



## October 2015 News

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Look for us:



# We Can Do This

**“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not *in* vain in the Lord.” I Cor. 15:58 NAS**

Everyone can use a cheerleader in their life from time to time. Someone to tell them: You can do this!! You are getting it right!! We are behind you!! You will make it!! No matter what it looks like right now **DON'T STOP TRYING! DON'T STOP PUSHING!!** It will happen. Keep on going!

A spirit of encouragement is a great gift to both have and to be able to receive from others. Our mentors, the ones whom God places in all of our lives during those formative years are the voices of encouragement to persevere, to press on, to plan the work and work the plan. I will never forget my years in Bible school, hearing my teachers and pastors constantly speaking over my life...that I was a world changer. I had never ever thought of myself in that way. But through their words, and in their eyes, all they saw was potential. And they were quick to speak to that potential, to move it from potential... to fact.

Beloved, we must do the same. One of the ways that Firstlight is bringing that encouragement to others is through mentorship that speaks to the potential in the lives of others. Through training and relationships both in the US and overseas, we are always calling out the gifting and faith

of others, walking alongside them, loving them, being aware of them. And, when we can, bringing them resource to their vision.

For the world will be won, not by one super large organization, but by a **BODY** that is joined, link by link, sinew to sinew, heart to heart, to fulfill a purpose larger than any of our own purpose statements. To reach beyond the reach of our own ministry parameters and spill out onto those whose parameters go far beyond ours. And to fill up the hearts of the younger generation, imparting every single drop of faith and wisdom we can into them before our time on this earth is over. **THESE** are the ways that the world will be won to Him. So that His Kingdom of peace and blessing can be established and bring a lasting peace and blessing to the nations. After all, He is the Hope of Every Nation. Let us never forget that.

Our work, when done His way, and in His love, and in a Jesus honoring way. That work, no matter how small, is never in vain.



DEBBIE ECKER  
 Vice President  
 Firstlight International

## Follow Hard After Him

**“You shall walk after the Lord your God and fear Him and keep His commandments and obey his voice, and you shall serve him and hold fast to him.”**

**Deuteronomy 13:4**

Did you notice the action words in that verse? Fear... obey...listen...serve...hold fast. At first glance these may seem conquerable, but when we delve deeper, these words are more difficult in action.

- **Fear** – to have a deep reverence for the Lord demands my humility.
- **Obey** – to be able to take His direction means I have to be thoroughly familiar with His commandments.
- **Listen** – to hear His voice requires intimacy in order to know what He sounds like when He speaks.
- **Serve** – to serve Him with wild abandon calls for complete availability to His promoting at any moment.
- **Hold fast** – to cling to Him with my entire self to the depths of my soul means I have to trust His sovereignty.

But we observe, God provided refuge for obstacles and impediments in the way of this arduous pursuit; and therefore the Psalmist says in 63:8, "My soul follows hard after you; your right hand upholds me." (Psalm 63:8)

These words express our need of divine strength, in order that the soul may not merely commence, but also be strengthened to keep up the pursuit. When we insist on relying on our own strength, we soon grow faint and weary. Perhaps after the soul has been going forth in earnest and intense longing after God's manifested presence, there is a continual reviving of God's love and strength in our soul, enabling it to follow hard after him. Thus, "your right hand upholds me." Just in the same way as the Lord strengthened Elijah to run before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel (1 Kings 18:46), a race he could not have performed unless the Lord had girded him with strength, so we can only *"run with patience the race that is set before us,"* and follow hard after the Lord, as he blessedly and imparts strength to our souls.



YC CHEN  
Board Member  
Firstlight International



### Growing People

Congratulations to Pastor Laore Rakprakhun on completing her Bachelor Degree in Biblical Studies from a training school in Khorat, Thailand.

Laore is one of our core Leaders of the Firstlight Fellowship Church Network - Thailand, and serves on the Board of Firstlight Foundation. She is presently pastoring two of our Firstlight Fellowship Churches and has become a spiritual mother to many throughout Thailand. This is a tremendous fulfillment in her life and a proud moment for all who know and love her.







## Growing Churches

Water baptism is an important step for those who decide to follow Christ not just in Thailand, but in the life of every believer who follows Christ.

However, it doesn't matter how many times I (Dan) get the opportunity to baptize people in Thailand, it never gets boring, and I never get tired of doing it! In fact, something very special happens in my heart each and every time.

In those moments, I imagine at the beginning, when God looked down through the ages of time, from eternity, and foresaw the moment that each one would accept His Son: Jesus, and decide to follow Him. I think back to the original commissioning of those early Apostles when Jesus commissioned them. It was something He told them to do! To preach this gospel to every creature .... to make disciples of all of the nations .... to teach them everything that He had commanded them .... to baptize them in the Name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. And He said: *"I am with you always, even to the end of the age."* WOW!

