

Asia Harvest



'Put in the Sickle, for the Harvest has Come!' (Mark 4:29)

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**A Personal Testimony:
The Man with Half a Brain**

The Man with Half a Brain

by Paul Hattaway

We would like to take a detour from our regular Asia Harvest newsletters by sharing a personal testimony. If you are on our e-mail contact list you will probably be aware of some of what we will share. For many others, however, this will be the first you are aware of Paul's experiences over the past few months. We hope you will be encouraged...

"We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. For we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that his life may also be revealed in our mortal body. So then, death is at work in us, but life is at work in you" (2 Corinthians 4:8-12).

On Wednesday, May 29, I went to bed feeling normal. I enjoyed a good night's sleep, but the next morning I awoke feeling very dizzy. I tried to get up but was unable to stand or walk. My left hand and arm were as cold as a block of ice so I knew something seriously bad was happening. My wife called for an ambulance and I was driven two and a half hours to a hospital in another town. Upon arrival I was wheeled inside on a bed and given a CT scan. After a while a doctor came in with the sombre news: "Mr. Hattaway, you have had a massive stroke. I'm sorry to tell you that half your brain has died. The left side of your body is paralyzed."

One of the first thoughts I had after hearing this grim diagnosis was: "This is not a problem for Jesus! One hundred percent of Lazarus' brain was dead, but the Lord completely healed him and raised him up! I knew that naturally speaking my situation was dire, but Jesus operates on a super-natural level, and He said, **"What is impossible with man is possible with God"** (Luke 18:27).

Those who know me best know that I try to see the funny side of every situation. I motioned for the doctor to come closer and told him, "Don't worry. If I only have half a brain left, I figure that still gives me an advantage over a lot of people!"

Facing my Mortality

“Nothing in all creation is hidden from God’s sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account” (Hebrews 4:13).

The most difficult moment for me was the initial long ambulance ride. Joy and our two sons followed in a car, not knowing if I was dead or alive. During that time two or three thoughts dominated my mind.

Firstly, more than ever I was aware how fragile and fleeting our lives are. Most people live as though they will never die, not realizing that we are all just a heart-beat, blood-clot or an accident away from standing face to face before our Judge and Creator.

Later, after more tests and scans, I was told my stroke was likely caused by a tiny blood clot—perhaps as small as a pin-head—that had formed elsewhere in my body. Just that slight interruption in the blood supply to my brain had caused a massive stroke. How true the Bible is when it says we are ***“fearfully and wonderfully made”*** (Psalm 139:14).

Secondly, I asked the Lord to bring to my mind any person I needed to forgive, for any reason. I heard a preacher say once that the most futile occupation in the world is to be a doctor, because it is guaranteed that 100 percent of their patients will eventually die!

If it was my time to die, I didn’t want to stand before the Judge of all the earth holding a grudge against anyone. You see, Jesus ties God’s forgiveness directly to whether or not we forgive others. He said, ***“if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins”*** (Matthew 6:14-15).

A few days later my desire to forgive was tested when I learned that just after news got out about what had happened to me a few cowardly, nameless people had sent messages to my family (via the whacky world of social media websites), mocking my stroke and wishing that I would die. I can honestly say that when I heard this news I laughed out loud and immediately forgave those people from my heart. I figured if it was good enough

Cover picture: A man from the Tamang tribe in western Nepal. Approximately two-million Tamang people inhabit hundreds of villages through the Himalayas - the highest mountain range in the world. Most Tamang people have never heard the Gospel, although a small and vibrant church has emerged in recent years. Through the Asian Workers’ fund we are privileged to support several Asian evangelists who are reaching the Tamang people in Nepal.

for the sinless Son of God to forgive His murderers as they nailed him to the cross, then the least I could do was try to emulate Him and forgive those poor souls. I laughed because I knew that whatever men might say or do to me is completely irrelevant.

