

Dear Friends and Partners:

*Grace, mercy, and peace be with you from God the Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love. (2nd John 1:3)*

It has been awhile since our last update and I know some of you have been wondering about us. I am sorry that it has taken so long. Much has been happening here. We are finding ministry opportunities every where we go. So many times I have thought I wish our friends in the US could see this. That thought usually occurs when my heart is going out to someone here and I know that if you were here your heart would also. Other times the thought occurs when I encounter something that is so foreign to my American mindset.

I will start with updating some things we were working on the last time I emailed. The water well is complete. The good news is that we have water. They estimate that it supplies about 4 to 5 gallons per minute, which is great. At first we had trouble with the pump and we thought that we would have to try and return it to where we purchased it. Which would have been difficult and the store already said they would not exchange it for us. You can not return things easily here, like you can in the US.



**This is the well pump house and pressure tank**

I believe the breakthrough for the pump came during worship at a conference we went to in Manila. I felt that the Lord was asking me if I was going to praise Him even if our pump did not work. I said yes, I am. I felt a kind of release at that moment. When we returned home the pump was working and has worked perfect ever since. The well man was very surprised. They had been here so many times to try and fix it. I told him exactly what happened and he agreed that it must have been God because he had given up.

However, there is one thing that we are still dealing with about the well. The water has too much iron in it so it is not potable, yet. We believe that the Lord will heal the well just as he did the waters at Marah in Exodus chapter 15. We are praying for wisdom about what to do about it. We ask that you agree with us in prayer about it also. We do use the water for everything but drinking and laundry, because it stains with a rust color. So we are thankful, but we believe that the water is to be potable and that is what we have prayed for from the beginning.

Our construction worker named Albert who was stabbed has recovered. I am planning to help him write out his testimony which we will give you when we do. But I will give you the highlights for now since I left you hanging in the last update.

Albert cried out to God to get a second chance at life when he was bleeding to death from the severe stab wound. He knows God heard his prayer. We are rejoicing at the work we have seen God do in Albert and in the life of his wife. We took a Bible to Albert in the hospital which he read constantly and then shared what he learned with the other patients. We had to bring more Bibles because the other patients were begging for them also. Albert told us that he was looking forward to come back to work for us because he could feel God's presence at our place.

We know God is doing a great work in Albert. He is a new man. He reads the Bible often and simply believes what he reads. He knows about the Holy Spirit and he is sensitive to Him. He told us about times when he was ministering in the hospital and the people he was talking to would have tears in

their eyes as they and Albert would sense the presence of God. Albert has no animosity toward the person who stabbed him; he has total forgiveness and even a burden to see the man experience God's love.

In the Philippines if you can not pay your hospital bill you are held as a kind of prisoner in the hospital until you find a way to pay. We helped Albert with the cost of some medicine and some food during the time he was in the hospital. However, we want people to know that God is their source, not us, so we are careful about how we give. We also have to be careful because we do not have a lot to give.

We watched Albert's wife go to relatives, government officials, and hospital administration in order to get help with the hospital bill. She was able to get a little help and she was able to get the bill reduced to about half of what it was. Then when we heard the Lord say it is time we knew that we had to help him get out of the hospital. Which we did, he was there for more than a month but was actually healthy enough to come home in the first week. Altogether we contributed about \$500, not much for American standards, but a chunk of change for us and an impossible amount for Albert and so many others here.

One of the other men that got stabbed along with Albert was a young man who previously had a good relationship with the Lord but he had grown cold. He is also calling this his second chance at life. When he was stabbed some people took him to a different hospital in a different town. That hospital said we can not treat your severe wound so they called an ambulance to take him to the town and hospital where Albert was taken. When the ambulance arrived they refused to take the man until they were paid 5000 pesos, about \$125 dollars. Fortunately the man's family was able to get the money. The stabbing happened at about 10 PM and he did not get to a hospital that would treat him until after 3 AM.

All three of the stabbing victims have recovered. The suspect is still hiding somewhere; he may have left the area. We heard that the suspect ran over and killed a boy in another town when he was fleeing. We do not know if that is true or not.

