

"How you be he-yah?"

"How come you are here?" When Cameroonians from West Africa asked us that question, as missionaries we were happy to answer. On that particular coastline of Africa a lot of Pidgin is spoken, a *grammar-fried* English with delightfully added vocabulary from other local languages and dialects. Pidgin might be like the *Celfonese* of today.

"How you be he-yah?" It is all due to *our calling*. What is a calling? Remember as kids how Mom or Dad called urgently, "ARE YOU COMING?" You would drop everything and shout back: "Coming!" Right? Just think of the authority of Jesus to James and John: "FOLLOW ME!" They promptly packed up their fishing gear and followed.

Our *Missionary Call* came in 1955, in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. We had just walked out from a missionary conference meeting where we first heard the Call to the Nations, to people who needed to hear the Gospel, like Italy and India. The Call came: "Why not *YOU?*" Indeed, why not us? Right there Vernon said, "Darlene, we've heard the need in the world. We can help meet that need. I want to quit my accounting job right now and become a missionary. Will you join me?" My reply: "Let's go!" Within weeks we packed up our little family of four along with our belongings and headed for Milwaukee Bible Institute. That whole school year was jam-packed with missionary talk, missionary praying, missionary plans, missionary questions. Our minds worked overtime. What kind of missionary work? Where? The thought of tribal missions grabbed us: reaching primitive people who never heard of Christ. In January '56 the whole saga emerged of the five missionaries who tried to reach out to the fierce Auca tribe in Ecuador, South America...only to be speared to death. Our hearts opened even more to get going with the gospel. By June we'd sold out our belongings and headed north to Canada for The Summer Institute of Linguistics to attend their specialized training for learning a language not yet written down. We were answering the Call as fast as we could.

Then our instructors told us how valuable it would be to also have missionary medical training. The Spirit kept calling, "Are you coming?" This time, "Coming, Lord!" meant BIOLA School of Missionary Medicine located in Los Angeles, very far from our Minnesota roots, but we eagerly followed His Call into the open door. In fact, we four were ready to accept our missionary-teacher Bascom's offer to pay half the gas and put *two families with stuff* into our old station wagon, sleeping in car seats and haystacks along the way from Canada, all pushed together but moving, always moving forward south and over the mountains to California. BIOLA SMM became a missionary preparation year of hard work, studying, learning, then practicing as nurses in hospitals, absorbing the thrill of missions. Our simple analysis was: *Wherever the need is GREAT-get going!* Paraguay in the South American interior loomed up big in our sights. But so did India, second largest country of the world, with millions of Hindus who needed the gospel of salvation in Christ.

THINGS TO COME MISSION BEGINNINGS

In 1956 inspired Milwaukee BI students merged Hope Mission with Things to Come Mission of Craig, Colorado. We personally had a new "boss", J. Herbert Palmer, who suggested to us, "On your way to India, can you stop in the Philippines and meet some people I'm helping there with books and a little aid?" To us who'd never been abroad, what was another unknown country? The Spirit called, "Coming through this open door?" "Coming, Lord!"

Palmer had placed an ad for evangelists for Colorado in a 1955 *Moody Monthly* magazine. He and Jessie had returned to Colorado after 10 years missionary service in Belgian Congo, and they wanted to stay involved with world evangelism. To their surprise their ad was answered from Mindanao, Philippines!

Filipinos volunteered to serve as *Rocky Mountain* evangelists. Palmer saw a wide door opening, so he sent dispensational Bible study books and a few dollars and many letters to encourage this team of Filipinos to stand for Christ right there in their own Filipino barrios. Liberalism theology was attacking Philippine churches and these men wanted to get into the battle for truth. Palmer's dream: "We are confident that the Andersons' embarking upon a long journey is not just another missionary entering upon his or her career. No, we believe that God has called these dear young people to the Far East, and that He is going to use them mightily there for His glory and praise."

The Andersons took off for their uncharted missionary call in December '57:

God has answered each and every prayer and has poured us out a blessing we can't contain. We have perfect health after traveling all these many miles and days. Saturday, December 14, we left Los Angeles on the S.S. President Cleveland. We traveled 3rd class which meant that the great majority of our fellow travelers were Japanese, Chinese, Korean, Filipino, Hawaiian, and Gypsy. The first day out on the Pacific we were given the opportunity to lead the Sunday A.M. service and the Lord blessed in spite of sea sickness among the passengers. The next day the Lord opened the way for the beginning of a daily Bible class from 3:30-4:30 each afternoon. Through these classes I contacted a Filipino pastor and a Japanese missionary pastor. As the class grew in numbers, these men became very good interpreters, in fact, we had a Sunday service with 3 messages in 3 languages: Ilocano, Japanese and English! (International Harvest Vol 1 No 1 1958)

Later Vernon wrote upon arrival in Mindanao, southern Philippines, January 1958:

