



**Please consider stepping across  
the invisible culture barrier.  
You'll do just fine.**

CULTURE: a system of habits, beliefs,  
values, and customs that is  
unique to a group of people.

INDONESIAN CULTURE IS A BLEND OF ASIAN, DUTCH, INDIAN, MUSLIM  
AND CHRISTIAN INFLUENCES.

*Come! Take a stroll with us along  
the streets of our island, Java,  
and its people.*

Java is about the size of New York state with a population of  
100 million.

*That's the population of all sixteen states which touch the Atlantic Ocean and the Gulf of Mexico -  
from Maine to Texas. [1990 census]*

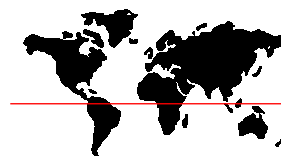
*The following 97 snatches of culture are  
just little windows into our  
neighborhood and our  
Indonesian friends.*

1. The old Grandmas chew BETEL NUT mixed with the leaves of a palm tree. Our house helper has a big wad of it between her cheek and gum. It turns her teeth red.
2. Many of my neighbors have never been to a DENTIST. They readily pull their own teeth when they decay.
3. Our neighborhood owns a SET OF CHINA plates, glasses and silverware which we pass around to the family that will be hosting the next community gathering, wedding, or out-of-town guest.
4. POLYGAMY IN INDONESIA - Islam permits polygamy, however, almost no one practices it here. The federal law which allows multiple marriages also stipulates that permission to take a second wife must be approved in writing by the first wife.



5.  
INDONESIAN GEOGRAPHY

We are 7 DEGREES SOUTH of the Equator. There are only about 9 other countries at the same latitude. Can you guess them?



- A. Africa = T\_\_\_\_\_, C\_\_\_\_\_, K\_\_\_\_\_,  
G\_\_\_\_\_, & U\_\_\_\_\_  
b. S. Amer. = E\_\_\_\_\_, B\_\_\_\_\_ & C\_\_\_\_\_  
c. The G\_\_\_\_\_, Islands  
[answers on p. 16]

6.  
PREJUDICE is a problem. The island of Java is home to 50% of the nation's population of 200 million. Javanese look down on the Chinese-Indonesians because they are the merchants and control much of the finances; they also look down on the Japanese-Indonesians because they ruled Indonesia during WWII; and they look down on black-skinned Indonesians from Irian Jaya because they are literally only one generation from the Stone Age.



THUMBS UP! means the same as it does in the US, but it is used far more frequently. We love it when a native speaker gives us the thumbs up sign when we say something perfectly!

8.  
BICYCLES - The stream of bicycles at rush hour is so heavy that the main roads have a separate lane for them. The bikes come from China and look like they were designed in the 1920's.



9.  
SMOKING is extremely common here. I have no trouble sitting in a cloud of smoke with my friends whenever we chat. Not many can afford to chain smoke. Cigarettes are sold in 2's & 3's. these are my friends so I learned not to let the smoke bother me.



10.  
Boys were in my yard at 6.30 in the morning shooting birds out of my tree. Later one climbed MY COCONUT TREE and took all my coconuts when he had a whole tree full at his house. So I asked him. His father wouldn't let him climb their tree.



11.  
I saw a family eating breakfast together. They were STANDING IN THE STREET buying pastries and juice from a local vendor with a cart.

12.  
All my friends can SQUAT ON THEIR HAUNCHES. They have stretched those Achilles tendons for years squatting like that. I could do it when I was a little kid, of course, but I suppose older folks here can do it as the result of living without as many chairs. Each year I get a little better at it.



13.  
I had to make A TELEPHONE CALL from a row of telephone "rooms" to a fellow worker in the capital 400 miles away. The cost: \$20 for 10 minutes. Eventually the cell phone era will come.



The next week I made an 800 mile round trip train ride to see a friend for the same price. *The difference, of course, was 11 hours on the train each way.*

14.

There are three MAJOR PEOPLE GROUPS ON JAVA

- The Sundanese are the most friendly, but firmly resistant to the Gospel. *west*
- The Javanese are more open [*our neighbors are almost all Javanese*]. *central*
- The Madurese are one of the largest "UNREACHED PEOPLE GROUP" in the world—12,000,000. many hostile.

15. Many Muslims CHANGE THEIR NAMES when they become Christians. It is a custom I would love to stop. What a testimony it would be if a Muslim were to ask a person, "What is your name?" and he were to answer, "My name is Mohammed. I'm a pastor." Wow! What a conversation starter.

16.