During his hospital stay we saw Albert grow spiritually. He feels called to serve God with his life, possibly as a pastor. We are continuing to disciple him and he is back helping us make improvements here. We are painting the outside of our house now and then we will paint the inside of our place. We are planning to have a once a week

time to go with Albert to the hospital to pray for the sick and share the love of God with the patients. Albert has a burden for the people in the hospital and he has faith to see God heal them.

We just heard about a little boy, seven years old, who had an appendicitis rupture. This family lives in our area also. We were told that when the boy complained about the pain the mother took him to a "quack doctor". That is the term they use here; it means a kind of witch doctor who uses satanic methods to diagnosis and treat people. People go to them because they do not know that it is evil and because it is much cheaper than a real doctor. When the pain got to severe they took him to a hospital but it was too late the appendicitis had ruptured.



**Albert sharing his testimony**

It turns out that this family lives in Albert's neighborhood and Albert is actually a Godparent of one of the siblings. Albert visited the family to pray with them and to learn more about the boy's condition. He spoke with the grandmother who was so thankful to Albert and God for sending Albert. They had no one to turn to for help and because of their severe poverty could not get help. The hospital did surgery on the boy and then the hospital gave the family a prescription but they have no money to buy the medicine.

This little boy's father died a few months ago leaving him fatherless and his mother a widow, with four children to take care of. Obviously we have to help them. Last week we made a connection with a good Christian ministry that helps people in this hospital, especially children. I called them and together we will see what we can do. This is just happening now so I will have to update you later. I will try to make it sooner than later. Please pray for the boy his name is Richard. Also pray for the family, when something like this



happens it is an open door for Jesus to be made known in the entire family.

Through a whole series of events that have happened since we got here we realize that praying for the sick and seeing them recover is to be an important part of our ministry. I now realize more than ever why healing the sick was such a big part of Jesus' ministry, and so it should be with all His followers. I don't have time to name off all the things that have happened here, but I can say that my faith is increasing and when I pray for the sick I now fully expect them to recover.

About the street boy Limwell, we have not seen him or his friends for quite some time now. We heard he is in an institution where he was before. We were told he runs away a lot. We also heard that he was in another province with his father, who may actually not be a relative. We still do not know the truth about his family. We talked to a government place that takes in the street kids for processing but they did not seem to know much about him either. We will continue to keep our eyes open for him.

We also learned from the local city government place that helps street kids that we are welcome to come there and minister to the kids. They have about 10 to 15 kids living there at any one time. We are planning to do a once a week visit there to share God's love with the kids and pray with them. We were also told that it is ok for us to help the street kids when we meet them on the street in anyway that we feel called to do.

Our office which is also the library is finished. We are now receiving pastors, ministry workers and whoever is hungry to come and visit. We encourage them in the Lord and let them use books and the media resources we have. We are setting up a place where we can use a projector and show ministry DVD's to more people at a time. If you have ministry books, CD's, or DVD's that you would like to donate please let us know. We have a way to get them to the Philippines. The ministry workers here are hungry for the deep things of God but many of them are too poor to even afford a book. Most of them have a Bible but no other study materials.

One of the things that is happening since we arrived here, and even before we moved here, is that we are connecting with other ministries and churches in the Philippines. This has been a great blessing to us and often to them also. Iron sharpens iron. It is really amazing to see the ways that the Lord is connecting us to brothers and sisters here and it seems one connection always

leads to others. We are here to do our part and to come along side and join with others when the Lord joins us. We are for sure, not here to duplicate or compete with any other ministries. The needs here are great and there is always a need for more workers in the harvest. I will be mentioning some of the other ministries in the future as I update you about how we are working together with others here.



**This is the office that we added on. You may be wondering if the bars are necessary, yes they are. Anything of value must be secured in the Philippines**

It is also clear that the Lord has called us to what is considered a dark area, fellow believers seem few and far between in our local area. Catholic spiritism which is really witchcraft is rampant here as well as in much of the Philippines. It is a stronghold that deceives the people. We know that we are called to be light here. We have experienced things that make us realize that our fight is not against flesh and blood, Ephesians 6. You who pray for us are vital to every success we have here. We want you to know that there have been some difficult times when the Lord has reminded us that we have some great prayer warriors praying for us and that thought is so comforting and reassuring.