Now, I realize that many Christians today think believers should have no enemies except spiritual ones. From the point of view of how we view others, I agree. But from the point of view of how others may view and treat us, the Scriptures are very clear, in countless places, that a host of enemies will oppose us. It would be easier if these enemies were spiritual only, but in our experience it is much harder when those spirits come at us through human bodies! Often when I am asked to give my testimony I say, "From the time I was 19 and decided to follow and serve Jesus Christ wholeheartedly, I would describe my life as a wonderful adventure with God, balanced by a steady accumulation of enemies! Hence the constant need to walk in forgiveness.

That night as I lay in my hospital bed I was greatly encouraged as I listened to an audio reading of Psalm 56:

"Be merciful to me, my God, for my enemies are in hot pursuit; all day long they press their attack. My adversaries pursue me all day long; in their pride many are attacking me. When I am afraid, I put my trust in you. In God, whose word I praise—in God I trust and am not afraid.

What can mere mortals do to me? All day long they twist my words; all their schemes

are for my ruin. They conspire, they lurk, they watch my steps, hoping to take my life.... Record my misery; list my tears on your scroll—are they not in your record? Then my enemies will turn back when I call for help. By this I will know that God is for me.

In God, whose word I praise, in the Lord, whose word I praise—in God I trust and am not afraid. What can man do to me?

I am under vows to you, my God; I will present my thank offerings to you. For you have delivered me from death and my feet from stumbling, that I may walk before God in the light of life."

Confident in my Destination

Over the next few days I lay in hospital, unable to move my left side. It was a special time in my life—somehow both horrible and glorious at the same time! I understood what the Apostle Paul meant when he wrote,

"We do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal" (2 Corinthians 4:16-18).

The grace of the Lord was extended to me, and I saw that He was also helping my family, who were coping fine. This encouraged me greatly.

God's Word became more precious to me. I realized how futile this world is, yet how good and loving God had been to me since I gave my life to Him as a teenager. He has never let me down, and has never left or forsaken me. He has overwhelmed me with one blessing after another. Even the worst and most difficult times with Jesus have been a million times better than the best experiences before I knew Jesus.

I was also acutely aware that if it was time for me to die and give an account of my life to God, that there was ABSOLUTELY NOTHING I could show or impress Him with. Not one thing I have ever done, said, or written will help me win favor with my Maker.

At the same time, I had complete, supernatural peace that I *am* a child of God, and that there is indeed one single thing I have that does impress the Almighty. That one thing is my faith and trust in THE BLOOD OF JESUS CHRIST! It is all I or anyone will ever need, and the only way any person will ever enter heaven. The King of Kings is moved mightily by the only sacrifice He finds acceptable: The death of His beloved Son. If you or I plan to rely on our own goodness or works to enter heaven, we will be doomed!

Yes, I was confident in my eternal destination, but it was a confidence wholly based on the goodness of God, and not at all on myself.

If you are a follower of Jesus Christ, and you pursue holiness and righteousness, I hope you will be encouraged and not

fearful of death. God has exchanged the goodness of Jesus for our own hopeless lives, if we will only believe and give Him our own filthy rags in return. How can we not love such a wonderful Savior?!

Consider the following beautiful passage, (written *not* to everyone, but exclusively to those who have placed their trust in Jesus as Lord and Master of their lives):

"If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? As it is written: 'For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.'

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:31-39).

Calling for Help

In those early days I could only concentrate for a few minutes at a time before I needed to rest my brain.

I knew that we needed as much prayer support as possible, so although the nurses may not have liked it, I painstakingly typed an email message with my right index finger, summarizing what had happened and asking for prayer for my family and I. We sent it to friends and Asia Harvest supporters around the world. In part, my email said,

“First and foremost I love Jesus, but I am not ashamed to say that I also love serving Him. He has given my life purpose and meaning.

Everything good that has ever come out of me has all been the doing of Jesus anyway.

Please pray God’s supernatural strength will empower me, Joy, and our sons Dalen and Taine. Pray we would be drawn closer to the heart of God than ever before, and Jesus Christ would be glorified though all this. I am motivated by the thought of kicking a ball and swimming in the lake with my sons again.

