



Earth Aflame

A Ministry Update from Ken Snyder

God is so good. Thank you so much for your continual thoughts and prayers. Thank you for your abundant financial support and your spiritual partnership. It has been an extremely busy last three months. I am tired and weary, in many ways overwhelmed and over-burdened. I have been stretched and tested in new ways and old. But God is still good, and His grace is sufficient.

Since my last update, my church here in Asia has shifted to a new location. We have only been able to raise a little over 40% of the funds needed for the move, so we are continuing to pray. Some of the renovation has been put on hold until funds are raised, and we have worked long hours to do as much as possible ourselves. With sacrifices of our sleep, our bodies, and our finances, we were able to celebrate and worship God on schedule in the new sanctuary. Weariness and exhaustion are the standard. But it is clear that God has placed us there. Our landlords are Christian, and they are extremely happy their property is being used for His Kingdom. A older woman who lives nearby attended our first service and told us she had been praying for years a church would come to that area.

I have also been able to run several more sessions of missions training. As a church, we plan on sending five or six short term trips every year. It is my desire to adequately prepare our people to minister effectively in cross cultural situations. I run a 24 hour class covering missions history, theory, as well as practical issues on how and what to pack, how to act, and what to expect. Participants get a chance to practice bathing in the dark in a sarong by dumping buckets cold water on themselves, just as they may have to do in a jungle village. They also get to eat strange foods and learn how to eat what is put before them without complaint. As the old missionary saying goes, "Where He lead me, I will follow. What He feeds me, I will swallow." It is great to be able to pour out my passion of missions to youth and young adults. May they catch a vision for the lost around the world and choose to spend their lives in His service.

In August, I will lead one team to the interior of Borneo in the Malaysian state of Sarawak where we will minister to the Iban people. A little over 50 years ago, the Iban still practiced head hunting. The government was finally able to end the practice, and while most of the tribe still practice Animism, there are many established Iban churches. The greatest need is for more trained pastors and leaders to be able to reach each village.

After that trip is complete, (without returning home) I will immediately fly to a different part of the state to join another team reaching out to a different tribe, the Penan. The Penan are still hunters and gatherers, living a nomadic lifestyle deep within the jungles of Borneo. As such, very few of the Penan have been reached with the Gospel. Local pastors and leaders are greatly needed to spread the message to the scattered groups throughout the jungle. But God is doing something great within the Penan. Penan men and women have begun to seek out training and discipleship to not only know God, but to share the Gospel with the rest of their village as well as the other surrounding villages. Many of us believe that the Penan are on the edge of a great awakening. It is exciting to see God move and touch an entire people. 30 years ago, God moved in the same region and several entire tribes became followers of Jesus. Radical transformation took place and 100% of these tribes turned from Animism to Jesus. But this move largely passed by the Penan. My friends from these other tribes tell me they believe that the time for God to do the same thing among the Penan has come. Honestly, as I wrote this last paragraph, I was so moved by joy for the tribes that have become followers of Jesus and burdened for the Penan and Iban that I began to weep and had to get on my face and pray for 30 minutes before I was able to finish. I tell you, God is doing something, and it is so awesome to be a part.

Finally, in about 48 hours I will be boarding a plane for the US. My youngest sister is getting married and I have the honor of performing the ceremony. I will be in MN for about three weeks.

The pastor of my local church will be joining me for about ten days as well. I would love to meet with as many of you as I can, and thank you in person and share more of what is happening in South East Asia.

Thank you once again for everything, your prayers make all the difference, and I rely on you every moment of every day. Your partnership enables me to be effective in ministry and to sow into other's ministry as well. With God, lives are being transformed, and the hopeless are finding hope.

Until all have heard,

Ken Snyder