You who partner with us financially provide the way for us to be here penetrating the darkness. You provide the means so that we can give food to hungry kids, medicine to the sick, and Bibles to people who long for one but can't afford one. We have a way to get Bibles at a good price in the Tagalog language. Giving Bibles has been an important part of what we do since I started coming here in 1996. We have pastors that visit us to get Bibles for the very poor people in their congregations. On behalf of the people you have blessed, thank you. Only in heaven will you know

your full reward and the numbers of people you have touched by your contributions. In the cases of people like Albert there is a multiplication affect as he goes on to be used by God to touch other lives also.

Since we got our van we have realized, in so many ways, how the Lord gave us the perfect vehicle for driving in the Philippines. It is narrow for the narrow roads, turns sharp in difficult parking situations, has awesome mirrors that allow you to see everything going on around you easily, all wheel drive to get up our muddy road in rainy season, and power to get around traffic hazards quickly. It is also comfortable to ride in for trips. Manila is over three hours away currently; when the expressway is complete it should be much less.

The van has been such a blessing and allowed us to extend our ministry boundaries greatly. We have been to Manila several times now. Every time that I enter Manila, by plane, and now by van, I get the same feeling. It is kind of like coming home. Manila is where God changed my life by letting me experience His love in the most profound way; it is where I met my wife, and where I received a call to ministry. It is where I have experienced some of my life changing encounters with the Lord. Entering Manila is like entering into a part of my destiny. We know that the Lord has given us a strategic location for our home base but we also believe that much of our work in the Philippines will be in Manila.

We continue to be so touched by the scenes of poverty in some areas of Manila. To say the least, the needs are massive in some of the squatter areas. Those are some of my favorite places to be. It is where you can tap into a continuous flow of God's compassion as you meet the people and connect with God's heart for individuals and groups.

Recently some friends came from the US and we did an outreach at a garbage dump in Manila, where so many people live. We gave out some foods and stuff for the kids. When the people were asked who needs a healing in their body more than half the people raised their hands. We prayed and several people were healed. However, we had to leave before too long because the crowd grew too large.

Every experience we have here helps us to know how to do it better next time. I met the head of the pastors association in that section of Manila and he told me about a man who has a flat bed truck equipped with a sound system that he would let us use for ministry there. That is something we

would like to plan for in the future. We will need to get more help with that and I want to better connect with churches and ministries in that area who can provide follow up. For now we can still visit those areas and do small crowd ministry and pray for people.

I and my wife are amazed at my new found ability to drive in traffic here, even in Manila; it is obviously a God thing. They have a saying here that if you can drive in Manila you can drive anywhere in the world. I think it is true. However driving in the Philippines is not only challenging, it really can be dangerous. We had an incident a couple of weeks ago that underscores that.

Our family was coming out of Olongapo on the highway heading home. This is not a highway like in the US but rather is a congested road that is not wide enough for all the traffic and hazards. There are always people including children close to the road, vehicles are stopping and going, and changing lanes, and there are only two lanes. We live about 15 or 20 minutes out of Olongapo close to this highway.

When I was pulling out of a paint store to get on the highway a guy said you need to get air in a tire because it is a little low. I could not stop and look at it then. I decided to get air on the way home at a station that is not far from there. We came to the station and I needed to make a left turn to pull in. My blinker was on, someone was stopped behind me, I waited for a guy on a tricycle to get out of the way in front of the station driveway. (A tricycle here is a motorcycle with a covered side car used to transport people.) I checked my mirrors, all clear; I proceeded to turn into the station driveway. As I approached the driveway, bam! We got hit by a big bus. The bus right front side hit my drivers' side front fender. It took a second to figure out what had happened.

We were almost in the driveway. This bus was moving fast and passing people blindly, that is what they sometimes do here. There was a curve behind us and that is why I did not see him coming. To show you the mind set of the bus drivers and the bus companies the conductor ran back to our car and instead of asking if everyone is ok, including our three young kids in the back. He said if you would have looked in the mirror you would have seen me passing. I did look because I know things like that can happen here. He must have come around the corner at a fast speed. The bus was way over on the left side of the oncoming lane when he hit us, almost in the station driveway.