I am hoping and praying for a full recovery. I don’t think God is finished with me yet, and I would be incredibly thankful if He would allow this time to pass and let me once again serve Him. There are still 4,835 unreached ethnic groups in Asia waiting to hear about God’s plan of salvation. We only have this life to help reach them.

*Please join me in praying that the words of Psalm 118:17 will become a reality in my life: **“I will not die but live, and will proclaim what the Lord has done.”***

I am thankful to be part of the Body of Christ! We received hundreds of messages of support and encouragement. We were told many Christians were praying fervently for us.

News reached us that numerous house church leaders in China had begun to pray for us; and of prayer groups in Papua New Guinea, Russia, America, and many other parts of the world. One friend informed us that a gathering of 13,000 believers in South Korea paused their conference and cried out to God on our behalf. Even my dear friend Saeed Abedini took a moment out from his daily routine of being tortured in an Iranian prison to send a message of encouragement via his family.

We felt like unworthy recipients of all this attention, but we were so thankful for the reminder that we are part of God’s global family.

God Performs a Miracle!

Please don’t ever believe that prayer is not powerful, or that God no longer performs miracles.

Almost as soon as people began to intercede, my mobility started to improve! At times we felt the tangible effect of all those prayers.

One of my siblings called to talk with me, and then phoned Joy to express his concern because I “sounded far too happy”!

The doctor told me I was “very lucky” and that he expected me to make a full

recovery, but that it could take one to two years.

Although my left arm and leg remained numb, I was able to move more every day.

When I first arrived at the hospital I had to be wheeled around in my bed.

After a few days they began to push me around in a wheelchair.

A few days later I was able to shuffle around by myself with the help of a frame.

The frame was soon discarded and I was given a single crutch.

A doctor came to see me one morning and said because I was progressing so well I was going to be transferred to a rehab facility in another city, where I would stay at least five to six weeks. I arrived there on June 12, just 14 days after the stroke. A short time later they took my crutch away because I was now able to walk around by myself!

Perhaps the greatest miracle was that my mind became as sharp as normal. I also had no trouble talking at all.

At one stage I was taken to see a psychologist, who put me through a series of mind and memory tests to see how much damage my brain had suffered.

I remember the confused look on the man's face as he struggled to keep up as my accurate answers came almost as quickly as he could ask the questions!

Just a few weeks earlier a doctor had informed me, "I am sorry to tell you that

half your brain has died. The left side of your body is paralyzed."

Please understand that none of this rapid improvement occurred because I am some kind of smart guy, or because I was 'courageous', or 'determined'. Not at all! This happened because the Living God heard the prayers of many of His children around the world, and it pleased Him to answer them.

One afternoon at the rehab facility I was asked to attend a group session with other patients who had suffered strokes and other brain injuries. I was shocked. Many of the others, including people much younger than me, were in terrible shape. Some couldn't lift their heads up or speak. Others didn't know their own names.

The doctors and nurses put my progress down to "good luck," but I knew it was all because of the power and grace of Jesus in my life. There are great benefits to serving God! He has declared, ***"On the day when I act,' says the Lord Almighty, 'they will be my treasured possession. I will spare them, just as a father has compassion and spares his son who serves him. And you will again see the distinction between the righteous and the wicked, between those who serve God and those who do not'" (Malachi 3:17-18).***

I had been told I would need to stay in the rehab facility at least 5 or 6 weeks, but I was discharged and went home to be with my family on June 26, just 14 days after my arrival there and less than a month after the stroke first occurred.

Although everything I have shared is true, I don't want to give the impression that it was all a 'walk in the park.'

There were some very tough times, especially in the first few weeks. Those who have suffered an injury or illness like this will know it can be very humiliating not to have control of your body. I needed help to do even the simplest of tasks such as going to the toilet, putting on a shirt or brushing my teeth.

The whole experience has given me greater compassion for those with physical or mental disabilities, and a tremendous respect for people who have dedicated their lives to provide care for others. If you know of such a person, please pray for them often.

