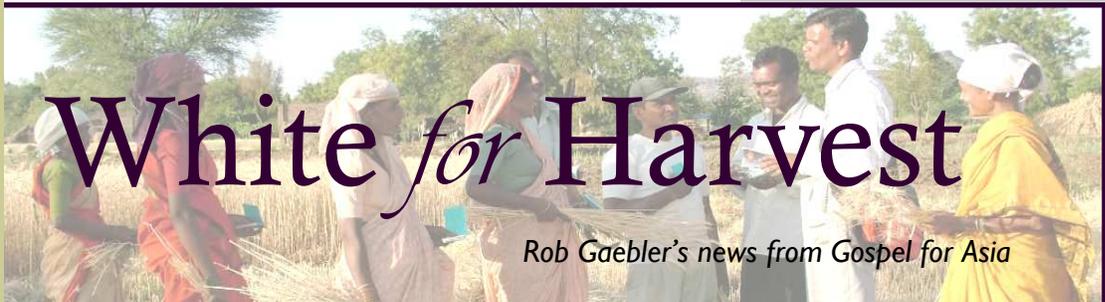


Do you not say, 'There are still four months and then comes the harvest'? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest! (John 4:35)



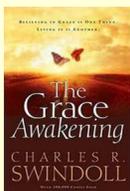
White for Harvest

Rob Gaebler's news from Gospel for Asia

April 2011

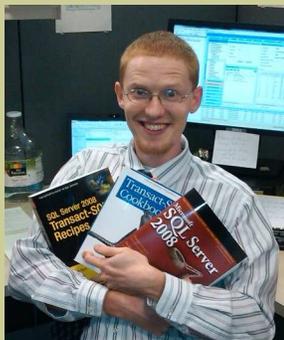
I Have Been Reading...

"I can't think of a greater mission in life than helping others know how to enjoy the life God has supplied."



"If I had the power in my hand to touch and heal one part of the body of Christ, I would touch the tongue, certainly including my own."

—from *The Grace Awakening*, by Chuck Swindoll



Above: I am enjoying learning the T-SQL programming language.

Dear friends,

I wish I could take each of you on a trip to Asia to meet our precious brothers and sisters there who have paid such a price for the Gospel out of love for the Lord. I know that one day in heaven you will experience the rewards of your partnership in this work, because you gave and you prayed by faith.

God is constantly opening exciting new doors for the Gospel. During my time at GFA, several major ministries of GFA have been launched in Asia. Right now, the Bridge of Hope outreach to needy chil-

dren is just starting in the nation of Myanmar. And later this year we will open our first homes in Asia to care for widows, an extremely needy and neglected segment of society in Asia.

I have been reading *Grace Awakening* by Chuck Swindoll, at the encouragement of some of my leaders. I tend to focus on the shortcomings of myself and other people. It is very refreshing to rest upon God's grace instead of being driven by the mentality "I need to [fill in the blank]." As Chuck Swindoll wrote, "What seems so right is, in fact, heresy—the one I consider the most dangerous

heresy on earth. What is it? *The emphasis on what we do for God, instead of what God does for us.*" It stings my pride, but it is true: *God doesn't need me!* But incredibly He loves me and He intends to love people through me. I want my life to be characterized by love and grace, like my Father.

Recently I started physical therapy for my hip, which I strained in October when I was training for a marathon. It's not too bad, but it wasn't healing on its own. Please pray for a good (and inexpensive) recovery. I really want to be able to run without problems again!

In the Office

We recently had the privilege to hear from two men of God, Francis Chan and David Platt, who visited our office and spoke to the GFA staff. Both are best-selling authors who have been used greatly by God. David Platt said that God has given all of us an assignment that we are unable to fulfill ourselves. As Jonathan Edwards said, "Only God is able to do the work of God." This should drive us to desperately seek the presence of God Himself in our lives, and His glory, like Moses did in Exodus 33 (one of my favorite Bible passages), and not be satisfied with less. Sadly, much of church culture is based on being satisfied with the words of God without His life and presence.