After 17 days on the Pacific, we reached Manila. A Christian brother acquainted with TCM met us in Manila...we arrived in Ozamis City, Misamis Occidental, Mindanao, P.I. ..later we met our TCM leader in Ozamis City, Pastor Potenciano Undag...has a family of eight children...has shown us already that TCM has a fine zealous representative in Ozamis City. Juan Undag, the brother and Director of TCM in the Philippines, came from Molave to meet us. This afternoon we all sat down and had a good talk about the gospel of the grace of God and the work of TCM here. We were thrilled with the news of how God is blessing. These men are bold for the Word rightly divided. They are willing to sacrifice to get it out. A group of about 30 small churches, the Evangelical Church of the Philippines, seems to be quite interested in combining forces with TCM. The leader of the this work is Brother Mendoza, the man who met us in Manila. (International Harvest, Vol 1 No1 1958)

BUILDING BY EVANGELISM

From the time Palmers began sending Bible dispensational books and some aid, the Filipino evangelists worked steadily to reach out to churches and contacts in Mindanao, the large southern island. Vernon immediately set out to help the Team get legally organized before the government which involved knowing who among the Team were ready to take their stand with Things to Come Mission alone, not being connected with the liberal churches. At this first meeting in the town of Molave on January 13th 1958, a General Agreement included under point #11: "No member of TCM will be actively engaged or belong to another church organization unless approved by a 2/3 vote of the entire membership of TCM. The approval of the U.S. Committee is also required." Within a month five of the original Team members stepped up for TCM, showing their zeal to evangelize as well as stay clear of the advance of liberalism.

Vernon mailed off his first prayer letter in February. He was facing complete challenges and prepared to face all the new things happening in our lives:

"We want to take you with us on 6 days of meetings we just finished in the mountains. During the meetings 35 souls accepted Jesus Christ as Savior, many were brought out of confusion into the pure grace truth, our TCM believers were confirmed and established

On Wednesday, Jan. 22 we arise at 4 AM, pack our bags and catch the bus to Molave, 50 kilometers away. The bus is the open-air type with planks for seats. There are supposed to be 7 people to a plank, but it is not uncommon to have 8-10 plus children. Under our feet are pigs, chickens, dogs, cats, goats, bags, food, fish, etc. The bus is loaded with cargo on top and underneath. Several people are hanging on the sides. The conductor, also hanging on the side, yells, 'Hebol!', and off we go. This is quite a trip. The roads are laughable. By the time we reach Molave in 3 hours, we are sore in every muscle and dirt from head to toe. By now the sun is up and it is getting very warm. We hop on a jeep and travel 6km to Da-o. On the bus we talk to a Roman Catholic woman and she says that she believes she will be converted. At Da-o we stop and talk with a RC druggist—he is interested in the truth.

From Da-o we start our hike up the mountain. Some of our TCM men meet us in Da-o and carry the public address system and battery for us. After going over river and mountain and through jungle, we arrive at Lipamba, a mountain barrio. After a lunch of rice, chicken and lemonade, a straw mat is thrown on the floor and we take a half-hour rest. People are waiting for us in a house where a child is to be dedicated to the Lord by its parents, as Hannah did with Samuel in the Bible. We hold a service right before noon. Many unbelievers attend and hear the gospel. We then have lunch: rice, pork, bananas, and lemonade. Soon after lunch we go to another home where we are to have Bible study. There are too many people to have it inside, so we hold it outside.

On this trip we are using *The Highway of Life* lessons by Mrs.C.F.Baker. We teach all 25 lessons in two sessions. The Bible study lasts 2-3 hours per session. Poten Undag is our interpreter for those who can't speak English. After our Bible class, we carry our PA system 2 km to the barrio. From 5-7 PM we hold our evangelistic meeting. Poten is our top evangelist and he doesn't have to take 2nd place to Billy Graham in Mindanao. Poten is a terrific speaker. We too give a message, usually using an object lesson. The people are eager and gather around. After our evangelistic meeting, we go back to the home of our worker. We eat supper, same as dinner. After supper we have a mixed evangelistic and Bible study meeting. After our meeting we talk and answer questions until 11-12 PM.

Then off to bed, only no bed. My bed is made of wooden slats. Around 4 AM the roosters begin to crow. Then a deep voice starts singing a hymn in the native dialect, all the voices chime in. You see that every available place on the floor is taken by those who came for the meetings. After singing, each one quotes a scripture verse and someone leads in prayer. This is all done in the darkness and it is thrilling, bringing tears to my eyes.

