

Blossoming Through Disruption:

Growing Faith in South Asia

By Dan, Missions Strategist and Former RI Worker

In my conversations with others this year, I've often asked the questions, "What do you see God doing during the time of COVID-19? Why did God allow this pandemic, which has affected so many people around the world, to happen? How can it be turned into a blessing?"

Over the past year, I have witnessed God working through the disruption of COVID-19 to spread the gospel. I have been able to keep weekly contact with Rosedale International's outreach team in South Asia. This team has seen a number of exciting developments during this time of disruption. They have found new opportunities to place their focus on God, and have blessed many people as a result.

Before the pandemic, I visited South Asia once or twice a year to have Bible studies and discuss how to reach the region's many Hindu and Muslim peoples with the message of Jesus. When it became clear that because of pandemic travel restrictions I would not be able to visit, we decided to try meeting online for weekly Bible studies. One of our first studies focused on the life of Job. We asked why God allowed him to lose everything, and wondered how that might help us understand the losses we were experiencing because of the pandemic. After that first meeting and continuing to the present, we have met weekly for studies that focus on the South Asia team's outreach opportunities.

One thing we did not foresee was how this one study would blossom into many Bible studies in South Asia. The pandemic restrictions created new opportunities to spread the gospel as many tribal people who had worked or studied in the

cities returned to their home villages. This allowed the team members with whom I was meeting to begin having weekly Bible studies and discussions in a number of villages near their homes.

Members of these simple meetings sang together, read Scripture, and discussed how to apply what they were learning to their lives. The participants were mostly young people who had an interest in the gospel, but before now had only listened rather than fully engage. Growth was contagious—in one area, members began traveling up to an hour away to attend. It was a blessing to me to hear their 1together with joy and celebration.

In a time when outreach seemed impossible, God brought these believers and seekers together to study his Word. Now that South Asia is slowly permitting people to return to school and work the members of these Bible studies are discussing how to continue meeting around the Word in whatever setting they face. They have learned that this isn't complex—leading simple interactions in diverse locations spreads the news of Jesus and is an encouragement to every participant.

Weekly, I continue to meet online with the core team, and they in turn follow up on the studies with local people. God is leading all of us, giving us a new understanding of the way he works in the face of deep economic, public health, and spiritual needs. In the lives of those who look to him in every situation, he is sufficient.

To Honor and Glorify the King:

Celebrating Four RI Workers

By Madalyn, Media Coordinator

RI recently celebrated four significant personnel milestones. Within the past year, Kevin, Sheryl, and Tom reached twenty years of service with RI, and Candice reached fifteen. Join us as we honor their work and look toward their futures with the agency!

Kevin, Mediterranean Regional Director

Kevin's service with RI began in 1993 on a Summer Witness in Mission team to Russia. Since then, Kevin has served in several roles, including graphic designer, worker to Spain, and Short-Term Programs Director. He is currently RI's Mediterranean Regional Director.

Kevin remembers his time as Short-Term Programs Director fondly, and considers his family's time in Spain to be emotionally and spiritually defining. In every role, Kevin has learned the importance of living with eternal perspective. "Everything we do and say is to honor and glorify the King. We live for the day when we'll stumble across the finish line and into his arms."

While Kevin hopes to return to the field himself one day, he is grateful to support and encourage RI workers as Regional Director. He has a passion to see the Great Commission fulfilled, and is excited by RI's vision to take the gospel into the world. "Someday every nation, tongue, and people group will have heard that Jesus is King. It's special to be part of an agency that works towards that."

Sheryl, Shekinah Foundation Director

Sheryl has spent her years with RI in Ecuador. Since 1985, she's served the country as a nurse, a teacher, and now an advocate and provider for at-risk children. Through her efforts, the Shekinah Foundation, a home for young victims of neglect and abuse, was founded. Sheryl moved to the States in 2002 for an extended break, but returned to Ecuador in 2015 to continue her work at the Foundation.

A highlight of Sheryl's work in Ecuador has been nurturing spiritual growth in others. It's a joy for her to watch the Foundation's children—seven of whom were recently baptized—grow and change as they learn about Jesus. "Seeing the transformations in their lives has been a blessing."



As she looks toward the future, Sheryl is excited to continue nourishing the spiritual growth of her twenty-nine wards with regular Bible study and verse memorization. She's also enjoyed becoming a mother and grandmother with the adoption of a teen girl and her daughter.

Tom, Asia Regional Director, and Candice, Asia Member Care Provider

Tom and Candice first served with RI in 1996 as part of a REACH team to Ecuador. A few years later, Tom joined RI as Director of Communications. During that time, the couple felt called to Thailand, and moved their young family there in 2006. They have served as long-term workers and leaders of the work in Bangkok ever since. Over the years, they've taken on more leadership: Tom serves as Asia Regional Director, and Candice worked as Staff Writer before taking responsibility for Member Care in the region.

As Tom and Candice look back on their service, they see many moments of God's provision. Tom is grateful for the relationships their family has built over the years in office and on the field. Candice feels blessed to have raised their three children in a new culture. "In all the change, God's faithfulness stands out to me. He's always provided, and we've always felt secure in him."

As they look towards the future, Tom plans to continue teaching, and Candice feels fulfilled by her work with refugees. They will also step into a new stage of life as their daughter begins college in the States. Due to COVID-19, travel plans are tentative, and Tom and Candice welcome your prayers as they make decisions.

Rosedale International is grateful to Kevin, Sheryl, Tom, and Candice for their years of dedication and service. Their work to serve others and further the gospel has been invaluable to many across the globe. Please join us in celebrating and lifting them up in prayer as they continue their work for the Kingdom.

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