In the IT Department, I am enjoying studying the T-SQL programming language and becoming more proficient in my work. In early May I will attend a DonorDirect conference to learn more in depth about the main software GFA uses for our database and which I work with daily. I will even get to present for a few minutes during one of the sessions.

Please pray for the staff here at GFA. Many of us have chronic illnesses or have gone to the emergency room in recent weeks. I could easily list off 40 people with health problems, some pretty severe. We know that Satan is on the attack, seeking to discourage us and take us out of the battle, but we also know Christ is the victor! Please join us in praying.



Above: Some of the young people at GFA posing with David Platt and his wife (top) and Francis Chan (bottom)



Above: Geeta is a widow who was in a desperate situation until a GFA-supported missionary stepped in to help. And it wasn't until she learned of Christ's love that her sorrow went away. To hear her story, which moved me to tears, visit www.gfa.org/widow.

*Dear friends,
I thank you from the bottom of my heart for your partnership in the work of the Gospel. I pray that through you, Christ's love will be shown to many people in Asia. I am grateful for your faithful support and prayers. May the Lord bless you and provide all your needs.*

*Yours in Christ,
Rob Gaebler*

Widows in Asia: As if they didn't Exist

My heart breaks when I hear about the social ills prevalent in India and other Asian countries. The reality of what goes on is shocking, especially since we are so accustomed to the human rights, safety nets, and respect for human life that exist in our country.

At a recent staff prayer meeting here at Gospel for Asia, Gisela, the wife of our president K.P. Yohannan, shared about the plight of widows in Asia. These are some of the most neglected and despised people on the planet.

Widows in South Asia face immense physiological and social pressures. When a woman's husband dies, society blames her. She is considered back luck and is neglected and excluded from religious and social life. Her own family and in-laws take away her jewelry and all her possessions. Often she is physically and sexually abused. Out of desperation for survival, she may resort to begging on busy streets and near temples. Remarriage is often out of the question. This will be her life until her death.

The cause for the status of widows is a deep-rooted belief system in which a woman has little or no value apart from her husband, and also declares her guilty of her husband's death. Until the influence of missionary William Carey helped to outlaw the practice in India, a widow would have been burned to death on her husband's funeral pyre. Today she is instead condemned to a social death.

While most widows are elderly, some are not. I was shocked to hear about child marriages which are prevalent in several Asian countries.

According to statistics from 2005, 45% of women between 25 and 29 had been married by the age of 15 in Bangladesh. Children, even babies, are married off. In India, 130,000 girls under 18 have already become widows and must face the horrors of widowhood at such a tender age.

I believe that real and lasting change will come only when people experience God's love through Christ and understand the high value He has placed on every human being. From my visit to India five years ago, I remember seeing poor old ladies singing to the Lord with such joy and freedom. I wouldn't be surprised if some of them were widows.

There are many examples of how Christ's love can change a widow's life. One night, GFA-supported mission-

ary Bishnu and his wife found a widow at their door, who pleaded with them to let her stay with them. The woman and her three children had become homeless after her husband's death, and she was begging from door to door just to survive. Without hesitation, they took her in and lovingly cared for her and her children. While with them, she learned about the love of Christ and found new hope and a future in Him. Bishnu has helped her get a place of her own and continues to assist with her needs.

Gospel for Asia is planning to start our first two homes to care for widows in Asia later this year. *Please pray that many widows, so desperate and neglected, but so precious to God, will find new life and dignity in Christ through our outreach to them.*

One Widow's Story

Lalita lost her husband in 2003. He left her with four children and no income. For three years she struggled to survive.

"When my husband passed away, I lost my only source of income. I didn't know where to turn or how to earn a living... Often my children and I went without food."

The local pastor in Lalita's village knew of her dire situation so he gave her a sewing machine that was provided through GFA's Christmas Catalog.

"After a couple months, I had enough tailoring work to more than meet my needs. I was so happy! The sewing machine also gives me an opportunity to share the love of Jesus with others. When I tell them the Lord provided it, they are amazed and want to know more." Two families have come to Christ through her testimony.



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I would love to hear from you!