

Asia Harvest



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

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God's Solution to Terrorism

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We live in an increasingly dangerous world, with terrorism—specifically Islamic terrorism—on the rise in many areas. Even places long considered peaceful have recently been shaken by evil acts. The city of Kunming in southwest China—a place we have spent much time over the years—was left reeling in March after eight Uyghurs (a large Muslim group in northwest China) stabbed 29 people to death and injured 140 more inside the Kunming train station.

Many people have opined as to why Islamic terrorism is on the rise. The world offers human reasons behind the problem: social displacement, cultural and ethnic conflict, political corruption, economic inequality, and more. While there is no doubt all these factors contain an element of truth, what does God say about the real cause of global terrorism, and what does the Bible say about how to prevent it from spreading?

In this newsletter we would like to look at **five key reasons** behind this global problem, and share **five insights** into what we believe is God's solution. One thing for sure: the world is oblivious to the true source of terrorism, and what we share will never make it into the world's media. Some of our statements may not be politically correct in today's age where good is called evil and evil good, but our concern is not to be politically correct, but Biblically correct.

#1: The Battle is Spiritual

The first point the world misses when evaluating terrorism is that it comes directly from Satan. Jesus stated, ***"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full"*** (John 10:10). Every act of murder and terror is an act motivated by Satan. He is the Father of terrorism. With each passing day, Satan is becoming more active in the world. ***"Woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has gone down to you! He is filled with fury, because he knows that his time is short"*** (Revelation 12:12).

While God expects civil governments to stem crime and protect their citizens, dropping bombs on Muslim communities will never result in the eradication of terrorism. In fact, it tends to stir up the pot and exacerbate the problem. The world doesn't believe in a literal devil, so they have no way of discerning the cause of acts of evil. The Bible puts it bluntly: ***"The person without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God but considers them foolishness, and cannot understand them because they are discerned only through the Spirit"*** (1 Corinthians 2:14).

#2: Terrorists Confuse Light and Darkness

Did you ever realize that about half of the New Testament was written by a former terrorist? The Apostle Paul was full of hatred and envy at the success of a new group called Christians, and his passion spilled over into violence and murder. It's a good thing the Lord didn't give up on Paul. We are still benefiting from his life and ministry two thousand years later.

The strongest enemies of the Gospel often confuse light and darkness. The Lord told us a day will come when *"anyone who kills you will think they are offering a service to God. They will do such things because they have not known the Father or me. I have told you this, so that when their time comes you will remember that I warned you about them"* (John 16:2-4).

#3: The Rise of the Church

One reason for terrorism you will never see reported in the media—even though terrorist leaders including Osama Bin Laden have often alluded to it in their speeches—is the growing influence of Christianity in Muslim nations.

The stark reality is that many Christians in countries like Syria and Iraq face death right now. In the city of Mosul alone—a city that has a Christian history dating back 1,700 years—terrorists have given all Christians three choices: pay a huge "tax", leave and never come back, or die. As a result of this tidal wave of terror, the number of Christians

living in Mosul has fallen from 60,000 in the year 2000 to zero today.

In many parts of Asia, Christians and Muslims lived alongside one another for generations without any great trouble, but in recent decades the church has grown both numerically and in influence, which has caused a violent reaction.

Thousands of Indonesian Muslims have been transformed by Jesus Christ. Local religious leaders felt threatened by these developments, so they recently lashed out and murdered a number of family leaders who had converted to Christ.

God's plan to bring the salvation of Jesus Christ to every ethnic group is progressing, and will not be thwarted! We anticipate that the more the Church grows, the more terrorism will continue to expand. Yet the more the Church is persecuted, the more it will grow, just like the children of Israel in Egypt: *"But the more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied and spread; so the Egyptians came to dread the Israelites"* (Exodus 1:12).

#4: Frustration and Envy

As the church has risen up and millions of lives have been transformed by the Holy Spirit, the leaders of other religions have been faced with a difficult reality. They know that their religions offer people little hope of real transformation. They may be able to give people discipline or focus them on a common goal, but only Jesus Christ has the power to change evil to good and to bring light and life to communities that



for generations have lived in darkness and death.

When people are faced with a decision between following Jesus and the desire to retain centuries of tradition, they often choose to strike out against God's people. Most are unwilling to face the reality that their own belief system is devoid of any real life-changing power.

The Lord Jesus summed it up: ***"This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that their deeds will be exposed. But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what they have done has been done in the sight of God"*** (John 3:19-21).

#5: The Role of Shame

Most Westerners don't understand the huge role that shame plays in Islam and other religions (including legalistic strains of Christianity). Shame is a powerful driving force that can compel people to take violent action.