I eat HOT PEPPERS EVERY DAY, but the food at the wedding reception today was the first dish that made my lips burn. My kids have friends who wonder why they cry when they eat with them.

17.

It is estimated that most Muslims who become Christians make contact with Christianity or the gospel about 250 TIMES before they come to faith in Christ. Proselytizing is illegal, but talking with Muslims about their favorite subject isn't.

18.

WHAT WOULD IT TAKE TO REACH THEM ALL?

Some of us have never even met an albino, but suppose we had a rare disease and the only cure was to touch the foot of one of the 500,000 albino people in the world. You have about a 1-in-20,000 chance of meeting an ALBINO.

- Suppose we didn't know we had the disease.
- Suppose only the albinos knew they had the cure.
- Suppose they never came to look for us.

What is the possibility that any of the 12,000,000 Madurese will hear and understand the gospel? If you were a Madurese Muslim you would have a 1-in-40,000 chance of meeting one of the 200 Madurese Christians.

Right now a friend of mine is building a strategy to train people to reach the Madurese. He believes he knows every person in the world who is also involved with the same task. There are less than a dozen.

Will you beg the Lord of the harvest to send laborers of any color, nationality, or age to reach the Madurese? Luke 10.2

*Pray ye therefore, the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth laborers into His harvest!*

19.

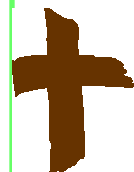
ALMOST NOBODY WEARS GLASSES - If you need them but can't afford them, you just get a job where you won't need them.

20.

CATERED MEALS are common. Wedding receptions, & parties thrown by professors for their students at mid-term, & local political meetings are all likely to be "catered." Even work parties to clean up a vacant lot or build a bamboo fence around the park serve a small catered meal of rice, vegetables, fish or meat, and a tasty rice snack for dessert. It comes beautifully wrapped in a banana leaf.

21.

Days are about ELEVEN AND A HALF TO TWELVE AND A HALF HOURS LONG all through the year. Sunrise 6 a.m. Dark again at 6 p.m.



22.  
TEMPERATURE - Every day is about 75 - 85 degrees. Nighttime temperatures don't change very much because the humidity keeps the heat constant. We both love the heat.



23.  
SEASONS - We have two seasons - dry and wet. Months that have the letter "R" also have a lot of "R"ain. Months without the letter "R" may not get even a drop.



24.  
MOSQUES [Islamic "churches"] face west out here, toward Mecca. The sermon at the mosque lasted about an hour last night and was broadcast by a 200 watt loudspeaker for those who didn't want to walk over to the mosque. My friend is the muezzin, or "caller." My other friend gave the lot next to his house to build the mosque [3 doors away from us].



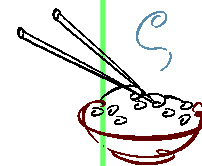
No, it's not a nuisance. It reminds me 5 times a day that this is the reason I've traveled halfway around the world to reach them. *We got used to it quite quickly. Like living near to the RR tracks, or the airport, or the freeway.*

*Some missionaries have allowed it to become a constant irritation.*

25.  
We had a VOLCANO in our backyard [30 kilometers away]. It spewed red lava somewhat constantly. In the last notable eruption, steam and smoke [not lava] killed 26 people. Later we lived on a dormant volcano.



26.  
Our CEILINGS are 10 feet high. We have one 32 watt florescent bulb in each room. The house had only 900 watts of electricity max and only one 10 amp circuit breaker. We were able to get 2,500 watts later. Rooms are usually LIT BY A SINGLE BULB hanging on a cord from the ceiling. Bulbs are 30 to 75 watts. I noticed that in a dimly lit room it takes longer to read a page than in a bright room.



27.  
I'VE LOST 15 POUNDS. We eat rice everyday with our noon meal. Kay makes powdered [full cream] milk. Imported dry cereal is just too expensive. There is not one store in our city of 125,000 that carries frozen or refrigerated products. The closest place is 50 miles away. We go every 2 or 3 months.

28.  
Everything is DUSTY during the dry season. The little kids love to dig in dirt, but volcanic ash dirt doesn't stick to you like mud. Anything grows in it. Everything is green [albeit, with dust on it].

29.  
Our community has NARROW STREETS. Most are cement or cobble-stones. Two cars must slow to a crawl to pass each other gently without scraping walls or mirrors.



30.  
We already participated in several COMMUNITY WORK PROJECTS. They collected money from everyone in the community and bought hundreds of small plants as well as "el cheap-o" grey bricks to line the street near our house. Then we whitewashed walls and cleaned gutters.

