

February  
2020

Our  
Itinerary



- Feb 7-10:** GTN Leadership Gathering
- Feb 23:** First Baptist Church, Nogales, AZ
- Feb 26-March 14:** Nepal Ministry
- April 5-24:** Philippine Ministry
- April 25-May 1:** Malawi Ministry
- May 2-10:** Rwanda Ministry
- May 17:** First Baptist Church, Duncan, AZ
- August 2:** Mesa Baptist Church, AZ
- August 9:** Calvary Crossroads, Wenatchee, WA
- August 16:** East Wenatchee First Baptist Church, WA



## Myanmar Report

We've just had three weeks of firsts: our first visit to Myanmar, our first time travelling through Japan, our first opportunity to work with GTN staff member Ron Rushing, our first interaction with the Burmese and Lisu people, the first time we have made a pro-life presentation to three separate groups on one trip, and our first time to train Chinese Lisu Christians.

Eileen and I spent two and a half weeks in Myanmar (Burma) plus transit time. Our first training event, along with GTN trainer Dr. Ron Rushing, was in Yangon (Rangoon) There we worked with 65 enthusiastic students including a large number of pastors and other leaders. I taught the book of Philippians while Ron Rushing taught Christian Discipleship. GTN trainer Richard Spencer (whom many of the students mistook for Bill Gates) organized the event and did the morning devotionals. I was very impressed

with the enthusiasm of the students whose unamplified voices raised in worship were almost deafening. Their thirst for knowledge was evident in their daily response to the training.

From Yangon we travelled to Mandalay. We had no training event here, but took part in an informal ceremony marking the graduation of several students from an earlier GTN training program there. We also took the opportunity to do some sightseeing along the Irrawaddy River. We visited the massive Mingun Pahtodawgyi, a massive and incomplete monument begun by King Bodawpaya in 1790. The pagoda is approximately 50 meters high, one third of its intended height.



**It Ain't  
Over 'til  
It's Over**

**It was a game to remember.** Superbowl 2020. As only an occasional football fan, I had no particular preference going into the game. As the first half unfolded, it appeared to me that the Kansas City Chiefs faced an uphill battle against what seemed to be a superior team: the San Francisco 49ers. San Francisco's offense seemed to advance the ball rapidly downfield while the Chiefs struggled. The Chief's quarterback always seemed to be on the verge of getting sacked. Indeed, the 20-10 score at the start of the fourth quarter seemed to bear out my suspicion that Kansas City

was simply outclassed. Then lightning struck. In a mere six minutes and thirteen seconds the Chiefs scored 21 unanswered points to win the Superbowl championship 31-20. As Yogi Berra once said, "It ain't over 'til it's over." Clearly the fourth quarter matters. It matters a lot.

As a guy arguably in or near the fourth quarter of my life, I appreciate this fact. I appreciate it a lot. What is true in football is true with life in general. Some of the most inspiring figures in our lifetimes have made their greatest contributions during the fourth quarter of life. Winston Churchill was 66 years old when he tackled the impossible task of leading England alone in defiance of the Nazi juggernaut. J.R.R. Tolkien wrote the Lord of the Rings trilogy in his early 60's. Colonel Harland Sanders franchised his first Kentucky Fried Chicken store at age 62. C.S. Lewis wrote 'Mere Christianity' at age 63, one year before his death. Francis Schaffer wrote 'A Christian Manifesto' at age 69, three years before his death. Ronald Reagan was sworn in as President of the United States at age 69, serving 8 years as one of the most successful presidents in history in spite of a number of health challenges including colon cancer and getting shot. Instead of regarding 'the golden years' as a time to slow down and turn the rest of life into one giant weekend, some of the best among us have leveraged a lifetime of learning and growing into their time of greatest impact. The world is changed for the better because they understood that the fourth

**Myanmar Report** (Cont'd)

King Bodawpaya boasted his intention to coat the finished pagoda in gold; however, he died before his vision could be completed and the project was abandoned. Earthquakes have subsequently created huge cracks in the structure. Thus it serves as a reminder that the mightiest works of mankind are, in the end, temporary. We also passed several villages whose local economies, sadly, are entirely based on human trafficking.

We ended our visit to Mandalay and moved on to Myitkyina (pronounced: Mitch YEEN ah) in the far north of Myanmar. The weather was cooler there, but the fellowship was warm. I never cease to be amazed at the fellowship between Christians of completely dissimilar cultures and circumstances. Here we divided to conquer. Ron Rushing conducted his class in Discipleship at a small theological college, while Richard Spencer and I taught New Testament Survey and Philippians to a group of Lisu pastors. Our group included five Lisu pastors who journeyed across the border from China to join our training event. They were very warm in their fellowship and were quite appreciative of the training they received.

We were able to do our pro-life presentation with both groups here in addition to the one in Yangon. I found myself speaking to a group which included citizens of China where family size is limited and abortion is mandated. Some words of comfort were in order. One of the high points of the trip came when an 80 year old Chinese Lisu pastor told us that he had learned things he never heard before. He mentioned the pro-life presentation specifically.



Holding up his 3 month fetal model, he said that he would spread the word. He challenged other pastors to do the same! God-speed!

**It Ain't Over 'til It's Over** (Cont'd)



quarter matters.

This morning at the gym, an older man asked me to help him open his locker since he could no longer see well enough to read the numbers on his lock. I happily obliged, thinking to myself, "Well, in spite of his infirmities, this man is in the gym. Good for him!" He asked me, "Are you retired?" I answered with the trite old joke, "I'm not retired, just tired." He looked at me seriously, poked my shoulder and gave me one word of advice: "Don't." Now, I'm pretty sure he wasn't speaking out against retirement in general. I took him to mean, "Don't quit before you're done." I don't intend to.

How much potential is wasted when good people give up on serving and giving and contributing because society has taught them this dysfunctional lesson: "You've worked hard all your adult life. Now it's time to play." I don't see that lesson in any of the teachings or examples of the Bible. Indeed, were I to name all of the people from Scripture whose names we only know because of what they did in the last quarter of their lives, this could become a very long article.

If you are in the fourth quarter of your game, you have more to offer the world than at any earlier time in your life! Don't underestimate yourself! Teach that class. Take that mission trip. Write those articles—or that book. Mentor those young people. They desperately need the wisdom you have acquired at such great cost. STAY IN THE GAME! It ain't over 'til it's over!



**Our Praises and Prayer Requests**



- Praise God for productive ministry in Myanmar in January.
- Praise God for pro-life presentations with three groups in Myanmar. This made a big impact on the Chinese pastors present.
- Please keep praying for Dilli Ram from Nepal. His final hearing on charges of illegal evangelism was postponed to Feb 25.
- Please pray that our GTN leadership gathering in Feb. will be a time of renewal and inspiration for the whole staff.
- Please continue to pray for God's provision for our travel and training costs.
- Please pray for safe travel to Nepal in spite of travel restrictions imposed by the Coronavirus, and for a productive ministry there starting February 27.

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*"Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that abounds to your account... And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:17, 19)*

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