Do you know that many Muslims feel deep disgrace that one billion of them are unable to wipe one tiny nation, Israel, from the face of the earth?

Millions feel shame that their religious zeal and dedication fails to give them inward freedom, while Jesus Christ is freely giving others hope, peace and joy.

The shame of realizing they and their ancestors have believed a lie is too much for most to consider, so they channel their frustrations and into violence against the Church, even to the point of being willing to murder their own family members who become followers of Jesus.

There are countless examples of the role of shame in terrorism around the world. The Mullahs and clerics of Iran continue to kill and punish Christians for their faith, including our good friend Saeed Abedini who has been imprisoned for the last two years because of his love for Jesus.

Like schoolground bullies, they think that inflicting pain on Christians shows strength and power, but in reality it just shows how empty and spiritually impoverished they are.

Meanwhile, the light of Jesus continues to shine through the good deeds of Christians. The evidence of the transformative power of Holy Spirit in believers' lives is undeniable. Even while

writing this newsletter, we received the following report from one of the Asian missionaries we support. After their team provided free medical and dental clinics for 700 people in a poor Muslim area, they wrote, ***“One of the Muslim leaders told us he wanted to know the teaching of Isa (Jesus) because of the care and love he has witnessed from us. An increasing number of people are attending our Bible studies and weekly discipleship training.”***

The unselfish and compassionate acts of God's people are gradually winning over the hearts and minds of many Muslims who are receptive to the truth. For, ***“It is God's will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish people”*** (1 Peter 2:15).





#6: Fear Not

If you have placed your trust in Jesus Christ, please don't lose heart at the darkness that is enveloping the world around you.

We recently heard that the exhortation for God's people to "fear not," or "Be of good courage" appears 366 times throughout the Bible—**once for every day of the year and an extra one for leap years!**

God is still on His throne, and His plans both for our lives and for this world will be fulfilled if we endure and don't lose heart. Our Lord encouraged us, ***"I tell you, my friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body and after that can do no more. But I will show you whom you should fear: Fear him who, after your body has been killed, has authority to throw you into hell. Yes, I tell you, fear him. Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? Yet not one of them is forgotten by God. Indeed, the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows"*** (Luke 4:7).

#7: Cleanse our Hearts

As Christians, our aims and desires should be the same as the Lord's. He is our boss, and our greatest goal should always be to love Him and do His will by reaching out to others (even terrorists) with the Good News of salvation.

We need to be careful that our hearts don't grow bitter over the wickedness all around us. Let's focus first and foremost on the wickedness in our own hearts, and ask the Holy Spirit to cleanse us from sin and hate. Last year one of our Asia Harvest newsletters included a picture of a group of Muslims as this newsletter does. One subscriber was distressed and demanded to be removed from our newsletter list. He wrote, ***"I am deeply offended by the picture of Muslims in your newsletter. I find it hard to even pray for them that they find Christ as Savior."***

We started our article with the point that all terrorism is from Satan. He would like nothing more than to choke the life out of Christians' hearts through fear and anxiety. May the Lord set us free so that we don't become unwitting victims of terrorism through the snare of bitterness.

We need to constantly ask the Holy Spirit to cleanse and purify us from all unrighteousness. Let us bow before Him and pray the words of David, ***"Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me"*** (Psalm 51:10-12).

#8: Spread the Gospel!

Despite many obstacles and dangers, the kingdom of God continues to advance in Asia among many Muslim, Hindu and Buddhist people groups. Last month we were blessed to receive pictures of the baptism of 18 former Muslims, including two imams (Islamic priests). Their faces were full of light and joy as they emerged from the water as new creations, their old sins washed away!

This is what it's all about. We must not stop reaching out to Muslims and others who need Jesus. In sport, it's often said that "the best form of defense is attack."

Similarly, the best strategy to stop the spread of worldwide terrorism is for the Church to share the truth and light of the Gospel, in the hope that some will believe and put their trust in Him. The best way to dispel darkness is still to simply turn on the light!

This, dear friends, is God's solution to terrorism... Preach the Good News to all creation! Only Jesus working in the lives of people will bring freedom. May we never be embarrassed to tell the world that Jesus is the answer. If we don't tell them, they have no chance of ever knowing God's salvation. ***"For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile"*** (Romans 1:16).

A generation ago, the mission statesman Brother Andrew wrote this about the threat of Communism: **"If you do not go to the heathen with the Gospel, they will come to you as revolutionaries or as occupying forces."**

If the Church grows disillusioned and weary of spreading the Good News, the scope of worldwide terrorism will expand quickly. ***"Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers"*** (Galatians 6:9-10).

