposes, is a devout Christian, mature, well educated, wise, respected person that has lived many years in the area of top Government officials and has become a respected friend of them.

Most Government officials are paid very little but earn additional income by accepting donations of appreciation from friends for favors. Our host understands the customs of the country and how the Government operates and with the right friends and customary appreciation, he has been able to successfully get 10 HTI teams into Myanmar for very successful missions.

Buddha repeatedly stated in his writings in 500 BC, that he was not God, but a God man would follow him. Buddhist people are desperately looking for God, and their lives center around being good so in the endless cycle of death and reincarnation as taught by Buddha they can improve their future reincarnation.

The Government does not allow open evangelism or the gathering of people outside buildings but they have never stopped us from one on one talking with people. Experts have estimated that of the 6.5 billion people in the world today 66% of the people have heard of Coca Cola but only 62% have ever heard the name of Jesus; that is over 2 billion people. It is hard to believe from our

United States environment, but when you get into countries like Myanmar, with 55 million people, we have found that even though Christmas is a National Holiday, well over 90% of the people have never heard the name of Jesus Christ.

Understanding the background of the country and people we have just visited will give you a better appreciation and excitement for the results we have experienced.

In our January 2008 mission to Myanmar we were able to treat over 2700 people. We had 9 team members. The team was kept small by the Government's request. We had 2 physicians; 1 pharmacist; 3 dentists; 1 dental assistant and 2 people trained to fit eye glasses with the help from Kendall Optometry Ministries who trained in 1 day my pastor and my Sunday school teacher. Kendall Optometry loaned us an auto-refractor and computer to accurately choose and fit eye glasses from our Lion Club inventory of used glasses, which we took with us. It is something any lay person can easily learn to do. Our longest lines were in the optical department, with people willing to suffer dental and medical problems in they could only get eye glasses and see again. The results of putting on a pair of glasses that allowed the person's world to come into focus was an instantly and most rewarding experience. The expression on a patient's face when they put on a pair of glasses that allow them to see again was absolutely priceless. Their faces lit up with big expressions of wonder, joy and appreciation with big smiles from ear to ear. It was easy to share with them; the glasses were free just as they could be freely be reincarnated into heaven when they die, by just asking Jesus to forgive them for all their mistakes and bad deeds and invite Jesus into their heart and life and believe He is the One True God. We had almost 100% of the people that we were able to share with asking to become Christians including 3 village chiefs.

I personally have never been in any country in my 30 some mission trips I have led, where people have been searching so hard for God and have been so open and happy to become Christians. In the dental clinic we had the excuse of needing to wait for the anesthesia to work. We did not have one patient that did not ask to hear what Christians believe, and after 30 minutes or so of hearing the Good News, almost 100% of our patients asked to become a Christian and prayed with us to have their sins forgiven and invite Jesus into their heart and life and believe He is the One True God.

After receiving the guarantee of Heaven, we asked if they would like their family and friends to go to Heaven some day to be with them and the answer was

100% yes. So with the help of a simple 20-page informational salvation pamphlet my pastor translator and I created and printed in color with illustrations, we taught them how to be evangelists and share the Good News of the Gospel with their families and friends. HTI considers themselves as Gospel seed planters to the unreached. Jesus tells us some seeds will land on rocky ground, some will be choked out with weeds and thorns, but some will land on fertile ground. We have several people we led to the Lord in Myanmar over the past several years, including several we talked to on this trip that have shared with us how successful they have been in converting their families, friends and neighbors to Christianity. It is simply awe inspiring and motivates us to do more. I cannot wait to go back.

We had 607 Buddhists who became Christians on this trip; all one on one conversions. Many of them were trained and equipped extensively to share the Good News of Jesus with others.

When you can personally see the smiles and tears of joy in the people's eyes when they have finally found God through Jesus Christ, and have the promise of going to Heaven when they die, receiving new bodies, and being with God, Jesus and Christian friends for eternity, well, it is just one of the most exciting and rewarding experiences of a life time. It does not get any better.

You say "I could never do that". That is what I said for many, many years, but with the help and power of the Holy Spirit I did it and I am convinced you could do it too. I would be happy to personally get you literature of how I do it or help you in any way I can, if you need or want me to. We had 2 team members on our Myanmar mission that never had the experience of leading a person to Christ and they did just that, led their first and many more to Christ. One of the team members said "this is one of the happiest days of my life". Do not miss out on this rewarding joy God has waiting for you. We still have 2 billion people who have never heard of Jesus and are just waiting for someone to come and tell them.

Serving Him,

Richard E. Charlick, D.D.S., M.S.

Pres/CEO Health Teams International