And in that very moment, I am reminded of the present - the here and now, 2000 years later and we are still walking in that same calling, that same commissioning, doing the same thing, and to have that same Presence with us always!

\* The task of the leader is to get their people from where they are to where they have not been. - Henry Kissinger

\* Jesus came not to condemn, but to reclaim. - AW Tozer

\* To pray means to think and live in the presence of God. - Henri Nouwen

## Did you know?

Firstlight Foundation is in its eight year in Thailand. It has four branch offices around the country, six paid Thai staff, and four registered projects. Our Mission: Changing lives and transforming communities through Health, Education, Moral, Economic, and Community Development. There are 11 Firstlight Fellowship Churches a part of a network around the country and 70 plus children from fatherless homes being reached Families Without Fathers (FWF).

## Reaching People

*Jesus did it, so can we!*

One of the core objectives of Firstlight in Thailand, is to reach people with the good news of Jesus Christ. This is being done through a good number of projects and ministry platforms reflected in our mission statement of changing lives and transforming communities. One of those platforms is Health.

Last months Eye Care Screenings for evangelism has resulted in over 2,000 people being seen by one of the four U.S. eye doctors from His Servants Ministries (HSM), in multiple villages in Khon Kaen, province in the north east of Thailand, in five days! **Hundreds were presented with the gospel by a local Thai team trained to preach Christ, and to share the gospel.**

We are still working on the numbers of those who came to Christ, as the follow up beings. The formation of a cluster of new believer cells is next. Join us as a new church begins to emerge. The planting phase starts now!



DAN ECKER  
President  
Firstlight International

## A Work in Progress

I can remember back in the early days as a skilled laborer, in the builders trade in Pittsburgh, during the Renaissance phase in the 80's that all work sites are messy. No joke! Dirt, rocks, mud, building materials everywhere! Overhead cranes, bulldozers, cement mixtures - you name it, it was there! Iron workers, brick layers, plumbers, pipe fitters, electricians, carpenters - all doing their jobs, all at the same time. Concrete being poured. Trucks of building materials being unloaded. All sorts of scaffolds being built. At first glance, one might conclude that all of this activity seems to be bit disorganized. However, quite the opposite is true.

Behind all of those activities, there are plans. Master Plans of how each of these contractors were to do each of their assigned jobs: What needed to be done, how it was to be done, by whom, by when - having deadlines, and what the costs would be. As each of these plans were being implemented, the building started to take shape until one day, often times years later, it was complete. Inside and out these amazing structures that once was just an idea on a piece of paper (blueprints if you will) came into existence.

In the role that I now have as the leader of Firstlight, I often remind myself of those former work sites. That behind all of what we are doing that there is a Master Plan, of what He wants us to accomplish with the resources He provides, to complete those plans. Planting churches, reaching people, caring for orphans, - all of what Firstlight is doing is being carried out according to what we know the Will of God to be. And a lot of that gets translated into the projects and ministries that Firstlight is involved in.

We want to be as Moses who was to build according to the pattern what was shown to him, on the mountain. And like the Apostle Paul who said: "I lay a foundation and another one comes and builds upon it." (I Cor. 3:8-10) As we approach the last 90 days of 2015, we are holding fast the plans and purposes that He has for us. Plans to prosper us, and to give us a future and a hope! (Jer. 29:11)



DAN ECKER  
President  
Firstlight International

## On A Personal Note



Last month I shared with you that I was going to be having surgery in late August, and here I am a month later, to share that the LORD has done an amazing thing and instead of surgery, my doctors have decided to treat me instead with an aggressive regimen of radiation and some chemo. I am OVERJOYED. A week before the doctor made the decision I had visions during a time of worship at church when I saw the hand of the Lord pushing the hand of the surgeon away from me. Then I saw another vision where the Lord showed me my abdomen, glowing with radioactive light.

When the surgeon called me later to tell me his decision, I leapt with joy. It will be a 7 week treatment with 5- 6 low doses of chemo. I will NOT lose my hair, but will be very tired and need about a month or so after to fully recover. Dan will be traveling to Thailand during the first two weeks of treatment, but will be home for the final 5 weeks, which will entail both external AND internal radiation. I do THANK all of you for your loving words of encouragement. You are my cheerleaders and I have needed you so!! LOVE to all of you.



DEBBIE ECKER  
Vice President  
Firstlight International

## Prayer Points

**"So I answered them and said to them, "The God of heaven will give us success; therefore we His servants will arise and build," Neh. 2:20a**

### Please pray for:

1. Follow up process of eye care screenings outreach in Khon Kean, Thailand.
2. Ask the Lord to release: Divine Favor, Abundant Finance & Lasting Fruit.
3. For all Firstlight projects, peoples, - Area Teams, Area Churches - all members and leaders.
4. For Debbie has she undergoes treatments.