

Something is Stirring



In January, I visited one of our partners in central Java in Indonesia. This beautiful country, with a population of around 260 million, is the world's largest Muslim country. Over 87% of the population identify as following Islam. Or at least they did in 2010 when the last census was published. But now, something seems to be changing.

Rumours abound that subsequent census figures on religious affiliation have been withheld because the growth in Christianity is of such concern to the government. Whether that is true or not, it is apparent there is a kind of tidal shift towards God happening in Indonesia. However, it goes further than that. It appears that something unprecedented is happening throughout the Islamic world.

For centuries after the death of Muhammed, very few Muslims came to faith voluntarily (and the less said about the forced conversions the better). Not until the 19th century did we start to see something stirring – in Indonesia actually – with a movement led by a local Indonesian Christian that saw 10,000 to 20,000 people come to faith. In the 2014 book *A Wind in The House of Islam* the author says “we have identified 82 voluntary Muslim movements to Christ throughout the course of history. The first two of these movements began in the 19th century; a further 11 took place in the 20th century...the 69 additional Muslim movements to Christ that have either commenced or are continuing to unfold in the 21st century”.

Our partner in Indonesia is a big part of one of these movements. They have seen 103,000 ‘cousins’ come to faith and they are doubling in size every 12 – 15 months. These figures are not loose numbers – they are rigorously recorded and verified. God is moving in Indonesia. God is moving in the Muslim World. But why? Why there and why now?

There are many reasons why Muslims are coming to faith in droves. Dreams and visions of Jesus are not uncommon in Muslim communities. Ex-Muslim believers are remaining within mosques and Islamic community groups to reach Muslims with the gospel from ‘the inside’. Cultural barriers that have for centuries acted to prevent Muslims coming to faith have been removed; you now don't have to become *Western* to become a follower of *Isa al-Masih*.

It is truly miraculous that in the midst of persecution and the real risk of social and familial isolation, hundreds of thousands of Muslims are finding Jesus. Moreover, they become – for the most part – faithful and vibrant witnesses despite the risk to their own safety. It makes me wonder: why do we rarely – if ever - see such fruit in the West? Are we doing something wrong? Do they have something we do not? Do we have something to learn from our brothers and sisters in the difficult places?

Fraser Scott
Executive Director

Bright Hope News

As mentioned in our last newsletter, January is the time (and the only time) that we are all able to get together as a team.

Our people come from Auckland, Tauranga, Wellington, Christchurch and Nelson and descend on a Christian camp for a weekend of fun and some challenging input.

This year we looked closely at team care and what we can do to look after our people. We want to ensure they are able to continue doing ministry that actually asks an awful lot of them.

Did you know our team is all unpaid and covers their own travel costs? Pretty much everyone has a family, a job, and church commitments, and serves God through Bright Hope World on top of all that. We want to build our ability to look after our ‘tribe’ because we love them and because we want – as a team - to be able to continue to do what we do.

So if you know any ‘Bright Hoppers’ (which is better than no-hoppers!) please do encourage them. Join with us in supporting our people and letting them know that they are valuable and that we respect what they do.

And please do keep our team in mind when you pray. It is no coincidence that a good number of our people know what spiritual attack looks like very well!

Life Change Story – Ukusenaminwa Child Foundation



In 2010 Roy and Sarah Nyirenda were challenged by the number of deaf children being dumped by their parents in the community where they live. Roy and Sarah decided to adopt some of the children themselves as they had nowhere else to go. This extended family started off with just a few children but has now grown to 44 children in total.

The vision of Ukusenaminwa Child Foundation is to see these deaf children grow so that they can live independent lives. This involves sending all the children to school so they can get an education.

It was therefore incredibly encouraging to receive the following email from Roy and Sarah:

“If you feel you are too vulnerable to achieve anything in life here is your challenge. I introduce to you Martin Bless Sichone and Peter Praise Chifunda.”

“These boys are a living testimony. Their journey has not been easy but they have faced anything and everything life has thrown at them with faith through Jesus!”

“Martin Bless Sichone is a third and final year student at Kitwe College of Education. Peter is running his own business and helps other deaf young people through his income. These boys are both deaf and vulnerable but their faith and trust in God is heartwarming.”

“God has blessed us to be a part of their journey, their ups and downs, their highs and lows. What should I say to the Lord - all I have to say is thank you Lord! And thank you to all our prayer partners and supporters. You all have made this amazing journey possible and have indeed been game changers!”

Read about Ukusenaminwa Child Foundation (ZAM30) at:

<http://www.brighthopeworld.com/partnerships.asp?pid=277>

Prayer and Praise

1. Pray for our partners working in the Muslim world and for the amazing fruit they are seeing. Pray for protection from persecution for those living as believers in Muslim communities.
2. Pray that God would help us to learn from those serving Him around the world so that we might better impact our own communities and be effective in the Kingdom of God.
3. Praise for the transformation that is happening in the lives of many deaf young people under the care of Roy and Sarah, particularly for Martin and Peter.
4. Praise for the great time we had together as a team in late January in Nelson. Pray for our team as we look to care for one another more effectively.



Bright Hope World, PO Box 8928, Christchurch 8440, New Zealand
Phone: (03) 341 0933 Fax: (03) 341 3363

www.brighthopeworld.com
www.facebook.com/brighthopeworld