



Missions Update

GREETINGS FROM THAILAND

Back in March I started a ten week Thai language module which I finished. This ten week course was very intense and at times seemingly overwhelming with speaking, reading and writing Thai.

It does make a big difference when you can communicate with people in their native language.

There are at least two more modules of language school that I will eventually take, but for now I am going to wait awhile and get a good hold on what I already have learned.

As adults we sort of expect to learn things instantly which was the cause of some of my frustration at times, especially with a language that in our English thinking doesn't make any sense at all. But my Thai teacher, bless her heart, would sense my frustration and say to me, "Gary, remember, you are in Kindergarten!"

ANOTHER TWO WEEKS IN MYANMAR

July 14 - 25 was another two weeks of teaching in Yangon Myanmar (*Burma*).

Even though teaching 6 hours a day in the extreme heat with no air conditioning is physically draining, I always look forward to and enjoy my time there.

The July session was the start of a new school year there which of course meant a new group of students and as usual, they were hungry and eager to receive.



Preaching at
Sanctuary
of His Glory Church



Breakfast at the Ruby Hotel
Two pieces of warmed up bread,
one egg, some fruit and coffee.

RAINY SEASON IN MYANMAR

This was my first trip to Myanmar during the rainy season which lived up to its name.

It rained, or I should say it down poured, everyday for long periods of time. Flooding was a common problem in the streets and buildings. There was one evening water was actually coming in under the door of my hotel room.

Traveling to the school from the hotel was a drive through flooded streets which made for very slow going.

All the wet weather left you soaking wet all day long, not because you were out in the rain, but because of the high humidity and damp saturated air. I noticed that even the pages of my Bible had absorbed the dampness in the air making them feel wet and soggy.



A VERY BUSY WEEK

My time in Myanmar was both filled with joy and sadness.

When I spend two weeks in Myanmar, the weekend between the two weeks is filled up with preaching Sunday services which I really enjoy. However, this time involved preaching a memorial service.

Josephine, a dearly loved friend and wife of Pastor Myint Nwe passed away early Saturday morning July 19th and Pastor Myint Nwe asked me to preach the funeral services. Funeral services in Myanmar have some similarities to those in Thailand which involves multiple services. So that Saturday evening I preached at Pastor Myint Nwe's church. Sunday, the next day, I preached two services which were also at the church. On Monday I taught the 3 hour morning session at the Bible school and then was taken to the cemetery where the main funeral service was to take place.

The building in which the service was held was quite large and seated about 500 people. Every chair was filled and there were people standing. There were many dignitaries and government officials present as well as the Pastors and congregations from the other churches around Myanmar. I have never personally seen such a large gathering for a funeral and certainly had never preached a funeral service this large. I wanted to take some pictures but I was seated on platform and it just didn't seem appropriate to be taking pictures.

After the service was over we walked over to the grave site where the body was to be put to rest. Because of all the heavy rain, the entire cemetery was flooded. The water around the building where they had the main service was only ankle deep but when we walked out to the grave site to have the grave-side service, I found myself, along with everyone else, walking through knee deep water. I wanted to take some pictures to commemorate the experience but again I thought it to be inappropriate.

All of the graves are crypts built out of cement above ground level and although you were standing in water, the crypt remained dry.

After the grave-side service I was taken back to my hotel where I put on some dry clothes and then was taken to the church where I preached another service. I was so glad I had taken my sneakers with me on this trip because at the funeral I was wearing my oxford shoes which of course became totally water logged. I placed my oxfords on a rack in my hotel room but after four days on the rack they were still soaking wet. The day I flew back to Bangkok they were still wet so I just put them in a plastic bag and packed them.

Sometimes the things that help us the most are the things we find the most difficult to do

There are times when the Lord speaks things to you that you just flat resist and do not want to hear. On my flight over to Myanmar, I just knew in my spirit that there was going to be a funeral involved with this trip. Preaching a funeral service at this point in time was something that I personally did not want anything to do with.

I struggled with it but the Lord reminded me of the time when John the Baptist was beheaded. It was a time when he wanted to be alone, but when he saw the multitudes he put aside his personal feelings and ministered to the needs of others. When I was asked to preach Josephine's funeral I said yes, not because it was something I wanted to, but because it was the right thing to do.

With my own wife's death still fresh in my mind and it being so close to the day she had passed away, I was not sure I would be able to maintain my composure; but the thing I thought the most difficult to do actually helped me the most - I came away stronger.

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Thank You and God Bless!

Gary Hausman
