



## May 2015 News

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Look for us:



# First Do No Harm

**“Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear.”**

**Ephesians 4:29 NAS**

Words have such power. Proverbs tells us that death and life are in the power of the tongue. (Prov.18:21) Our words can give strength, or take it away; they can bring healing or they can cause the hearer to become sick at heart. There is a creative force in words: the Lord SPOKE, and the world was created. We are made in the image of God; we are wise to remember that creative force, and be sure we use it for blessing, and not destruction.

Romans tells us that faith comes from hearing, and hearing the word of God. (Rom. 10:17) When others tell us that we can do something, eventually, we believe. On the other hand if all we ever hear is that our dreams are improbable, impossible, and are sure to fail, our faith withers, especially if that prediction comes from those we look up to and admire.

How very important it is then, that we should ON PURPOSE use our words to build up, not tear down. Taking every opportunity to speak kindly and remind each other of the Lord's faithfulness, speaking His wonderful promises to each other rather than our own opinions, which is vanity. One thing I try never to do is to carry

unwholesome comments, or derogatory remarks back to the people they were spoken about. There is no point in this, and if fact we are better friends if we let those remarks die in our presence, never to be repeated.

On the other hand, if I ever hear of someone being complimented in a conversation, I make note of it, and will share that compliment the next time I see that person. I have seen many downcast expressions change to first surprise, then a kind of embarrassed happiness, to think that others had spoken so kindly of them.

We have so many people, from all walks of life and backgrounds, in our world. Some are doing well, and thriving. Others are struggling to hold on with their last bit of strength. Each time I have a chance to speak to someone, I ask the Lord to take charge of that conversation. I ask Him to give me HIS words, words of life for that one. As I open my mouth I keep in mind these words: First, do no harm.



DEBBIE ECKER  
Vice President  
Firstlight International

## A Fresh Look: Financial Stewardship

**Jesus did not say “For where your heart is, there will your treasure be also.” Rather, he said “For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” (Matt. 6:21)**

How often have you heard someone say they are asking God to give them a “heart” for something before they invest their time and treasure? Jesus doesn’t simply want our money. He wants our hearts. He knows that wherever our wealth goes, so does our heart.

Big trees start out as little seeds. Years ago a missionary invited me to financially support one of his projects. I didn’t have a heart for missions at that time, but I was willing to donate some seed money. It wasn’t

long before I took a trip to China to see firsthand how my seed was growing. Later on I had the opportunity to visit a missionary in Russia; this time I felt prompted to invest in my daughter, so I invited her to come along. During that trip God touched her heart and she felt a call into the mission field; the next eight years she served in missions in China and Malaysia. She is now the director of missions at our church, giving care to over fifty missionaries and training many to follow a call to missions. And my walk with the Lord has been greatly enriched.

Perhaps you have given to a missionary and then gained a fresh interest in their work. Suddenly you’re praying more for them, you’re more

eager to hear how things are going, your ears prick up when their country is mentioned in the news.

Firstlight International has a mission worthy of your financial treasure. Each month throughout the year, each of us are given a tremendous opportunity to sow a financial seed into a series of projects and ministry platforms that are reaching souls for Christ. Every newsletter is filled with exciting reports of lives that are being changed! Give. And watch as your heart follows your treasure.



KIRK (MAC) MCCABE  
Board Member  
Firstlight International

## Family Church Camp Highlights



We were so blessed this year to have John Paul Sprecher, his wife Paula, and Paula’s mom and dad: Linda and Paul with us for our sixth annual Firstlight Fellowship Family Church Camp in Thailand. John Paul and Paula lead Forerunning Flame International, a ministry dedicated to ending fatherlessness world wide. At this year’s camp, there were closer to 130 in attendance from six locations - a good mixture of the children (*and families*) from our Families Without Fathers (FWF) project, as well as our Firstlight Fellowship churches. Wonderful preaching moments. Personal prayer and ministry times. Workshops for children and adults. In each session, we gave room for the Holy Spirit to do His work, and several came to know the Lord and the love of their Heavenly Father. John

Paul’s message was very timely indeed: You are born of God, God is your Father 100%!