#9: Forget the Sentiment

Please don't think that before you can do anything to reach Muslims and others that you first need to have a deep emotional connection or feelings of love toward them. It certainly helps, but Jesus loves the unlovable and reaches the unreachable!

If you came across someone drowning in a river, would you stop and consider whether you have feelings of love for that person, or even if you like them? Hopefully not! What a drowning person needs is to be rescued before it's too late. By doing all you can to help a perishing soul you are displaying true love to them.



We must love our enemies, and the greatest act of love we can show them is to lead them to salvation in Jesus Christ, who taught His followers: ***"You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect"*** (Matthew 5:43-48).

#10: Jesus Wins!

We once heard a story about Bible college students who had spent weeks studying the Book of Revelation. At the end of class one day, a group sat down in the school gymnasium, and discussed among themselves what the main theme of Revelation was. They all had different convoluted views and theological explanations, but no one was able to grasp the mystery of the last Book of the Bible.

Across from them, the elderly school janitor was enjoying a sandwich as he read his Bible during a break. The students, in a half-mocking tone, decided to ask this man what he thought the main theme of Revelation was.

"Simple," he replied without hesitation: **"Jesus Wins!"**

Friends, in our newsletter we have touched on a number of causes for terrorism, but through it all, please never lose sight of the fact that Jesus wins! He is already the victor through His death and resurrection, and even though it's difficult to see God's unfolding purpose when evil seems so prevalent, be confident that Jesus remains fully in charge, and is working everything out for His purposes, both in your own life and in the world.

The Lord has a plan that cannot be thwarted. He is busy saving some from among every tribe, language, nation and people group on the globe! Included in this number will be many former terrorists and those who are enemies of the Gospel. Jesus has always pursued those who need Him the most, for ***"it is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners"*** (Mark 2:17).

God loves the hundreds of millions of lost Muslims in the world and desires to know them as His children.

At the moment we must work hard to see the kingdom of God expand, but the day is coming when terrorism will be no more, and all the enemies of God will be put under the feet of Jesus. In that day, a trumpet blast will sound, and "loud voices in heaven" will proclaim:

"The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Messiah, and he will reign for ever and ever" (Revelation 11:15).

Helping Others Get the Job Done

On the front cover of this newsletter is a picture of Uygur (pronounced 'wee-gur') men praying at a mosque in Kashgar, northwest China. This is the same group that has spread terror throughout parts of China in recent months.

There are less than 1,000 Uygur Christians in all of China, compared to 13 million Muslims. Reaching them with the Gospel is a difficult and risky task. As you look at the faces of the men in the picture, do you wish they would know Jesus Christ as Lord, but have no idea how you could help that become a reality?

We would like to share a wonderful opportunity that exists to help reach the Uygurs for Jesus. **We currently need support for more than a dozen Asian missionaries working among the Uygur people through the Asian Workers' fund.** It's a great privilege to help sow the seeds for a breakthrough among this and many other unreached people groups.

"I come from a Muslim family. I had an experience where my son became sick and died. Even though I was a Muslim, I prayed that if the Prophet Isa (Jesus) really died and rose again, then He could also make my son live again. And He did it! My son was raised from the dead! Through this miracle, I became a Christian. I also gave my son a new name, changing it from Usman to Paul. I was baptized and later attended Bible school. I have served God ever since."

—Testimony from one of the missionaries we support in Indonesia

We have found that while all efforts to establish the kingdom of God are greatly needed, the most effective way to reach the Uygurs has not been through Western missionaries, or even Chinese missionaries. Rather, we have come to see that the most effective and long-lasting results occur when Uygur Christians reach their own people.

They put their lives at risk to do this work, and they need prayer and support to enable them to go more places and minister more effectively.

Please prayerfully consider taking advantage of this opportunity to help establish the Gospel among these needy groups, so that not only will Uygurs be reaching Uygurs for Christ, but Kazak believers will be taking the Gospel to Kazaks, Kirgiz to Kirgiz, Hui to Hui and so on.

If you would like to support one or more missionary through the Asian Workers' fund, please visit our website, or fill out the enclosed Response form and post it back to us. If you specifically want to support a worker among one of the groups mentioned above (**Uygur, Kazak, Kirgiz, or Hui**), please let us know. We will allocate a worker to you, and will send you a prayer card with basic information about the evangelist and their ministry for the Lord. For those who continue to help, we provide six-monthly updates so you can continue to pray for them.

ASIAN WORKERS' FUND



We are currently supporting 776 Asian evangelists working among 438 unreached tribes and ethnic groups.