**Our van was pointed toward the Petron Station going in the driveway. The impact turned the van. You can see that the bus is not even on the marked roadway but was on the left side of the left lane. Behind is a curve which would have prevented the bus driver from seeing ahead to pass safely.**

We are thanking God for His protection, no one was hurt. I did have a seatbelt mark across my neck but it is mostly healed now. If we would have been in a more 90 degree turn he could have hit us broad side and it could have been very very bad. Maybe even a one second difference and the bus would have plowed into me in the drivers' side and the kids in the seat behind me. The policeman who came was honest and reported that the accident was the fault of the bus driver. The bus companies have power here so that is not always the case when they are at fault.



**This shows the damage to the bus and our van**

We have seen so many close calls with busses here that it would be hard for you to believe if I told you. When I see them coming I give extra

room because they are often in both lanes. They often pass into oncoming traffic especially if the oncoming traffic is a motorcycle or tricycle. They just expect the motorcycle will get out of the way which they do if they can. While we were in the police station they were investigating another incident where a bus had killed a tricycle driver head on.

A few years ago two busses from this same company got in a race, I believe on this same highway. They saw each other and began to try and pass each other because whoever gets to the station first gets to go out next. The faster you drive the more money you can make. While scared passengers were screaming for them to stop they escalated the competition into a very dangerous race. They ended up getting in a wreck with each other and killed several people who were waiting at a bus stop.

They had us come to the police station and meet with the bus driver and the bus company representative. I was able to vent a good lecture on the company first for putting so much pressure on the drivers to keep a schedule that they can not do if they drive safely. The drivers' job depends on their speed. Then I turned to the driver and told him even with the pressure on your schedule if you kill someone you will live with that the rest of your life and no job is worth that.

They all listened courteously. Americans are respected in the Philippines and they have some power of influence. I make use of that at the right times and it can be very helpful sometimes. When we were finished we told the driver that we forgive him we just want him to learn from the incident and drive safely. We told the company to go easy on the driver because he is more valuable because of the experience. Here workers are expendable and the companies generally treat people that way.

They knew that we are missionaries and missionaries are also respected here, which is a good thing. What is interesting is that the bus that hit us was taking a group of medical mission's people back to Manila so they could come home to the US. We did meet some new friends out of the situation also.

The bus company acknowledges that they are at fault and have agreed to pay for our damages. We got the two estimates and turned in the claim to them according to the instructions given us. They will not tell us how long we have to wait and we hear from others it could be six months or a year. We really need the van and it greatly hinders the

ministry not to have transportation. So we decided to get it fixed and hope that they will pay us back, which they probably will, but we do not know how long it could take. It looks like it will cost a little under \$1000. The van is in the shop for repairs and should be ready by next week.

Even with the challenges and dangers there is no other place we would rather be. We really feel called to the Philippines. We love the people and consider it a great privilege to bring God's love to them. We believe that the Philippines is the gateway for the gospel to go throughout Asia and that God has a great plan for the country. We have felt called to the Philippines since I started coming in 1996. However, until last year we did not know where we were called to live. Now that we are here and doing what we are called to do we can see how the Lord has ordered our steps and experiences to prepare us for this time and place.

Almost daily I have the sense of destiny here. It seems that the Lord is always setting up ministry opportunities for us. We recognize them and take advantage of each one. Each opportunity is a life who also affects many others lives. This is a close knit culture and people are often part of large families. I look at individuals and think to myself, you are one of the reasons I am here. There is so much more to do here and so many more people to reach.

For those who would like to partner with us financially you can send your gifts to our mailing address in the US:

Seek God Ministries  
P O Box 100  
Otis Orchards, WA 99027

You can also donate online at the [SeekGod.org](http://SeekGod.org) web site, just click on "Donate" or the "Make A Donation" button.

We love you and we always pray for our partners. If you have a prayer request please email it to us and we are happy to join with you in prayer.

Gary and Family,  
Seek God Ministries  
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