Ron & Cheryl Myers **GOD'S LIVING WORD FOR ALL PEOPLE** **October 2024**

A Faith-based Ministry Sustained Through the Faithful Prayers and Partnership of God's People

My Upcoming Return Trip to Thailand

"Land of 10,000 Smiles and 43,500 Temples"

By Ron Myers

Dear Friends and Supporters,

Thailand is a nation known for its vibrant culture, breathtaking landscapes, golden temples, and rich history. It's often referred to as "The Land of 10,000 Smiles." But how did Thailand get this nickname? The reasons lay in the heart of what makes Thailand unique. It becomes increasingly evident as it reflects not just the physical act of smiling, but also the Thai spirit of warmth, friendliness, and hospitality that radiates from its people. It's an embodiment of the nation's character, represented by its citizens, traditions, and culture. The smiles reflect an inner joy, a contentment, a celebration of life that pervades every aspect of Thai society.

This excerpt from *a Siam blog* is true on the surface. Yet the more one lives alongside the beautiful Thai people, like Cheryl and I have done for the last few decades, the more one realizes their smiles can also mask a multitude of things, like embarrassment, insecurity, anxiety, or fear. Almost every Thai Buddhist I know is seeking external happiness to bring about internal peace, which Buddhism cannot provide. To the Thais, happiness is found in dreams of wealth, which they feel brings well-being and security.

While eating at my favorite breakfast spot, I watch as Lottery ticket peddlers file back and forth among the tables carrying foldable display boards of "winning" tickets. Interested customers peer across the rows of tickets as they decide which number will solve all their problems. Being superstitious, they often choose numbers based on a license plate or some intriguing number they've seen that looks "pretty," as they call it, and thus likely to win.

The other major part of Thai life is Buddhism, it's temples and all its ingrained traditions. It's been said that Thai life revolves around the temple. Yet the impersonal tenants of their faith and practice leave them empty. Buddhism has been called a bootstrap religion. Faith is placed in one's self, to climb the good-works ladder of untold lifetimes to become karma free enough to escape the reincarnation cycle and "spin off" into Nirvana—a state of non-existence. Meaning, there's nothing left to be pulled back into the karmic wheel of reincarnation. That, to its adherends, is salvation Therevada Buddhist style.

As missionaries, we don't just bring the Thai another religious system, but the truth of their Creator, the Unknown God, as Paul told the heathen on Mars Hill (Acts 17). The Thai are similar. Like Paul, we start with Origins, God's character and attributes as the self-existent Eternal Creator. Then, the risen Christ. Origins are needed before they can comprehend the true identity of Jesus as their Creator, Lord and Savior, whom they do not yet know. <u>What the Thai seek can only be found in Jesus Christ!</u>

Praise God, I found less-expensive airfare, but a longer flight time. I leave on October 24 and will be in Bangkok first, advising and fellowshipping with Chinese house church members, who will travel there to join me to discuss aspects of missionary work to unreached peoples. They plan to send fully trained young missionaries to the yet-unreached masses around the world.

Ron and Cheryl Myers
Your Missionaries to Thailand

I fly to our ministry headquarters in Nakhon Phanom on November 1st. I'll be mentoring, teaching, and continue working on the much-needed, more-accurate, Spoken Thai New Testament up until December 12th. (December 7th is my birthday, which I'll be celebrating with my Thai brothers and sisters in Christ.) I return to Bangkok for a few days and fly home on December 18th, just in time for Christmas. In closing, I want to say how your support and prayers for safety and success are greatly appreciated. You play an essential role. Please remember to pray also for my being able to get a one-year, multiple entry Thai visa, which I can apply while in-country over 45 days.