

# CO-MISSION INTERNATIONAL, INC.

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## NEWSLETTER—March, 2009

On Wednesday mornings at 6:30, I meet with a group of guys for Bible study. We have some awesome times in the Word. This morning we talked about Hebrews 12:1, concerning "running the race." One of our guys, Chad (a marathon and triathlon runner) shared several amazing comparisons between running the spiritual race and running a physical race. One thing he said was something like this. "When you are *in training*, you seldom give everything you have. You peak out at about 80% and train at that level. But when you are *in a real race*, you give it all you've got. *You leave everything on the road*. In other words, when you finish the race, there is nothing left in you to give. You've given it all in the race—on the road."

When I consider myself and Christian friends I see around me, I sometimes wonder if we are really in the race, or are we still in training. How much unspent effort are we still going to have in us when the race is over? But one thing I'm sure of—concerning the folks CO-Mission is partnering with in unreached lands—they *are leaving it all on the road*. They have committed absolutely everything to the race—"red lining" the whole way—counting not their lives dear.

Please pray for the dear folks you read about in this Newsletter—people who hazard their lives daily to carry the Gospel to their own people.

## BIHAR GRAVE YARD OF MISSIONARIES

The state of Bihar is known as "the graveyard of missionaries" because so many missionaries, both Indian and foreign, have gone there over the years, and never came back—nor were ever heard of again. But things have changed. There are giants in the land. I met several, but I'll tell you about only two—Kamlesh and Prabha.

I first met Kamlesh in August in Patna (capital of Bihar) at the airport. After a long drive, we arrived at his house and were met by a very young girl, Prabha, who looked about fourteen years old. I learned she was Kamlesh's wife. She told me she was 21. When I fained disbelief, she became a bit indignant and assured me, "Yes, I am twenty-one."

They have a beautiful baby about a year old.

As I learned in the next twenty four hours, this dear little couple are some of the most aggressive, courageous evangelists I have ever met. Prabha looks like a young teen girl. Kamlesh, weighing in at about a hundred and ten pounds, wasn't much bigger than she—but both are indeed giants.



Kamlesh and Pabhra

Kamlesh and Prabha came to this village (probably close to a half million people) just over a year ago. They have started five congregations (house churches) with a combined attendance of about 150 people. They will soon be

baptizing the first thirty or so new believers. These are all (even Kamlesh and Prabha) former Hindu idol worshipers.

As you can imagine, it has not been an easy year for them, but God has richly blessed them. We would consider their housing and lifestyle to be in abject poverty. It is. Kamlesh gave up a good job to go to Bihar to plant churches. He did it willingly to follow the Lord—and Prabha to follow Kamlesh.

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## Bihar—continued from

Has ministry in Bihar cost Kamlesh and Pabhra much, or did they only invest much? That is not a rhetorical question. I challenge you to think about it.

So, why have Kamlesh and Prabha been so successful in “the graveyard of missionaries?” Daniel Kumar and the other leaders of our partners in India, told me, “A significant factor is—they are Biharians themselves. They know the culture, speak the language, and live like the Biharians.” And, like people everywhere, once they showed they really cared about their neighbors, the people of Bihar listened to their fellow citizens. And hearing, they believed.

It was an amazing visit. Prabha and I became great friends. I spoke to about a hundred of their people in one service. The whole crowd stayed and ate together. It was a great day of fellowship, worship, and praise. I will always be grateful to Pastor Daniel Kumar for taking me to “the graveyard of missionaries.” Oh, but these folks no longer call it that. They call it, “Bihar, the opportunity of missionaries.” ✚



Though we say little about the folks we sponsor in China, I hear from both groups often. They are continuing to see their countrymen coming to Christ. One of the ministries' primary focus is to travel about the country, teaching house church pastors more about the Word of God. Many of the house church pastors have had little to no training.

Another ministry continues to do street and “official government church” drama presentations, calling nominal Christians to genuinely “take up their cross for Christ.” Please continue to pray for these. ✚

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** When I read the following testimonies, my first thought was, “Interesting—but not unusual.” But I was immediately checked in my spirit to consider the significance of that statement. They are indeed “not unusual”—because they are typical of the wonderful ministries God has allowed CO-Mission to be in partnership with. Dmitry (in Russia) and Stanimir (in Bulgaria) are involving their people in reaching out to the unreached. You and I may not visit orphans in Eastern Europe, but we can help those who do. Please pray for these ministries.

## **BULGARIA**—From Stanimir Todorov

My name is Anelia Yankova. I was born in 1988 in Byala to a Muslim family. When I was five years old my parents started to quarrel very much and wanted to divorce. One day my mother met a Christian lady who invited her to go to a church meeting. God touched my mother's heart, and the next time she invited my father to go with her. First he refused, but later, because he loved me, they took me and we went together. A few months later my parents received Jesus in their hearts. Finally, there was great peace in our family. With my two brothers, we enjoyed the presence of the Lord, and thanked God for His mercy to our home.



When I became a teenager I joined the children's ministry and prayed one day to be a teacher. Later I attended a seminar for Sundays school teachers. Then Pastor Stanimir appointed me to be a teacher in the Sunday school. Last year one of the sisters invited me to go to the orphanages in Strajiza and Liskovetz. We presented lessons, songs, and Bible games. During Christmas time, Easter, and other Christian holidays, I prepare programs for the children and organize them to take a part in the outreach. Our God is great and I am thankful to Him. ✚

## **RUSSIA**—From Dmitry Kavaleuski

Just before Christmas, God put in our hearts to spread the Gospel to the orphanage of Ekaterinburg. We named December “The Month of Testimonies and Good Deeds to God's Glory.”

There are 2680 orphanages and eight hundred thousand orphans in Russia. Fifteen thousand orphans are from newborn to three years old. God touched our hearts to bring the Good News about Jesus' love to these kids, and also to give them care and warmth from our hearts. We all had a wonderful time.



Many of our people went to the orphanages to bring Christmas gifts and to tell about Jesus. We saw joy in their eyes! The teachers at the orphanage were so surprised that we came—not only to share the Gospel but also to give them all gifts. We preached God's Word, and saw how Jesus came into their little hearts.

After this day the manager of the orphanage called to thank us. He also invited our sisters to come back and teach the Bible to the children. According to the laws for educational institutions, the church does not have the freedom to share the Gospel in these places. Praise the Lord! We thank God that He opened the doors to spread His word to the children and their teachers. Please pray that God will bring His glory into this orphanage through our ministry. ✚



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CO-Mission International Inc. is a non-profit Christian organization. Our purpose is to sponsor native missionaries in unreached areas of the world. Some names and locations have been changed in order to protect the identity of believers in areas where they are persecuted by government and religious leaders.