An Extended Break

As we write this newsletter I have been home about a month. I have continued to gradually improve, although not at the same rate as initially. My left leg and arm remain numb, but much better than they were. The greatest prayer need is for co-ordination to return between my brain and the two sides of my body. At the moment I can walk up and down stairs unaided, but I struggle with simple tasks that require both my hands, such as neatly folding a piece of paper in half, or typing with two fingers.

It has been a good time to take stock of my life and make plans for a less stressful future with less travel. I am not in a rush, and plan to take as long as necessary to rest and recover completely.

The Ministry Carries On

One great blessing of the whole experience is how my wife and others stepped in and

took over my administrative workload at Asia Harvest. Together with our wonderful project leaders throughout Asia, the ministry continued to move forward fine without me.

In fact, they did such a good job that during the time I was on my back we printed and delivered more than 200,000 more Bibles to the house churches in China, and through the Asian Workers' fund we took on—or are in the process of taking on—about 130 new evangelists who are working among 60 or 70 different unreached people groups throughout Asia!

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to share what the Lord has done in my life in recent months, and thank you for your prayer support.

May you be encouraged and strengthened in the knowledge that whatever storms and difficulties may come across your path, the Lord Jesus is able to calm the storm and help you through.

I am glad to report that I am no longer the man with half a brain! Our loving and all-powerful God has brought the dead half back to life and is in the processing of restoring me back to full health. May the Lamb of God receive all the glory!

*To the only God our Savior be glory,
majesty, power and authority, through
Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages,
now and forevermore! Amen”
(Jude 1:25).*

Hidden Treasures

Our previous newsletter (May) was entitled “Why Jesus Has Yet to Return.” Everyone at Asia Harvest has continued to advance forward in our determination to take the Good News to the most remote and unreached areas of Asia.

There are still many parts of Asia that have been forgotten by both the world and the Church. For example, have you ever heard of the **Andaman & Nicobar Islands**? They consist of a long chain of 572 islands stretching across the Bay of Bengal from near the southern tip of Myanmar (Burma) almost to Indonesia. Only 38 of the 572 islands—which are officially administered by India—are permanently inhabited. Beautiful, pristine beaches await travellers who make it to these shores, but getting there is so difficult that few outsiders have ever visited.

When the 2004 Tsunami devastated many parts of Asia, the Indian military sent helicopters to the Andaman & Nicobar Islands in an attempt to bring relief to the native people. Some of the tribes are so untouched by the modern world that they didn’t understand the offer of help. The pilots were forced to withdraw after tribesmen armed with bows and arrows appeared and started firing at the helicopters!

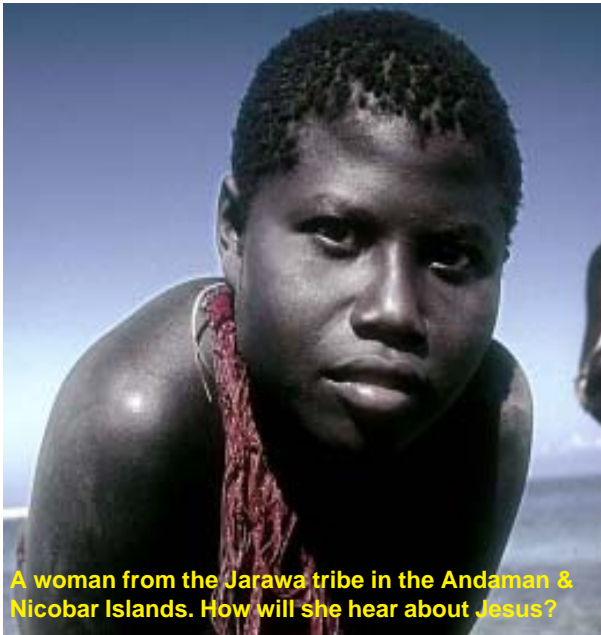
The 400,000 people who call these islands home are divided into dozens of ethnic groups.

