



Stand Firm

April 2018 News

“ Be on guard. Stand firm in the faith. Be courageous. Be strong.” I Corinthians 16:13 NLT

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When I was very near giving birth to my son with a circumference of dizzying proportion, I decided to take a walk through my small town. I waddled down main street, the spring air lifting my spirits. As I passed a small shoe store, I felt an overwhelming urge to go in.

Inside I met a woman who worked there, and before long I knew why I had entered. She quickly revealed to me she had recently been widowed, that her husband had died of cancer, that he had found Christ when he was diagnosed and that he was hopeful and joyful to the end. Then she told me the saddest thing. She said she was an avowed atheist. If the love her husband had for God was not good enough for God to choose to heal him, then there must not be a God.

Strong words, spoken with conviction; she voiced one of life’s unanswerable questions: If there is a God, why do bad things happen to good people? I breathed a prayer: ‘What words do YOU have for her, Lord?’

I took her hand, and said how very, very sorry I was that she had lost her husband. I told her how inspired I was by his faith; through the suffering even to his death. I was humbled by such faith. Then I heard this bedrock truth come out of my mouth straight from heaven:

‘Life is hard. It is so hard. It is unkind and unfair and NO one seems

to escape the worst things life brings. It is frightening sometimes, and terrible. But. No matter what life will dish out to me, I am thankful that I have God’s love to lean on, His big loving arms to hold me in the darkest nights of my soul. That even when I do not know what to do, or why something is happening I can be comforted by His love and His presence. And I do not know how people who do not know that love can survive this awful, terrifying life.”

She looked stunned, realizing that she might be pushing away the very thing that could make her better again. Tears came to her eyes. I said, ‘I know one thing: I guarantee you that your dear husband was praying for you during that entire time and that even now he is praying for you to come to know the love and peace that he found in Jesus.”

Then the tears fell. We stood there on that lovely spring day in that fancy shoe shop, one very pregnant, sweaty missionary wife and one perfectly coiffed, elegant widow and prayed and invited the Presence of the Comforter to come. The love and joy that is Jesus flooded that shop and filled us. She smiled through her tears. She was connected. She was brave. She could stand firm. She had faith.



Written by, Stand firm.
Debbie Ecker

Teamwork Makes the Dream Work!



WRITTEN BY,
BOB ROTH

My grand son Jalen has just finished

another season of basketball, which he loves to play and watch and he is very interested in the professional players statistics and how they apply to the team. I have had the joy of watching many practices and games and constantly remind him it's not just him but a team effort, from the first practice to the last game.

On a search for Teamwork in the Bible I found that the word is never used, however there are many examples of teamwork in scripture. Opening examples start with the Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, Adam and Eve, Moses

and Aaron, Jesus and his Disciples, a very diverse team. First Corinthians 12 :17-31 unfolds the idea of the church as a body in greater depth, using the systems of the body as an analogy of the way team members need to rely on each other. Strong teams, like strong bodies, are made up of interdependent members fulfilling specific tasks.

We all are part of a team for Firstlight and each of us has an important part to provide. For some we have the very important part of praying for the ministry, others being Board members, Newsletter authors, financial supporters and so on, teamwork. Ephesians 4:12 refers to the church community of believers as the "body of Christ" the church is to work as a team. I just did a quick check of our team leader Dan's

Facebook account for the latest update on Firstlight Ministry events. Its always a blessing to see Dan and Deb's joyful faces and read about the current move of Our Lord in Thailand , Myanmar or Laos.

I would love to be able to serve and travel with Dan regularly but that is not possible for me at this time. I pray that there will be a time, but the Lord will have his plan for my time as a team member.

It would be my prayer that we all continue to come together as a unified team and seek any opportunity to move the kingdom forward through Firstlight.

Thank you all for all your team efforts each month. Teamwork makes the Dream work!

Care For Kingdom Families!

A biblical response for reaching children and families for Christ



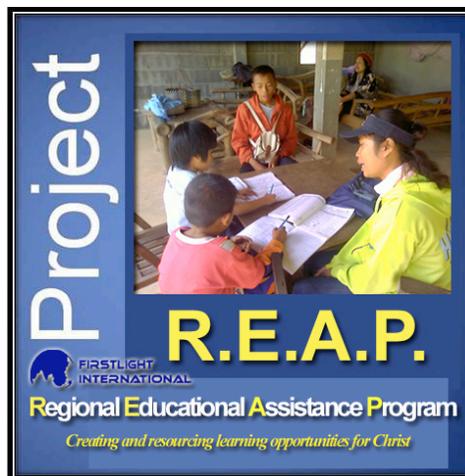
WRITTEN BY,
DAN ECKER

One of our core objectives in 2018 is to provide Care For Kingdom Families: A biblical response for reaching children at risk and children and families from fatherless homes for Christ.

*** From Fatherless Homes:** This is being done through Families Without Fathers FWF, project and Project REAP: Regional Education Assistance Program with 30 plus children and young adults in four locations across Thailand. Plans are being formed to place these projects in several Thai churches in at least two new locations in selected areas this year. Project REAP and FWF are proving to be effective for bringing Christ into fatherless homes, areas schools, and in some cases universities. School fees and related supplies are being provided for every child involved in these two projects.