Maayong Buntag! [Good morning!] and the lamps are lit. Poten sets up the PA system in the front room and proceeds to preach the gospel. Breakfast is prepared and eaten. The house we are in sits high above the ground on poles. Pigs live underneath and chickens roost in baskets inside the house. It is not uncommon to have a chicken walk across the table as we are eating or to have him fly across the room while we are teaching. In the yard we find chickens, pigs, dogs, cats, goats

and *carabao* [water buffalo]. After breakfast--not prepared under sanitary American rules--we continue *The Highway of Life*. The people are thrilled with the study--I don't believe there are any finer lessons for teaching the Word rightly divided. Hats off to Mrs. Charles Baker! Lunch is served. The people do their very best to satisfy us. They go way out of their way. After lunch I teach the book of Revelation as I have just finished writing a small pamphlet on the book. I am interested to see if these people can take this difficult a study. They eat it up like sweet candy and want more. I tell them I will give them each a copy when the pamphlet is printed.

We have to stop at 4 PM so we can go back to the barrio for our evangelistic meeting. It is difficult to say how many are saved in the barrio because just about everyone raises his hand and comes forward. We only count those who are saved in our Bible study meetings, those we have a chance to talk with. Time will tell how many of these others really mean business. After our evangelistic meeting, we return to our meeting place. Supper is served and we continue our Bible study and evangelistic meeting. We now have 10 names of people who accepted Christ.

The next morning Poten is up again at 4 AM preaching the gospel! Breakfast is served and we start on our way to Bacahan, 12km away. This is a rough walk over mountains. As we meet mountain folk on the way, they greet me as *Father*. To the shame of Protestant missions I am the only American missionary that these people have ever seen. One even grabs my hand and kisses it thinking I am a RC priest. These people have religion but not Christ. There is a certain fee set by the RC church for everything they do for the people. The poor people pay through the nose while the church gets wealthy.

We arrive in Bacahan at noon. We are boiling hot and our legs feel like they will collapse. We eat a little and flop on the grain bin (my bed for the next 2 nights) for a little rest. After an hour or two we arise and take a bath in the dishpan as everyone watches. From 5-6 PM we hold our evangelistic meeting. We have our supper and continue our meeting until 10 PM. This is a new work with a small congregation. The following day we are up early again. We teach *The Highway of Life* in two sessions again and have two evangelistic meetings.

The chief sport in the Philippine Islands is cock-fighting. It is a cruel thing with much gambling included. They are having a cock fight as we start our meeting. Soon everyone leaves the cock fight and comes over to our meeting! We think we might be stoned because they have to stop the cock fight, but the Lord delivers us. Six people are saved in this place including 2 Subanos [tribespeople]. One Subano, so eager to learn, follows us to our next meeting. We stay in Bacahan Sunday AM for Sunday morning service and Sunday school. After church in a small chapel with dirt floor and grass roof, the father of one of the girls saved the night before becomes very angry because his daughter is saved. We stand up and just read scripture to him. The power of the Word penetrates his hard heart and all of a sudden he begins to smile and comes up and shakes our hands and says he did not understand before.

Lunch is served and off we go to Depalusan, 12 km. This is the worst part of the day to travel. The sun is high and extremely hot. We arrive late in the afternoon, have supper, and hold our evangelistic meeting. We have a fine worker here, Isaias Lopez. He has no support from TCM, we pray for him. We can tell the Holy Spirit is at work in our lives as we minister the Word. After our meeting no one wants to go home, but we must--it has been a long day. We return from the chapel to the home

of Lopez—such a humble home. My bed for these two nights is the eating table. Every available place on the floor is taken in all four tiny rooms. I can tell that the people want me to be happy here. They are so kind, it makes me ashamed when I think of the Christian luxury I had in America. While we are there they slaughter two pigs. Of course this is done right out in the open and cooked also in the open. I ask where the latrine is and they point to the open cornfield. So this is missionary life!

The following day proves to be the highlight of all our meetings. Again I teach *The Highway of Life* to a full house. These people stay all day long to hear the Word rightly divided. After the lesson we have an open forum and answer questions. Supper is served and we all go out to hold our evangelistic meeting. The small chapel is packed to overflowing with people standing, sitting in the aisle, looking in the windows, sitting on the platform. I use *The Magic Blocks* visual and it is well received. Poten gives a tremendous call and 19 adults come to Jesus Christ to leave their burden of sin. We cannot get the people to go home after the meeting. Finally we just have to remove the lamps.

The people don't want us to leave the next day, but I know my body is becoming overly exhausted—my mind is numb. I tell Poten that he can stay and continue to teach and preach. We have another work in this area and they are begging us to come. What can I do? I am only human. Poten will go there for one day also. I am up at 4 AM and after breakfast I head back to Molave (12km). On the way I slip one leg into a muddy stream and have to continue with a soaked shoe and leg full of mud. A live chicken, which was given to me, I must carry under my arm. I arrive in Molave and hop the open air bus for Ozamis arriving at noon, wet, dirty and tired, yet rejoicing for all that He has wrought. It is good to get home to the family."