It is believed people have lived on the Andaman & Nicobar Islands for at least 2,200 years. That means that when the Lord Jesus instructed His disciples to **“go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation”** (Mark 16:15), there were already people living on these isolated islands who needed to know His salvation. Two thousand years later

there are several Negroid tribes in the Andaman & Nicobar Islands who are still waiting to hear about Jesus. It is people and tribes like these that we long to reach, because Jesus died for them and longs to redeem them.

A tremendous opportunity exists for you to be part of this vision! **Would you prayerfully consider supporting one or more faithful Asian evangelists?** A monthly gift of \$25 (\$300 per year) to the **Asian Workers’ Fund** makes a tremendous difference. It allows the workers to carry out the work God has called them to.

It is a great privilege to be able to play a part in seeing this happen.



A woman from the Jarawa tribe in the Andaman & Nicobar Islands. How will she hear about Jesus?

ASIAN WORKERS' FUND

Thanks to your support we are currently able to support 381 Asian evangelists working among 201 unreached tribes and ethnic groups.



The **Asian Workers Fund** assists church-planting evangelists who are involved in strategic ministry in Asia. These servants of the Lord have committed their whole lives to the Gospel but are hindered by lack of finances. We only support evangelists/missionaries and not pastors, as we believe pastors should be supported by the flocks they shepherd. Please pray about whether you or your church could help support these dedicated workers, at **\$25 per month** each. A prayer card and occasional worker updates are sent to all regular donors.

CHINA BIBLE PRINTING

Current Total: 7,083,874 Bibles printed and delivered.



We are partnering with house churches in China in a long-term project to provide Bibles for Christians. We receive countless requests for God's Word from church leaders throughout the country. These Bibles are distributed free of charge, equipping the believers and helping add fuel to the fires of revival in China. **Each full Bible costs just \$1.80 to print and deliver.**

A generous donor has recently given a "dollar for dollar" matching grant to Asia Harvest. For a period of time each donation we receive for Bibles will be doubled, so that two new Bibles will be provided instead of one!

SOUTHEAST ASIA BIBLE FUND



Current Total: 331,568 Bibles printed in 47 languages

The Communist nations of Laos and Vietnam are home to more than 250 different tribes, dozens of which had full Bibles or New Testaments translated into their languages prior to the arrival of Communism in 1975. Since then, these believers have been deprived of Bibles by the authorities. We are also providing God's Word to tribes in Myanmar (Burma), Cambodia, and other Southeast and South Asian nations as the need arises. **Each Bible costs \$2.70 to print and deliver.**

LIVING MARTYRS' FUND

Because of your partnership we are supporting 751 living martyrs.



"A martyr is a Christian who chooses to suffer death rather than deny Christ or His work... One who sacrifices something very important to further the Kingdom of God and endures great suffering for Christian witness." (The Voice of the Martyrs)

The **Living Martyrs Fund** assists pastors and evangelists in China and Vietnam who are unable to work because of injuries or illness caused by persecution. They and their families face extreme poverty and hardship. Through a gift of **\$35 per month** you can help support one of these living martyrs. A prayer card is sent to every supporter of this project.

PROJECT SMILE



Your generous gifts have so far helped bring a smile to the faces of 12,549 children in Vietnam.

Project Smile helps children from poor families in Vietnam who were born with disabilities such as cleft palates, cleft lips and club feet, as well as others who need operations for burns, cancerous growths and other conditions. The cost of helping a child varies depending on the kind of surgery required, but each gift received of **\$60 changes a child's life**. A laminated prayer card of a child helped through Project Smile is sent to all donors.

ASIA DISASTER RELIEF FUND



Transforming lives from ashes to beauty with God's love.

Over the years Asia Harvest has provided relief assistance to the victims of natural disasters such as the earthquake in China and cyclone in Myanmar (Burma); the Tsunamis of Southeast Asia and Japan, and a host of other disasters in India, Afghanistan, Vietnam, and elsewhere. In addition to providing aid through medicine, tents, blankets, food and water, rebuilding homes etc., the Christians we partner with take every opportunity to share the Gospel, and thousands of people have come to know Jesus Christ. This long-term fund helps us respond immediately whenever a disaster strikes.



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