

Did you know that many peoples in Indonesia were once Hindus, later Buddhists, but today they are Muslim? Most peoples in this region of color and diversity are either Buddhist or Muslim. The gospel is making small inroads, but few people groups have embraced Jesus other than a couple of tribes in northern Thailand and Myanmar. We need to pray for the spiritual obstacles be removed



IBU SRI: A Woman's Story

Sri's mom was from a poor Hitu family. She was first attracted to music being sung by a local church. Soon, Sri was won to the Lord by the preaching of a powerful Chinese evangelist. The mother raised the children to be very honest. She gave a tithe before feeding her family, knowing the Lord always provides. Sri attended seminary in Java. Her sister and brother-in-law went to Papua as missionaries where they were martyred. A disease hit the pigs in the area and the locals thought they, being outsiders, were the cause. Years later, their only child came back to show God's love to this tribe. Over 5000 came to hear him preach. Many people came to confess sins and accept Christ during these services. One who came to confess Christ as Lord also surrendered his spear which had been used to kill the parents. They destroyed the spear as a symbol of how God destroys and forgives sin.

Sri served with her husband for thirty years as a pastor's wife doing "Christian activities" and at various times worked in church planting and also in evangelism to people of "like kind." Nearby, a couple from a different ethnic group came to faith through the preaching of the Gospel at their grandson's funeral. A mission team had shared the Gospel but did not begin a congregation. Sri and the Women's Group at her church began ministering to this Suneuma family and sent a young woman to live in the village. When the young woman left, Sri felt compelled to continue the church planting effort. She took public transportation and motorcycles over muddy roads to reach the church some two hours away. While there, she slept on the floor of villagers. She taught men, women and children on Saturday and led the bible study and the worship on Sunday morning. Her work and service brought on persecution by various local and regional leaders because she was an "outsider." They also objected to outsiders coming from other villages to worship. She asked if the church could continue their Christian worship if the outsiders left. The government leaders agreed to let them worship if the outsiders did not come. The result was the original congregation continued to worship and a second congregation emerged BOTH IN THAT VILLAGE AND in another village since they could not worship in the first village.

Sri and her helpers brought six church members (3 from each congregation) once a week for training. The local Indonesian mother church, very small and not rich, sacrificed to pay for part of the training. The goal was to train these leaders to lead their own worship and to "tell God's story" using chronological storying. One of the men was so shy he could not even practice the story with these close friends. Then one day he traveled to a nearby village to sell his wares. That evening, he stopped at a cousin's house and while there told the Bible story from the previous week. He was such a success that he was invited to come back the next week with another story. He later created a drama / music band and began to disciple young men and they too adopted his style of story telling. When the word got out they were invited and paid to play at to all kinds of socials, activities and events all over the region.

Sri and her group have used reproducible methods such as storying and sustainable agricultural ministries and a medical clinic to start other Suneuma congregations. Not only does the mother church continue to serve these congregations. These congregations are beginning other congregations. Their Suneuma churches have also been praying for the least reached of Indonesia and other countries as well, even as they are being persecuted where they are. One of these congregations dismantled their building with their own hands to prevent a mob from tearing it down. They stored the wood to use later when they can rebuild. That is faith!

Ninety- nine percent of the 2,268,000 Hitu are Muslim, but traditional ethnic beliefs and rituals are still practiced in the remote areas. Less than 1% are believers as are the Sunuema. The Sunuema are one of the largest groups of people still unreached for Christ.

As we heard in the story of Ibu Sri, let us pray for not only the Hitu and the Sunuema, but pray for all of the other 657 Least-Reached People Groups of Southeast Asia as well that...

EXPATRIATE & INDIGENOUS WORKERS

God would thrust forth many more workers and provide creative means of access to the Least-Reached Peoples throughout Southeast Asia for the gospel.

STORYING

Pray for God to show workers how to tell His story effectively and tell it accurately and for Him to confirm His Word with signs and wonders.

MULTIPLICATION

Pray for God to inspire many other new believers to share throughout their natural relational networks what Jesus has done and is doing in their lives. Pray for many to come to faith.

FELLOWSHIPS

Pray for believers to understand that where two or three gather in Jesus' Name, there He is in their midst; that they would focus on living fellowships to encourage one another to love and good deeds.

CONTEXTUAL EVANGELISM

Pray that they also will remain involved in community activities and actively seek friendship with local leaders as indications of good citizenship. Just as the believers were using songs and stories, pray for God to help believers creatively communicate the gospel and His Truth through familiar means with an eternal message of Hope and Salvation.

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