THE DREAM : A TRAINING CENTER

It was not many weeks till Vernon saw that accompanying the Team was like carrying along a Bible School as they trekked. Every place they concentrated on organizing congregations. "Who is going to pastor all these congregations of new converts?" The dream of establishing a training center became a definite need. Joe & Pauline Watkins, TCM members in USA, agreed to come over to the Philippines after graduation from Milwaukee Bible College. Joe would join a Filipino pastor, Arturo Chavez, who was qualified to teach Bible, and Hubert Johnson, another American missionary, to become the first faculty for *International Grace Bible Institute*. Things had galloped forward as can be seen in the diary entries for the first three months of 1958:

- Feb. 1 Made out application...[to get TCM legally registered as an organization]
- Feb. 11 Incorporation papers made out.
- Feb. 16 Boarded boat to Manila.
- Feb.20 Conference in Manila - acquired corporation papers for TCM .
- Mar.3 Meeting with Workers.
- Mar.31 Made out application for visa to India. [Remember our plan for India...]

In the August-September 1958 International Harvest the Dream is happening:

"God has done it again; blessed even exceedingly, abundantly, above all we can ask or think. Hardly was our prayer sent to heaven before He showered us with blessings. I personally wanted to be the one to tell you that God has raised up the initial cost of our Far Eastern Grace Bible School. Just yesterday we received a check for \$2,799.00 from one dear saint of God who knows the meaning of the word "FAITH". This woman had previously written me a letter asking for an estimate of the initial cost of land, teacher's

cottage and school building. With reluctance I enclosed my estimate in a letter. Now two weeks later I have a check covering the exact amount of my estimation! Brother, now is the time to act. The very first grace Bible school will be built in the East, and this after we have been on the field six months. God has already supplied teachers for the school in the Watkins, Johnsons, and our Filipino worker, Arturo Chavez. Certainly we have abundant evidence that God is for us. Now we must hold nothing back. A school is not an easy thing to establish. We are two missionaries standing for the pure message of grace among teeming multitudes. Daily we are faced with gigantic decisions that force us to our knees asking God's guidance. Won't you pray for us each day? We go forth in your stead. As yet we have done nothing in regard to a curriculum. Lesson material must be secured. Books will be needed. Equipment must be procured.

"What is the aim of this school? To train young men and women in sound Bible teaching that will enable them to go out and meet every situation that exists in the East. We shall eliminate from our curriculum any subject that will just be excess baggage, unusable by a true missionary of Jesus Christ. Our purpose will not be to train theologians as such, but to train deep, spiritual workers that will have the tools necessary to meet the needs of the lost. Much emphasis will be placed on practical Christianity, the walk of a true believer in Jesus Christ. We will endeavor to give to our students real tools and weapons, so they can go out and defeat thousands of false cults that plague the Far East. Brother, it is time to exercise our God-given faith. Yea, exercise to the extreme, even as Paul of old...everyone knows that our time is limited in the East. Unless we act now, it will be eternally too late. Let us fall on our knees and ask God for a great school to glorify Christ in the regions beyond. In the work of His Son, Vernon D. Anderson, Official Representative of Things to Come Mission, Inc.

LAUREL DEPARTS FOR HEAVEN

Eleven years old and ready to be with her Lord Jesus, Laurel died of fulminant meningitis on April 12, 1959 after only three days illness. Needless to say, her death shocked all the Filipino brethren as much as the missionaries. Many came in tears to comfort the Andersons, but all realized that to die and go to be with Christ is far better. We, as Laurel's mom and dad, found ourselves needing to comfort our beloved Filipino brethren who thought we would surely pack up and leave following Laurel's death in their country. But in actuality, we determined more than ever to take up His call even more seriously.

INTERNATIONAL GRACE BIBLE INSTITUTE - JUNE 1959

Joe Watkins wrote: "We had anticipated 30 students and the Lord sent us 44...God blessed us with these students and we are challenged to feed them spiritually and physically as well. The school is tuition free and the students work 40 hours a month for their room and board. It is now requiring about \$125 per month to feed the students...this school does not teach any secular subjects and is not recognized by the Government...does not give any degrees. Its sole purpose is to train young men and women for Christian service. Only the BIBLE and related subjects are taught."

With Watkins, Johnsons, and Bro. Chavez preparing to open International Grace Bible Institute, we felt ready to take up our plan to go on to India as Brother Palmer had requested in the IH magazine:

Special Prayer Request—The Andersons need a visa into India NOW. For months they have been trying to obtain a visa with no results. Feeling the Lord was leading them to enter India now, they sailed August 10th for Singapore and then to Ceylon [Sri Lanka]. They have no visa into India nor any promise of one. They are trusting the Lord to provide a visa for them while they are in Ceylon. Let us unite our prayers to God that a visa will be approved and they might answer the

call to minister to India's multitudes.