The **Asian Workers' Fund** assists indigenous church-planting evangelists who are involved in strategic ministry to unreached people groups in Asia. These servants of the Lord have committed their whole lives to the Gospel but are hindered by lack of finances.

You can help support these dedicated workers for **\$25 per month** each. A prayer card and occasional updates are sent to all regular donors of this project.

CHINA BIBLE FUND



Current Total: 8,493,781 Chinese Bibles distributed.

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 Body of Christ and helping add fuel to the revival in China.

Each full Chinese Bible costs just \$1.80 to print and deliver.

ASIAN BIBLE FUND



Current Total: 406,570 Bibles printed in 49 languages.

Asia is home to many ethnic groups where people have been deprived of God's Word, sometimes for decades. The **Asian Bible fund** provides the Scriptures in numerous languages in Southeast Asia, North Korea, the Indian subcontinent, and elsewhere. The one country where the Asian Bible Fund doesn't apply to is China, where our China Bible Fund functions as a separate project.

Each Bible costs \$2.70 to print and deliver through the Asian Bible Fund.

LIVING MARTYRS' FUND

Because of your partnership we are supporting 769 living martyrs.



"A martyr has been defined as "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 **Living Martyrs' Fund** assists pastors and evangelists in China, Vietnam and North Korea 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 support has so far helped bring smiles to the faces of 13,607 children in Vietnam.

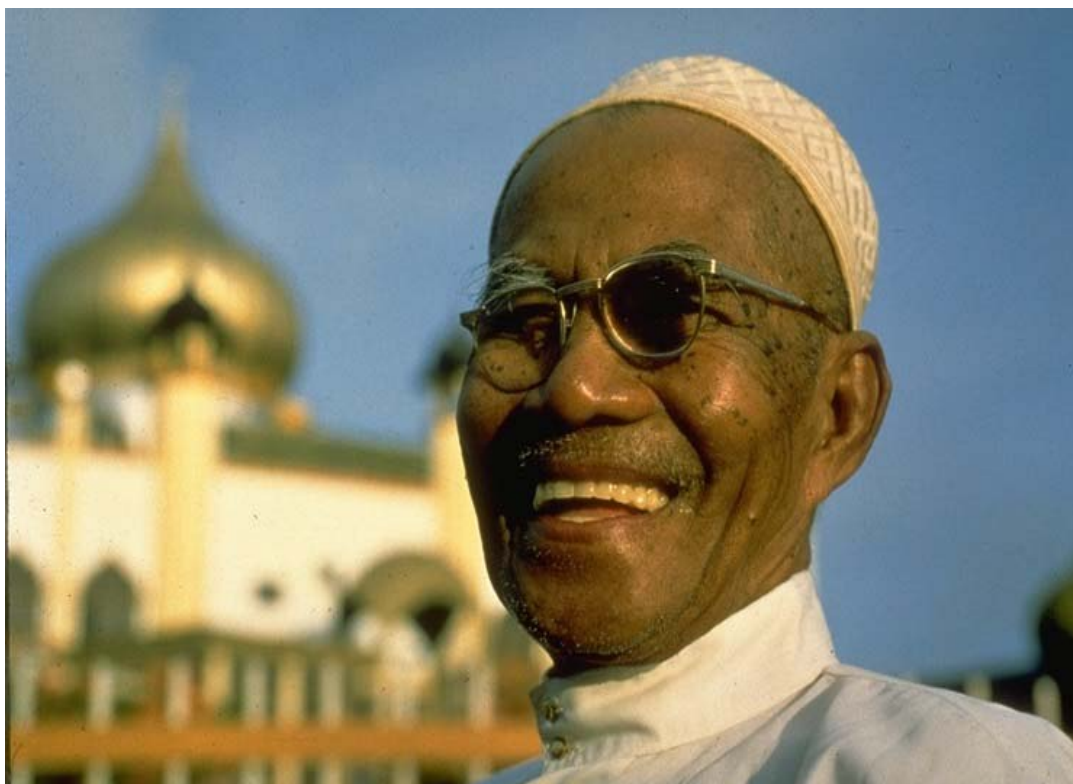
Project Smile helps children from poor families in Vietnam who were born with disabilities such as cleft palates, cleft lips and club feet, as well as others who need operations for burns, cancerous growths and other conditions. The cost of helping a child varies depending on the kind of surgery required,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

PERSECUTION & RELIEF FUND



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

Over the years Asia Harvest has provided assistance to the victims of natural disasters that have struck Asia. 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 many people have come to know Jesus Christ. This project also provides physical and spiritual relief to Christian communities and families throughout Asia who have been affected by persecution.



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