



Brennecke Journal

Steve & Kim Brennecke

Serving with Baptist Mid-Missions

May, 2010

Dear Friends:

I am writing this "Journal" to you from the southern tip of India. It is over 100 degrees outside, and about 92 degrees in the house where I am staying. What a contrast to the scenes that come to mind from only a week ago, when I was on-location in Siberia, standing on the frozen shore of Lake Baikal! Ministry tasks have taken me abroad in the last two months.

JAPAN

Our Japan Team met for their Biennial field conference in Tokyo. Over a three day period, they met and shared the Lord's blessings in their ministries over the last 24 months. The agenda was aggressive; they worked through difficult issues; they explored proposed solutions for chronic problems; and they encouraged one another. I wish you could have heard their singing, their times of prayer, and the fun they enjoyed around the table as we shared meals together. At the close of one of the days, in the darkness of night, we met a homeless man who had sought help at the church in the past. Rick, (one of the missionaries), spent considerable time with this man, though we were all tired. We prayed for him as he walked away. Rick and Becky continued to show the love of Christ to him in the weeks that followed. Then last week, this letter came from Rick:

For Thursday night prayer meeting Rick preached a sermon making salvation clear. Japanese medical missionary to Bangladesh Dr. Masashi Tomioka was visiting. He sat with Mr. Yamashita [the homeless man] and helped him find Bible passages. At the end, Dr. Tomioka talked personally to Mr. Yamashita, and he trusted the Lord as Savior.

Rick asked Mr. Yamashita to tell the others in the room what he had done. He smiled shyly and announced that he is now believing in Jesus.

Later that night we took Yamashita-san to a grocery store where we can get food at half price. He smiled broadly as he carried bags to share with his friend who shares his living space. We are praying that he will be able to witness to his friend, too.

How many “Mr. Yamashita’s” are waiting to hear the words of life from a follower of Jesus Christ? Are we “opening our mouths boldly,” as Paul did? Let’s resolve to do all we can to enable the Lord to reach the lost through us as we follow after Christ!

RUSSIA

The ice on Lake Baikal is nine feet thick in the midst of a typical Siberian winter. Stepping into your home in Irkutsk in the midst of winter, you undergo a 100 – 120 degree temperature change! (-50 degrees outside, 60 – 70 degrees inside). The difficulty of living in these conditions is only matched by the difficulty of ministry there. When the Iron Curtain fell, missionaries flooded into those needy lands. At the peak, there were nearly 30 missionaries from “our circles” living and ministering in Irkutsk. Now, after a series of governmental changes that can only be seen as targeting our endeavors, those numbers have dwindled to only five or six.

Yet in the midst of this opposition, the work of the gospel goes forward! One by one, people are coming into relationships with the Cottle family, and are hearing from the Word of God. For the first time in their lives, they are studying the Bible, and they are finding in those pages the very words of life and coming to know Jesus Christ as their Lord and savior. Though the restrictions prevent the Cottles from building a church structure, they are able to refer new believers into a local Russian Baptist church.

Though they serve as BMM’s lone missionary family in Irkutsk (following the passing of Jesse Armstrong), they are not deterred. *“It’s a special place. Definitely not for everybody! But, the Lord is working and calling people to serve Him, and if they are willing to work with great patience in a hard place, Irkutsk may just be the place for them!”*

Will you pray that the Lord will send more missionaries to eastern Russia?

INDIA

“Incredible India!” is the national promotional slogan, and indeed there is some truth to it when you consider the incredible looking temples, the Taj Mahal, the history of a vast and burgeoning populace, and the current challenges in the culture which rise up as obstacles to the gospel. It is also a land of “Incredible Opportunities!” for the Lord’s work...if we can work with wisdom. More on India in our next letter....

FAMILY

We are all doing well! We thank the Lord for good health. Thanks for your prayers for Kim. Nic is soon to be home from his second year of college. We are all looking forward to having him home. Thank you for the blessing you are to us, for your continuing support of our ministry, and for your prayers. You are special to us.

Sincerely in Christ,

Steve, Kim and the Brennecke Kids.