While the Andersons were patiently waiting for a visa for India to materialize, they stayed at the YWCA in Colombo Ceylon, the closest island to the southern point of India. Meanwhile in the Philippines, IGBI opened with 40 students in the barrio community of Lupagan, Clarin, Misamis Occidental. Classes went forward with everyone learning the Bible and English together. By the end of the first semester 27 students remained to keep on preparing themselves to serve as pastors and Bible women.

I G B I OVERCOMES- 1961

At the end of 1959 Brother B. Mathews of St. Thomas Mount in Madras, South India wrote:

God has answered prayer. Brother and Sister Anderson and their daughter Hope arrived in Madras on October 1st. They were here until the 12th and then left for Kerala State...their lives have impressed me and most of the brethren here. They are not only the legal representatives of the TCM International, they are truly the representatives of the Lord God to carry His message of Grace. I have learned many truths from him...the work is small and we face much opposition. In this vast land of India, 90% of the people are idol worshipers. A very small percent of the people are "Christian"...only a fraction are the real children of God...pray with us that the work of the Lord in India may grow and many souls come to know the Lord Jesus as their personal saviour.

We three tried desperately to stay on in India, but could not renew our visas. It was a time when Americans were suspected of being Communists. But then we found out why we were struggling so much in this matter of visas.

In the Philippines classes and Christian Service ministries continued busily despite looming problems of which Director Joe Watkins wrote in the International Harvest of Jan-Feb, 1961:

First we must bring you up-to-date. As of July 17th Mr. Johnson and family resigned from the mission and IGBI. He taught till the end of July then began making plans to leave. He no longer agreed with the doctrine of the mission, therefore he felt he would like to go out on his own. This doctrine question had been a problem for some time and that is why we feel it is an answer to prayer that he resigned. We feel that the Lord led in the decision. Brother Anderson has taken over the classes, so the school has not suffered. We are in need of another couple to take over the evangelistic end of the work, or to teach so that Mr. Anderson can again do the evangelizing, along with Poten. Poten is doing it alone now and is unable to fill all the calls. Pray that another couple will be raised up to fill the gap here.

Orville and Connie Hunt, Janet Dudley and John Shriver answered that call, arriving in Lupagan from Milwaukee Bible College to take up the work of IGBI. Janet and John even married in the barrio and strengthened their call.

NEW ARRIVAL MARCH 7, 1961

Vernon wrote this happy news: "We now have Benjamin Nate, a fine boy. Born the 3rd month, a complete number. The 7th day, another complete number, Benjamin Nate has 12 letters and March is the 12th month of the Jewish calendar. He is God's answer to our prayer. "Benjamin" we took from Jacob's youngest son-"Nate" from the faithful missionary pilot who was martyred in Ecuador. We want this man's testimony to live on in our son."

REACHING OUT - REACHING OUT II

As the work began stretching out all over the Islands, we could see that gospel LITERATURE needed to keep up with the preaching and evangelizing. Prayer began in order to obtain a printing press and God

provided one right on the island of Mindanao!

"God has spoken to the heart of one of His children and a gift was sent to purchase a used printing press and other equipment. Prayer has been answered and the TCM of the P.I. now have a printing outfit with which they can get the message of God's Grace into the hands of many more of the people in that country in their own language. Let us PRAISE the Lord for His faithfulness in answering prayer." -IH May-June 1959

The first printing machine was a letter press meaning a foot-powered machine which demanded the operator to have strong legs. Also needed were strong eyes as all the type for printing had to be picked over letter by letter and tied into blocks of type which would then be bound and set into the press. Many, many hours went into these first efforts, but it paid off in people taking the Bible studies, especially *The Highway of Life* correspondence courses, and thousands of tracts distributed in all the evangelistic meetings. The printer, Andres Ella, came to us as an unbeliever, but in time, pumping that press and setting up all that type, listening to his IGBI student helpers, brought him and his large family to accept Christ. Hallelujah!

A PLAN FOR USEFULNESS

While preaching from barrio to barrio, we began to notice a strange thing—nearly every barrio had a transistor radio with a group of Filipinos standing or sitting nearby listening. Even though the grass houses were wee and fragile, yet a radio was sending forth loud music! With a small down payment and a few pesos per month, Filipinos were buying cheap Japanese transistor radios and new radio stations were going up everywhere. Ozamis, Iligan, Cagayan, Tagbilaran, Dumaguete, Cebu, Davao and Cotabato. Even in Lupagan barrio some of our close neighbors had radio sets.

Could we use this means to reach every barrio? Why not? We could multiply our tongue thousands and thousands of times. Erecting a radio station was considered, but a project of such magnitude required thousands of dollars, much technical personnel, expensive electronics equipment, radio engineers and licenses.

Why not use the commercial stations coming up in so many places? Radio time was cheap—\$3 to \$5 for a half hour! Nearby Ozamiz City and Iligan City across the bay were our first projects. Cebu City was contacted, one of the largest and most popular stations in the southern Philippines. For less than \$5 we could have a weekly broadcast of one half hour, a broadcast that could be heard all the way from Manila to Davao, about 700 miles. One of the present rooms has been converted into a suitable studio so all the broadcasts can be taped without the sound of roosters crowing in the background.

