

# *Church Triumphant*

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January/February 2005

## ***“THE LORD IS NOT SLACK CONCERNING HIS PROMISE” II Peter 3:9***

As we look at the problems and challenges around us, it is easy to get discouraged and give up. Circumstances may shout that God does not care or is powerless to help us because we do not have enough “faith”. It is times like these that we need to hold onto God’s Word spoken through Peter. God is still on the throne. He is still sovereign in the affairs of men and nations. He is always right on time. We look through the pressures of the urgent while God sees clearly from the viewpoint of eternity. He is not slack. He is working in every situation for our good and for His glory.

### ***God’s Provision***

We have just returned from an awesome time on Mindanao where we saw first hand the goodness and mercy and grace of God. We did not doubt the faithfulness of God but we did not understand why we did not have the finances to begin the projects in the mountains. We felt we needed to return to Mindanao to meet again with the tribal chieftains to encourage them in their newfound faith. We knew we needed to reach out to other ministries to involve them in gathering in the great harvest of souls waiting to hear the Gospel. We prayed and felt convinced that now was the time to go yet the money just wasn’t there. So in faith we made our reservations and trusted in God to keep His promise to supply all our needs. That is exactly what He did – and more!

The weekend before we left for Mindanao we spoke in three meetings in southern California. In those three meetings, God brought in exactly the amount we needed to take with us to meet the needs awaiting us. But God did not just meet our financial needs. He met physical needs as well.

### ***God’s Healing Touch***

About a week before we left for Mindanao, we received an email asking for prayer for Pastor Virgil Roche, one of our fulltime workers who pastors in Calabcab. He was having respiratory problems and needed medicine. We arrived on Friday, January 21 and were told that Virgil was in the hospital. We went to visit him the next day. We found him in the terminal ward with TB. The doctors had already drained eight liters of fluid from his lungs. We anointed him with oil and prayed as described in James 5. That was Saturday. By Sunday his lungs were clear. On Monday, the doctors sent him home from the hospital totally healed! God keeps His promises.



*Pastor Virgil Roche smiles as he tells us how God totally healed him of TB in answer to prayer.*

We also met and prayed with Bayani Asang, our chief carpenter, at church on Sunday evening. We asked you to pray for him in our last newsletter. He had been hospitalized with a mysterious liver ailment. At first the doctors declared the situation hopeless. Then they talked about possible surgery. You prayed and God healed him completely. When he was first hospitalized, the doctors told him that his liver was shriveled up and hard as a rock. But God gave him a brand new liver. Then the doctors found a gall bladder infection but God healed that also. When we met with Bayani he was still weak but well on the road to a full recovery. The doctors are still talking about his miracle liver. Bayani asked us to thank all of you for your prayers.

## *God's Faithfulness*

While we were in Mindanao, we met with 30 of the leading chieftains from among the 300 we had met with last May. It was a great blessing as chieftain after chieftain stood to testify of the goodness of God since they renounced their pagan gods to enter into covenant with the Creator God. Since they declared Jesus Christ as Lord over Mindanao, they have seen His great faithfulness. When the horrendous earthquake and tsunami hit neighboring Indonesia on December 26, the people on Mindanao watched in wonder as the tide went out and out and out – up to 20 yards in some places. The government warned the people to flee for their lives. But the tsunami never came. The shoreline had moved! God kept the waters from rushing back in to bring destruction. This was also the first rainy season on record with no flooding and no mudslides on Mindanao. God was watching over these new Believers.

## *God's Prosperity*

When we visited Calabcab last May where Pastor Virgil is pioneering a church, 80% of the people there were idol worshippers. God moved in power, bringing many to salvation and healing all their diseases. Now God is at work to bring transformation to this poor village where unemployment is extremely high.

The government gave us seeds that have now grown into seedlings ready to transplant. When these seedlings reach maturity, they will be cacao trees. That's where chocolate comes from. These seedlings are being transported to Calabcab where they will be given to families in the church to plant. The cocoa beans will provide the families with a steady source of income. Their tithes will then support the ongoing work of the church that is currently under construction thanks to the generosity of our supporters here in America.