DAN ECKER  
President  
Firstlight International



## Top Stories - *Appointing Local Church Elders ...*

During our Easter Celebration Service, two Thai men were appointed as local elders in our Firstlight Fellowship Church, in Suwannakhuha, Thailand. It was an excited moment in the life of the church. This particular church is located in Nong Bua Lam Phu province and is being pastored by Laore Rakprakhun. She also leads a second church in the province as part of the Firstlight Fellowship Church Network.

On this particular day, I (Dan) preached live in two locations via Skype, (*a first for me*) and we also baptized five new believers in the Suwannakhuha church that day. It was very evident that JESUS is alive! The church was full! In fact, many participated in a 'sunrise' service earlier that day where prayer and reflection took place to ponder the scriptures and to recommit ourselves once more to the risen Christ.



## Top Stories - *New believers are water baptized ...*



**There is nothing quite like moments like these!** Being able to witness first-hand new believers deciding to follow Jesus in the waters of baptism is one of the most exciting experiences I (Dan) have ever had in 15 years of full time ministry in Thailand. A cutting off of the 'old' to identify with the 'new' is an important step to becoming a true follower of Jesus Christ. These are those who have taken that step.

**A total of 16 new believers were water baptized in two weeks, in two locations of the Firstlight Fellowship Church Network, Thailand.** In each location moments like these are taking place on a regular basis. Your prayers and financial giving is helping to make all of this possible. You, too, have a part in all that is taking place. **Thank you for doing your part each month.**

## The Road Ahead ...

Every so often there are moments in life when you sense that what you have been praying for finally starts coming to pass. And I believe that we are coming into one of those seasons in our personal lives and also in the work of Firstlight International. Looking out over the next several months I see tons happening for the kingdom in the places where we serve.

**Families Without Fathers (FWF):** As a new Thai school term begins this month we have the potential of reaching 100 kids from fatherless homes in seven locations across Thailand. The need to reach the widow and the orphan in Thailand is great. Already our Firstlight

Area Teams and Area Churches are bringing the gospel to them on a regular basis. The registration of two new branch offices for the Foundation in Thailand, will help to make it possible to reach more kids. Adding additional staff to help care for these kids and to assist on the admin side will be another step towards reaching our goal. FWF is in a good place for growth in 2015 and beyond.

**Firstlight Fellowship Church Network, Thailand (FLFCHN):** We are blessed to have Pastor Nott join the team with 5 churches in the province of Nan, in the north of Thailand. The FLFCHN has grown to 11 churches in

the north, and northeast of Thailand. We will move towards the formation of a FLFCHN - School of Leaders to train local Thai church leaders in the network. A major step forward in the road ahead.

**Myanmar:** We will be back in Myanmar in July to teach and to train students in the Emmanuel Theological Seminary. So blessed to have this opportunity to pour into the next generation of leaders in Asia! Join us as we travel on the road ahead!



DAN ECKER  
President  
Firstlight International

## On A Personal Note



Hallelujah!! It is spring at last!! After such a long and arduous winter, the first warm breezes bring smiles everywhere. I smiled as I sat beside my dear 84 year old mother for Easter Sunday service, something I have not done since I was a child. Isn't that exactly what the Lord does when He thaws a heart that is frozen in place? When the yoke that holds us down is removed, there is a warmth, a peace that passes our understanding. And a smile born of a newfound joy that pervades our lives. These are the thoughts that have been springing up in my heart as the seasons are changing. In this new season we are seeing wonderful new opportunities to serve the Lord. I have the joy of putting together a curriculum for New Testament Survey and a study on the Covenants to be presented to our friends in Kings's Kids 222 group. We are also looking into the possibility of remote teaching into our Thai cell churches as well as possibly into new believers in Nepal! I must confess, my heart LEAPT at the thought of teaching via the internet to countries where y feet have gone, so many years before. Be looking in the newsletter for more details in the weeks to come, and please, I/we do appreciate your prayers for these and ALL the endeavors that are before us.



DEBBIE ECKER  
Vice President  
Firstlight International

## Prayer Points

**“Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with *an attitude of thanksgiving*; Colossians 4:2 NAS**

### Please pray for:

1. For the follow up on those who came to Christ and have been water baptized.
2. FWF first Thai school term 2015 begins this month: \$10,000.00 needed.
3. God's abundant provision for Firstlight International during this 2nd quarter of 2015.