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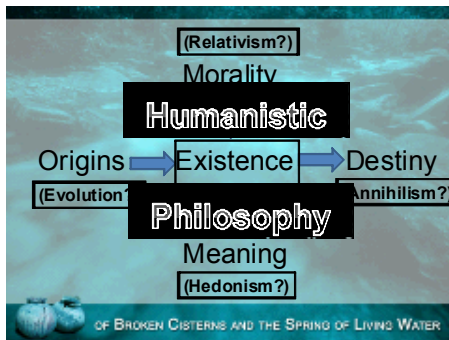


McGraths' Newsletter – February, 2010
Manila, Philippines

Greetings Faithful Partners:

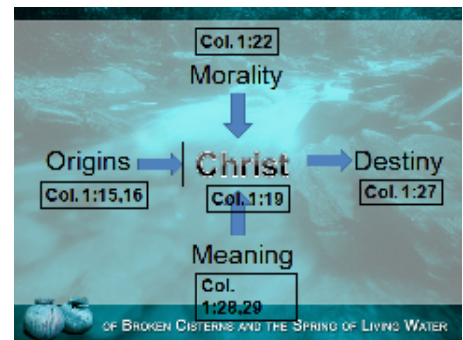
During these last few months in our staff devotions, we have been working through the book of Colossians. (Our church also decided at the first of the year to do a twelve week study of this book!). What a great reminder that we have from Paul as he seeks to divert the believers at Colossae away from the influences that would distract them from Christ.

One of those distractions to avoid is being “taken captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition, and the basic principles of this world. One of our pastors spoke on these verses and diagrammed it to help us better appreciate the impact. He gave me his permission to share these charts with you.



Pastor Sebastian suggested that man's questions come basically in four areas – origins – morality – destiny – and meaning.

The world's answers come from human tradition and wisdom as is seen in the diagram on the left - answers like evolution, relativism, nihilism and hedonism.



While God, on the other hand, would have us see and understand that Christ answers all of man's questions, as is seen in the diagram on the right. Paul went on to reiterate this fact in Colossians 2:9 by stating that “in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, and you (we) have been given fullness in Christ.” With that as a “given”, what more could we ask for or want?

It is so easy for us to get caught up in things that would detract from our fullness in Christ! May God keep us from such like, and may we be completely devoted to Christ!

It was with great excitement and anticipation that we travelled to Bangkok, Thailand in late February. We were able to have a one-day vacation, before heading into a week of meetings with many of our Asia area leaders. It was our first trip outside of the Philippines since we came and our first trip to Thailand, thus the excitement.

The anticipation was fulfilled as we spent three very full days then learning about our partnerships throughout Asia. Most of us are going through significant changes structurally, which often brings discomfort. It was good to relate to others and to hear their victories and their challenges.

It was also a blessing to meet many of our colleagues whom we have just heard about before or with whom we have only emailed. What a beautiful blend of nationalities we have here in Asia, as we are so encouraged with more and more of our Asian brethren accepting the challenge within their own countries, and now are even beginning to send workers to other locations on this side of the world.

Eric took an unexpected “trip” while in Bangkok on our first morning. While looking at one of the sites, and continuing to walk along the sidewalk, he tripped and his head/face had an unannounced meeting with the sidewalk! While not doing any major damage, he did suffer minor cuts and soreness in shins and wrist. He did

manage to join Sharon on one shopping outing as Sharon found some Thai silk, which she is going to have made into blouses.



While Thailand is a predominantly Buddhist country, we were impressed to find a Gideon bi-lingual New Testament in the hotel room, along with a bi-lingual Bible. Of course, these accompanied a couple of Buddhist's books as well.

The picture on the left is the hotel we stayed and met in. The picture on the right is one of the many Buddhist shrines that you will find around the city of Bangkok as well as around the country.



The week we were there, the Thai court was releasing a court decision that was somewhat controversial, and there was an alert sounded that kept us pretty close to our hotel. You might remember some of the trouble back a year or two ago, when the Bangkok airport was taken over by rebels. We were glad to be able to get on our plane and head out back to Manila without incident. Actually it seems that the expected troubles never materialized.

Eric is heading down south in the Philippines the first week of March, to attend another conference. This one is part of our orientation of new members to the field and that whole area comes under the hat of personnel/human resources. It will also give him some firsthand experience, as in mid-April we will be holding a similar conference in Manila for our new people up here.

Sharon has been very busy mostly with member care this past month. Two or three ladies have kept her busy with doctors and hospital visits, and coupled with her own, she feels like she might as well just start punching in there! ☺ In her "spare time", she does get in a few days and hours in the library.

Sharon will be assuming an additional role as she will be providing a summary of prayer letters for supervisors. This will enable supervisors to be somewhat up-to-date on important matters in the lives of their members, which otherwise might slip by unnoticed. Most supervisors have so much on their plates that it is easy to miss something in a prayer letter of importance. So Sharon's goal will be to highlight the letters and then send the report off to the supervisor. This will provide the supervisor with a more succinct memo to read over and be aware of these matters.

Rumour has it that Eric will be assuming another hat to wear shortly! He has been told that he will have a three month grace period, as he "slips" into this additional oversight. But more about that next month!

Again we are so grateful for your partnership with us and we continue to be encouraged with the small gains that are being made in our support figures. And how we value and sense your prayers on our behalf. THANK YOU!

Complete in Christ, Eric & Sharon McGrath

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Mark support sent to the office "for the ministry or work of Eric & Sharon McGrath"

February Support Status Report:

% of Total Ministry Budget Met – 90%

Balance required: - \$416/mth