ANY RESULTS ? ENTERING HISTORIC LEYTE

Vernon was so excited to enter the island of Leyte, an historic site indeed in the Philippines due to Gen. MacArthur's return during WWII. He wrote *Leyte Victory* in the IH article of 1965,

Every soldier who sailed into the Philippines to fight the Japanese remembers Leyte. Americans, Filipinos, and Japanese died by the thousands in this island. The mountainside displays perhaps the only reminder of a war arena. Craters and foxholes still keep exposed where the trees have not dared to cover the memory of war. Four rusty Jap helmets hanging in a garden commemorate 20,000 Japanese soldiers dying in one valley. Along one trail 50 American soldiers were ambushed by their enemies and killed. Twenty years after such a battle for life was won, another war is raging. The souls of a million men are at stake.

Twice Liborio Denzo of Villaba, Leyte, had come to Mindanao to call us to Leyte. The Macedonian calling Paul was no clearer than Bro. Denzo calling, 'Come over and help us!' April 26, the day after graduation at IGBI, "D Day" was set for Leyte...the Hour of Grace (*Ora Sa Grasya*) opened the door to us in Leyte. Liborio, Poten Undag

(TCM radio evangelist), Abundio Boco (IGBI intern), and myself boarded the Mission Tripacer at Labo airstrip. With the four passengers plus luggage and public address system, the plane was at gross weight on takeoff. The 150 horses were pulling hard as the Harvester cleared the coconut trees at the end of the strip. Heading was set for 360 degrees due north with the first stop at Cebu City, 150 miles across the sea. With head winds we flew an hour and thirty minutes to reach Cebu. The visibility and ceiling were unlimited, a very pleasant flight...at 3 P.M. we board another truck for Villaba which was still 100 kilometers north. What roads! The truck also was slow...as we hiked to the seashore, many people began following us, perhaps due to the loud speaker and the long-nosed, white-faced Americano attracting them. When we arrived at the uncle's house quite a crowd had gathered. Not wanting to lose any opportunity, Boco led the service and Poten and I preached...It was already noon when we arrived in Villaba. Eating in the marketplace is quite an experience. Food is cooked early in the morning and kept in pots all day. You just look in each pot and tell the owner what you want. You can even taste if you like, and many do, while the uneaten serving portions go back into the pot! After the market dinner we hiked three kilometers to Liborio's house...when the invitation was given, 24 persons stood to give witness that they had received Christ as Savior.

Next day we went to a barrio four kilometers away. Our host there was the brother of the Manalista preacher. In fact, even the preacher was there. Poten started a heated discussion which lasted about three hours. Everyone was interested. The Manalista's brother had been listening to the Hour of Grace, writing down all the scripture references on the deity of Christ. He used these to defend the doctrine against his brother. That night we preached again and 14 people stood when the invitation was given. The Manalista's brother was one of them...we were called to the house of a sick man who could not come to the meetings. Immediately we went over to his house and turned on the p.a. to gather the people. After the preaching, nine persons stood to receive Christ. In all these years in the PI I had never experienced such a moving of hearts! The seed was sown by the radio and we were gathering in the harvest. It was a long hike to a distant barrio next day. Half way we stopped for lunch at the house of Liborio's mother. The people gathered and we preached the gospel. Eleven more souls stood to acknowledge Christ as Saviour. After this service we proceeded with our hike. Along the trail Liborio stopped me saying 50 American soldiers had been ambushed and killed by the Japanese in the very place where we hiked. General MacArthur and his soldiers had been right in the places where we now preached, 20 years after the war the gospel had come. Why is it always delayed so long! Approaching the barrio I came up out of the river bed trail to see a whole field of rice harvesters. My heart jumped with joy. "We'll preach right now! Set up the p.a.!" Ten meters away stood the church of the Manalistas. Again the scripture bombs were dropped and how happy the harvesters were. The Manalistas had been plaguing them to accept their doctrine. The unknowing had no defense. One man told us that all of these people would have joined the false cult had we not arrived with the truth. Again that evening we preached. This meeting was for evangelistic preaching and a good number stood to receive Christ. By this time the Manalistas saw they were losing ground and unless they formally debated us, they would lose all. They signed a topic: *"The church of Christ led by Felix Manalo is the church that Christ will save when He comes."*