*** Reaching Children At Risk:** In Myanmar, we are partnered with some amazing people in Lishio, at the Harvest Children's Home. Luke and Jennivive (*our project host couple*) and a core of 10 national church planters, are providing care for 40 plus children at risk and they are preaching the Good News of Jesus in over 48 villages of the Pulang. Regular trainings and water baptisms are taking place.

A Support & Care Ministry Project of Firstlight International



Why not send a financial gift this month?

*** A gift of any size can help make the difference**

Equipping & Training Gospel Workers

Myanmar Highlights

The person on the left is Pastor Joseph Deih Lian. He and his wife Lydia are pioneer church planters in Yangon, Myanmar's capital city. I (Dan) was invited to teach a three day Thanksgiving & Equipping Seminar as Victory Community Church celebrated its 11th Year Anniversary. Together we equipped 40 plus church members on how to advance the Kingdom through personal witness, prayer, hearing from God, and prophetic evangelism. From there Pastor Joseph and I traveled further upcountry to Kalaymyo, where together we trained another 30 Seminary students for three days at the Emmanuel Theological Seminary (ETS). There, too, the training involved advancing the Kingdom through acts of power from a restored identity in Christ. As an Executive Advisor to this university, we graduated another nine students with Masters Degrees.



Fanning Flames of Intercession!



Highlights from Thailand

This was a most remarkable opportunity in Thailand. During the first part of my time there, I (Dan) taught four sessions on Understanding Times & Seasons at the Z-Gen Church in Chonburi, with Pastor Daniel, his wife Ooy, and their congregation. From there I went on to teach another three evening sessions at the Hiding Place Third Floor Prayer Room, in Pattaya, with Bill & Joanna Samuels and the Dayspring Church Thailand. The Lord is raising up a core of intercessors who are going after God with all of their hearts! We were standing in His Presence on Holy ground ...

Word Up: *An Hour is Coming and Now is*



WRITTEN BY,
DAN ECKER

In John chapter 4, we find an amazing story in a dialogue

that Jesus is having with a women who had come to draw water from a well. The scripture tell us that Jesus had to pass through this region called Samaria, and as you read the story, you soon discover why. It's amazing to see how the Lord puts us in those places that have been intended for us even though we might not know the full implications of what is about to unfold.

Jesus, being weary from his journey, sits down by this well and who shows up but a woman who needs God! From

this simple and yet profound conversation between two people who historically would have had no dealings with each other: Jesus who was Jewish and this women who is a Samaritan - even though they were sister religions, historically they had no dealing with each other. We learn this from the words of the woman in her response to Jesus asking her for a drink (v.7-9).

However, the moment this question was asked, a pathway for hidden truth to be revealed was opened. The whole idea of how Jesus takes her from an understanding of 'natural water' that her ancestor Jacob drank, to this woman desiring Holy Spirit Salvation water that 'becomes a well springing up to eternal life' insider of her was a mystery that she would find to be true.

Jesus spoke of an hour that moves her from a 'place of worship' at a mountain, (*a Samaritan belief*) and from a city, Jerusalem, (*a Jewish belief*), to a Person, (*God*). Who is a Spirit to be worshipped in spirit and in truth, (v. 21-24). That hour had now come!

In this dialogue Jesus speaks from a 'future present' perspective; about something that is 'coming' not here yet (future) to 'now is' or has shown up, it has now arrived (present tense). He spoke of something that was to come - something that she knew was on its way, (*I know that Messiah is coming*) and what Jesus was saying now is: What you've been waiting for is now here! This story teaches us that what God has 'promised' is coming will 'show up' in our 'now is' moments!

We Will Not Be Shaken!

On a personal note ...



Written by,
Debbie Ecker

As the season changes, so does the very fabric of our lives. In this spring season, my dear mother and father aged 87 and 88, will be coming to live in our home in Pittsburgh. I am overwhelmed by the love and favor God has given me, that after all the years of travel and all the many miles I have lived my life away from them, in this season of their lives we will have time together. Days spent in memories and laughter. My mother is one of the funniest women on this planet and my father LOVES to laugh. They are both sweet, caring and unselfish people who have lived their lives devoted to others. My family understandably are going through the grieving of this change. We do appreciate your heartfelt prayers for my brother, Ted who has lived with them for decades, my sister Chris who lives with her husband in Chicago, my niece, Nicci who lives in South Bend, and her two sons, Michael and Daylin, who are my parent's great grandchildren who have known my parents every day of their lives since they were born. We are all feeling it, and I am praying for great peace to be upon us all. Change is never easy, but we are praying that this one is as easy and peaceful for everyone as it can be. Bless you all, for your prayers.

Prayer Points

"Then the Lord said to Moses, "Has my arm lost its power? Now you will see whether or not my word comes true!"

Numbers 11:23 NLT

Please pray for:

- 1. Global Training Platforms: Thailand, China, Myanmar, and India.**
- 2. Care For Kingdom Families 2018: (see pg.2)
* FWF, *REAP,* Harvest Children's Home**
- 3. For God's abundant provision for Firstlight Intl. during the second quarter of 2018.**