*These cacao seedlings are traveling by motorcycle to their new home in Calabcab. When they are mature, these trees will produce "mounds" of delicious chocolate.*

## *God's Breakthrough*

When we met with the 300 tribal chieftains last year and their 30 representatives last month, we shared our vision of establishing five community centers where we would teach the tribal people how to grow their own food, raise farm animals, set up fish farms, etc. We shared our vision of sending out literacy teachers to teach the younger children to read and write and then bringing the older children who had the desire and the ability to the centers for upper elementary and high school. We told them of our desire to have a medical clinic and a Bible school to train pastors to take the Gospel deeper into the interior and eventually to other tribes, other islands, and even other nations.

When we met with the 30 leaders, we told them of our efforts to raise the funds necessary to get the centers established – about \$250,000 – but we had not been able to raise even \$25,000 to start the first project. We told them how we asked God for the finances to make this vision a reality but God just said, “What is in your hand?” So all we could do when sharing the details of the planned community centers with the 30 tribal leaders was to encourage them with God’s Word to Moses, “What is in your hand?” and to challenge them to trust in God and not trust in us or in America.



*These tribal leaders listen as Howard explains our plans for the community centers.*

We felt like we had failed because we could not build the centers for them as we had hoped to do. But God knew something and they knew something that we did not know. We had done all we were supposed to do – we obeyed God and showed up with His message of encouragement and challenge. We were totally unaware that about eleven years ago the government had given the tribal people seedlings to plant in their tribal areas – lots of them! These thousands of acres of trees were now mature and ready for harvest. When we challenged the chieftains with the question “What is in your hand?” they realized that Moses just had a stick but they had trees – lots of trees! They just needed to find a buyer. So they asked Allan Asang, our Philippine Director, to find someone who would give them a

good price for their timber with enough profit so they could afford to replant. Then they committed to give Allan 25% of the profits from the sale of the trees to build the community centers.

Allan knew that traditionally the buyers in the lowlands had given the tribal people a small fraction of what the trees they grew were actually worth so he determined that he would find the best price for them. He quickly found many who were ready to reward him handsomely if he would just persuade the chieftains to sell the trees at a low price. He refused to compromise. Just before we left to return to America, Allan found a buyer who was willing to take all the logs Allan could deliver COD for six pesos per board foot. The first section that is ready for harvest contains 11 million board feet. That figures out to 66 million pesos or \$1.2 million! 25% of that comes to about \$250,000 – exactly what we need to establish these community centers. God had already provided everything we needed. It was there all the time!

We already have chain saws and cutting the trees will provide jobs for the tribal people. There is only one barrier that stands in the way. We need a truck to haul the logs to the buyer. Renting a truck is very expen-

sive. We can buy a “like new” truck with a new truck warranty for \$10,000 or \$5,000 down and the rest in monthly payments. So now instead of needing \$250,000, all we need to believe God to supply is \$5,000 to buy the truck so we can begin cutting the timber and transporting it down the mountain.

Because of the destruction caused by the tsunami throughout the coastal areas of Indonesia and the rest of southern Asia, there is a huge demand for lumber to rebuild homes. This comes at a time when the Philippine government is trying to crack down on illegal logging. These trees that the chieftains are giving to Allan to sell are grown specifically for timber and so all the legal paperwork is in order. The lumber can be sold to build furniture or for export to other parts of the world. God is allowing the tribal people to build their own community centers and He is allowing us to help make it possible. God has blessed us by giving us a little part to play in a major miracle as we come along side our tribal Brothers and Sisters to help them as God allows them to do the work.

### ***What about you?***

What has God put into your hand? Are you willing to share it to help us buy this truck to make this financial breakthrough possible? God is pouring out a great blessing on these people and He is inviting you to share in that blessing and be a part of what God is doing to establish His Kingdom in Southeast Asia. Help us today to buy this truck so these tribal people can come into their inheritance as blood bought Brothers and Sisters in Christ. Pray with us that all the many pieces of God’s plan will come together at the proper time so that a harvest of souls will come into the Kingdom of God from the mountains of Mindanao.