Early in the morning Boco preached. We went to the river to bathe and give Poten

needed time to prepare and rest before the debate. From 3 o'clock till 6 o'clock the debate went on. Each side stands for three 20 minute periods with the opponent allowed to ask questions for five minutes after each stand. Poten is a man of the Book. He is gifted by God above others in Biblical debating. He knows the Word of God in a practical way which can answer all foes. It is a wonderful experience to watch him debate against someone denying the authority of Jesus Christ. As the debate opened, Poten's voice was weak from preaching so many times during the week, but soon the Lord gave extra power and his voice strengthened. By the end of the debate he was at his peak and the enemy was defeated. Witnessing these debates reminds one of Paul in Acts when he debated daily in the market with the religious leaders. Poten was cheered by the people and the Manalistas were jeered at by the crowd. That night we triumphantly preached. Especially did I plead with the Manalistas and those who had not yet received Christ. The week's total now reached 103 persons standing to witness to everyone that Christ was their Savior. Seven of them were Manalistas and one was a Jehovah's Witness. No doubt the greatest exhilaration in this victory is that souls were harvested from the Hour of Grace. How the Spirit doth work!"

ANOTHER NEW ARRIVAL JANUARY 7, 1964

The July 1964 International Harvest announced: "Vernon and Darlene Anderson now have three children: Hope, Ben and Valerie. The Andersons are not living at the Bible Institute, but have moved to the air strip and live over the hangar which was built for the *Harvester*. Vernon is Field Director in charge of all field work and all National workers.

ANOTHER DREAM : TAKING TO THE SKIES

For several years Vernon spoke of the wonderful thing it would be to fly around the Philippines to carry out the evangelism and church planting ministry. In *News From The Fields* in 1961 he wrote: "During these days we have been soaked by the rain and plowing through mud and water. One day we went out to visit members and we had to ride the carabao [water buffalo]. In some places the mud was up to the carabao's stomach. Going up one hill, Poten Undag, who was sitting in front of me, slid back and pushed me right off into the mud. This was very embarrassing for me, but the Filipinos had a good laugh." The Philippines is a land of thousands of islands and many of them had dirt airstrips connected with lumbering, mining, agricultural companies, also a number of political and government strips. Being a small country none of these strips was too far apart. One day Vernon was invited to fly to Manila with the lumber company CEO, Harley Tawlks. When he told Vernon to try out the controls...that was it!! From that moment on Vernon was hooked on the idea of flying for the Lord, taking to the skies for His Glory. He even posted the verse on our wall: "*Those who wait on the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.*" (Isa.40:31) This dream was really a dream because Vernon was not a pilot and he definitely had no airplane! But on another eventful day, Mr. Tawlks called again inviting to join flight lessons as people from the lumber company wanted to learn to fly...and a plane and pilot would be available right in Ozamis City, the airport next to us! Adding to the excitement of becoming a pilot, TCM was able to purchase two single engine planes: a Piper Tri-Pacer and a Piper Cherokee Six. The Pacer rode across the Pacific in a crate on a freighter ready to be reassembled, but the Cherokee was flown all the way from Albuquerque, New Mexico to the Philippines by pilot friend, Ken Cordes and Liola his wife, the first couple to ever ferry a plane across the wide Pacific. The *Harvester* flew almost daily for evangelism and conferences, saving lives and carrying Poten and many other young evangelists. In the July 1967 IH Vernon explains.

WHY FLY ?

A good question deserves a sound answer. Why fly? T-I-M-E. "Buy up the time!" God commands. Upon arrival home from an evangelistic trip, the query came, "Couldn't you take a cargo-bus to that area?" True, one could also pedal a bicycle or perhaps even hike. Certainly expenses would be cut considering only the actual cost of transportation. However, the loss would constitute the most highly useful commodity we possess—TIME.

Humans in general do not evaluate TIME as the measurement of LIFE. Human life is measured per hour, per day, per week, monthly, yearly. Every hour lost represents an hour of life lost. Is not life precious above anything else? Time has monetary value. Every laborer receives wages in proportion to his laboring time. The plane saves approximately one day of land transportation time per one hour of flight time. This time saving can be multiplied by the number of passengers flying, usually two, three, or four people. The cost of flying the TCM plane is \$5 an hour. For \$5 one day of a missionary's work time is conserved. Why fly? Flying is safer. All around statistics prove it safer. Traveling in this population-expanding world is dangerous, and land transportation is the most dangerous. Exposure time to these potential accident factors is one of the main reasons for the danger. With the airplane a missionary is exposed to travel danger one hour compared to one day of other travel.

Another reason for flying is strength conservation. Traveling on substandard roads is extremely tiring. The more time spent traveling under adverse physical conditions, the more fatigue sets in. An airplane provides smoother, cleaner, faster travel than any other means. Aside from these rather business-like factors, the plane boosts the spiritual tempo of the work. Could we estimate this morale factor in the Philippines, we must first realize that for Filipinos the airplane represents a substantial investment and impresses the element of permanence, so beneficial to a rapidly expanding ministry. Arriving at a preaching station foot-sore and dusty hardly promotes the emphasis of vigor and enthusiasm needed to sell the Gospel of Christ. Planes are yet sufficiently new to combine the thrill of flying with the inspiration of preaching far and wide. There are no longer bounds on the ministry of the evangelists—they can reach and preach with the advantages of speed and safety.

