

“For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God.” - I Thessalonians 1:9

November 2011

Dear Pastor,

I trust this letter finds you well and your ministry prospering. I have nothing but appreciation for your work and faithfulness to the ministry God has given you. As I reflect on the example God has given me in you, the pastor of a Bible-believing, separated, soul-winning church, I am challenged to examine my life and ministry. Does it measure up? At the very least, am I constantly striving for improvement?

In recent months, I have really made an effort to lead my wife and children in understanding that our very sustenance (not to mention what money we use for ministry) comes from the tithing members of your church. We eat daily because of the giving of your church. We are allowed to serve God on the mission field because of you and others. We often receive letters and birthday cards. I am trying to get in the habit of reading each of the names of people who have signed those cards. Then I have my children pray for that church and pastor.

I have been sending our prayer letters to your church for many years. No doubt you have noticed by now that we have a strong relationship with some ministries in India. Of course, we serve in Cambodia. That is where God called me long before I met my wife. However, due to an unusual sequence of events, I married a dedicated Christian lady from India. In fact, she had never left her country before she was married to me. She followed me faithfully to Cambodia, even though she would admit she never received a call to Cambodia. Having grown up in a family that was VERY involved in God's service, she naturally had a burden for her country. Her father was an active pastor until recent years, although now he is limited due to poor health. All her siblings have various ministries, whether pastor, evangelist, or Gospel singer. I thank God that she yielded her personal desires and dreams to follow me to Cambodia. Six weeks after our wedding, we left on a plane for Cambodia. So we were new to each other and, in addition to that, came from different cultures. Then on top of that, while we were still getting to know each other, we moved to a country and culture new to both of us.

To be sure, the first few years were difficult, yet God has blessed. We are now a family with two wonderful children. We were given the privilege of starting a soul-winning, independent Baptist church. My wife's extensive and practical experience in the ministry has been a help to us countless times.

But my real point in this letter is to explain our burden to maintain a work not only in Cambodia but also in India. In these past eight years since I first came to India to meet my wife, I have actually spent a considerable amount of time there. This includes three months surrounding the time of our marriage. Both my children were born there, and so I stayed with my wife's



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family for six weeks both times. On our last furlough, we used about four months to help care for my father-in-law, who was at times close to death.

One other sidelight to this is the issue of visas. Because of my wife, I was able to obtain what amounts to a lifelong visa for me and both our children. This means I can come and go freely (literally meaning that I don't pay for a visa), and I do not have to explain my purpose for entering.

Although my primary purpose in going to India was to be with family members, I barely passed one Sunday where I was not preaching somewhere. Although I don't have an exact count, I believe it is safe to say that I have preached or taught in church or in some Bible study over 200 times and probably more than that. Because of that, I have had ample time to get to know some ministries intimately. This includes my wife's family but also many other fine men of God. My heart is close to them because we were together in preaching, in prayer, and in fun.

There are obvious and practical realities.

- I am only able to be in one place at any given time.
- I can't divide my time equally and still give our church in Cambodia the time it needs.

My finances are limited, since I only raised support for one country.

I have a burden to help in India those who have proven themselves over the last eight- plus years. This includes both financial and teaching help.

Pastor, I am asking that you do the following:

1. Keep me in your prayers regarding God's will. Let me emphatically say that I believe God has not changed His call for me to work in Cambodia for an indefinite time. I am happy to be here, but God allowed me to marry a lady from India and have strong connections with these aforementioned ministries. There should be a reason why I was able to obtain a lifelong visa for me and my children. I am not asking for counsel but merely asking for your prayers that I will keep in God's will.

2. Please consider supporting some of these ministries. We do give out of our own support already; but, needless to say, there are limits. Much could be accomplished immediately if there was support sent to those we want to help. We see so many in India who have secured a connection to the States and are well-funded; and, no doubt, many are well-deserving. But for those who have not had the fortune of making those connections, it can be VERY discouraging. That includes most, if not all, those with whom I have a relationship. I believe God has more in store for these men than has been shown so far. I have really avoided being blunt and forward about asking for financial help, hoping to see God work through our prayers, and I still feel that is appropriate for us personally. But I am asking for others who don't have a "voice." These are not "hirelings." They have worked by faith and have waited on God. That is why I have no problem asking for help at this time.

3. Consider coming to India yourself and helping by preaching and teaching in various venues. This includes evangelism, pastors' meetings, village ministries, and much more. We can help put you in touch with various opportunities.

Sincerely,

Walter Poole