



Mike and Mak Sanglir talk with Hmong elders about reaching the Hmong for Christ

CATCH THE VISION

How do we effectively reach the Hmong for Christ? Where should we go first? To a village with no known believers or where there may be a few but who are struggling in their faith? Mike met with Hmong elders and discussed these and many more questions and ideas. We found three villages that don't have any known believers and two that have a few. Our goal this year is to find which villages are open to us and the Gospel. Naturally, they are suspicious of outsiders who want to build relationships with them. This will take much time as we need to adjust to another culture and be welcomed into the Hmong villages. At the end of 2009 we will move from the city of Chiang Mai directly east to the province of Nan, where many Hmong villages are located. Until then, we are still concentrating on language learning. We need much prayer that God will open the hearts of the Hmong and direct our path in His will.

WHEN IS A CHURCH A CHURCH? (CONT'D)

In our last newsletter we studied when a church becomes a church, and we'll continue this subject in this newsletter. We saw in Ephesians 1:22-23 that people who have been "born again" through Christ death, burial, and resurrection are the church. The Church is not a building!

In almost every book on the subject of church growth, the emphasis is on numbers. The more people you have, the more successful you are. Do we see that emphasis in the New Testament? No! The only mention of numbers in the book of Acts is simply to give us some indication as to how the Spirit of God was moving. It is true that the apostle Paul's focus as he travelled from city to city was sharing the

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Gospel with as many people as possible. But his focus was never to “bring in the numbers.” It was through the Spirit of God that people came to know Christ. Paul was persuasive, but it was the Holy Spirit who brought about a change of heart and performed real “church growth” from within the hearts of people.

Last month we went to Nan province and obtained specific information as to where the Hmong villages are located, especially those that don't have a church planter (a.k.a. an



evangelist). Just like Paul, we are looking at how we can effectively share the Gospel. Having a “numbers theology” comes from a man-centered, organizational/business mindset and is not found anywhere in Scripture. So, whether we go to a village with 2,000 people or to a village of 200, that is not the issue. Attendance figures, activities, finances, buildings, etc. were never the focus of the Church in the New Testament. **The focus was on changed lives for Christ.** Jesus commanded the apostles to “go and make disciples.” That command was given to them, and it was passed on to all be-

lievers. Sonja and I have committed our plans to the Lord (Proverbs 16:3), and we will simply allow the Holy Spirit to direct us in this ministry to the Hmong.

May I challenge you with a question: How many believers does it take for a church to become a church? Let me know what you think.

Mike

Praise and Prayer

- *Praise for Sinjin's birth on Christmas Eve - no complications and everyone's healthy!
- *Praise that even with the economic downturn, our supporters continue to faithfully give as the Spirit leads.
- *Praise that Sonja's parents visited for 2 weeks in January and returned safely.
- *Pray for Hmong hearts to respond positively to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
- *Pray for our visits to the Hmong villages; that we will be welcomed and able to share the Good News.
- *Continue to pray for other Hmong believers to partner with us in ministry.