Then Piper Tripacer PI-C564 arrived. Suddenly there were no limits on where to preach. The preachers could see farther and go farther in their circuits. Other islands became closer targets and things began to happen. The Ata Training Center directly resulted from the aerial survey of a tribespeople without gospel witness. Construction and preparation of the Center were carried forward primarily by use of the plane. (72 hours of travel time by land shrunk magically to five by plane!) Longer itineraries developed for a more intensive confirmation ministry to the churches. At the same time "home" was not so far away in case of family emergencies. How could true value be estimated when a beloved sick one can in one "hop" reach the geographically remote doctor and in another "hop" that beloved one is received as it were "back from the dead?" I repeat: WHY FLY? Isaiah 40:31. WHY NOT FLY?

PROOF OF GOD'S AMAZING CALLING

Joe and Pauline Watkins were forced to remain in the United States for over four years from 1962. In the meantime more missionaries came and worked together, the national pastors continued now aided by the students graduating from IGBI each year. Joe wrote of his emotional surprise at observing the ongoing results of the work begun in 1958.

"It has been our privilege to return after four and a half years in the States. It is amazing how things have changed during these four years and also how the work has expanded. We believe the work has doubled since we were here before. I have just returned from the annual mission conference and there was talk that we could not have the conference in only one church in the near future because of the number of delegates that are attending. There has sprung up in these islands during the past four years hundreds of radio stations. When we left Ozamis City there was not one radio station here—now there are

two. The mission has taken advantage of this by building a recording studio so as to use the radio to reach millions of Filipinos with the Gospel of the Grace of God. Tapes are made for 30 minute and 15 minute broadcasts and are sent out to the key stations in the southern half of the Philippines. We reach more in one week by radio than we could reach in one year by doing evangelistic work on the road. Over these broadcasts we offer correspondence courses. We received a letter some time ago from a man who had attached a PA system to his radio so as to broadcast the program to his whole barrio [community].

The national churches have doubled in number. We started in 1959 with about five churches, now there are close to one hundred national assemblies. We feel that an established national church is the end of all our works. This is the principle the Apostle Paul followed. Our printing press, the radio, IGBI, are all geared for this purpose—to establish a church. When I left in 1962 all the churches could be visited by land travel, buses, or boats—but now it has to be done by airplane in order to save travel time and to visit the churches regularly.

With the increase of churches comes the demand for more national workers and this means the International Grace Bible Institute must do its job of training the national in the Word of God. This past April we saw 10 young people graduate. Out of the 10 there will be nine to work under Things to Come Mission. We are thrilled at the work that has been done here. Teaching is not filled with new daily experiences, but is a steady day by day routine. At graduation time we are able to feel that something has been accomplished as we see these young people graduate and go out into full-time service for the Lord.

When we left, the mission had an 8 ½ x 11 letter press which put out all the literature needed at that time, but with the increase of churches, radio broadcasts, correspondence courses, and workers the demand for literature increased also and thus the demand for a larger press. Now we have a larger press which will handle the load. Each day it is busy printing tracts and gospel literature.

Annual seminars have also been added. The women have their seminar at the beginning of the summer vacation. They are taught to prepare flannelgraph lessons and backgrounds, to make their own visual aids, to organize clubs and also are instructed in the DVBS material for the summer.

The elders' seminars are held in different districts and are used to bring together the elders of the various TCM churches to have Bible study. This has proven a real asset to strengthen the elders in the churches.

Youth conferences are also established in different areas. The young people of the churches of a certain district come together for three days of Bible study and fellowship. Along with this we have a camp once a year. The public school ministry continues. When we were here four years ago we were teaching Bible lessons in the public schools around IGBI, using our students to do this work. Now besides the public schools within walking distance or traveling distance from the school, the Bible women are holding classes in the public schools where they are assigned.

Since 1962 a new work has been started with a tribal people called the Atas. One of the first graduates from IGBI has started a training school for these people. At the school they are taught to read Cebuano, the language which they can speak but cannot read. The Bible is in the Cebuano language so once they learn to read then they are taught to read and study the Word of God. Several churches have been established among these people and several workers are in this area. This year another graduate from IGBI will assist in the work there.

Another new field will soon be opened up when the Shrivvers arrive and settle on the island of Luzon. A Bible Woman will go there to help them establish a work. We certainly don't want to be found lagging behind when God wants us to do greater things for Him. We want you, dear reader, to stand with us in prayer. It is hard at times not to press the battle when the fields are so open. We would love to see the work here branch out into other countries here in the Far East. The eyes of the world are upon this section of the world. We, as Christians, should be concerned too about it for Christ, to direct the worshipful eyes of this section of the world upon Christ." - I H , July 1967

AND SO THE CALL CONTINUES I