When it was time to water the plants, they just diverted water from a nearby rice paddie and dug a little ditch 100' long to get the water to flood the plants. It also flooded the street and a nearby widow's whole yard.

The women also planted a community garden for herbal medicines.

31.

There is virtually NO PROVOCATIVE CLOTHING in the country. Muslims here think American women dress like Indonesian whores.

Burkas [*whole-body coverings*] are rare, but becoming more prevalent slowly. The jilbab is the Muslim head covering which allows men to see the smile. Lots of college age girls wear a jilbab, head scarf.



32.

Track-straightening crews periodically fix the rails on the 400 mile stretch from Yogya to Jakarta. The train, of course slows down at these places and passengers THROW MONEY, extra food and fruit out to the workmen.



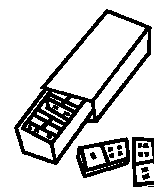
33.

A bicycle RICKSHAW driver was straining up a hill with a couple passengers. The next thing I saw was a fellow on a motorcycle coming up close behind him. He placed his foot gently on the rear fender of the rickshaw and "pushed" him all the way up the hill.



34.

GAMBLING CARDS look similar to dominoes printed on cardboard.



35.

### SHOPPING

Daily street vendors *often delivered by bicycle*

- ice cream & popsicles
- bread
- refills for propane gas
- shish-kabob chicken on tiny sticks
- fruit salad sculptured from fresh fruit before your eyes
- iced tea & weird tropical drinks
- noodle & rice dinners



Within a 1/2 mile walk:

- eggs & some veggies
- fresh bread [200 yds. away] *We have watched them take it out of the oven and pop it into a bag for us.*
- most bare necessities and even some medicines
- bike repairman
- ex-pat mother's co-op school
- Grace's dance lessons [*traditional Javanese dance*]
- public telephone & fax service

Within a 1 mile:

- Post office
- airport
- car repair shop [Mercedes]
- immigration & police office

Within a 2 mile walk:

- language lessons
- the seminary & Bible college where I teach
- most of our American friends
- my office and school telephone
- film development



Within 6 miles:

- bank
- computer store
- supermarket
- mall
- tourist traps

*We never did buy a car. Public transportation allowed us more opportunities to spend time with others on cheap and convenient public transportation: mini-busses, horsecarts, motorcycle taxis, and trains.*

*I did get a HUGE 200cc cycle & even started a motorcycle Clubhouse for [rich] mostly Chinese young men who owned the same model, HONDA TIGER 2000. Yes, I can get the front wheel of my motorcycle two feet off the ground.*

36.  
POSTAGE [1997]  
75 cents per letter overseas  
35 cents overseas postcard  
15 cents per domestic letter



37.  
Now I know why CASHEWS cost so much. They grow on trees along our street and the poor women of the village use 10' long sticks to knock them out of the trees. About 10 to 20 ripen each week, one cashew on the end of an apple-sized fruit.



38.  
MONEY - bills come in 2 different sizes and 6 different colors.

39.  
WHAT NUMBER ARE YOU? Although there is a national program of birth control to limit the size of families, many friends come from large homes. They often ask our kids, "What number are you?" They are glad that 6 of our children joined us in Indonesia.  
National motto: "Two Kids are Enough."



40.  
BIRTH CONTROL - It is common to ask someone if she has joined the KB [the national family planning program]. Only 40% of the people actually practice it. When they ask me if I practice family planning, I tell them, "Yes! As a matter of fact, all of my 9 children were planned."

41.  
POOL HALLS EXCLUDE ALL WOMEN - The only females allowed in are those who run the cash register, keep scores, and chat with the men customers.

42.  
Life EXPECTANCY = 63 Twenty percent die before age 5. Many are too poor to buy the world's cheapest kerosene.

43.  
Only 14 McDONALD'S in the entire nation of 200 million. We've eaten in 3 of them.



44. I've had ENORMOUS DIFFICULTY with language all 3 years! The language learning part of my brain has rusted shut. My vocab is significant, but when I listen to a conversation my brain types out what I hear and I'm trying to read it off the inside of my skull. Nobody does well with that system. Drastic measures are needed for my ultimate survival. I've been a visual learner for a very long time.

45.  
LIFE IN THE KAMPUNG [*neighborhood*] For three months of intensive language study, I am renting a room with a Muslim family headed by Grandma Choo-Choo, in Bandung, an 8-hour train ride away from my family.

I'm immersed in the language here in the kampung. I love it. This is the crowded section of town, and many of the poorer folks live here. I knew there must be a pride factor somewhere which would allow these people to find esteem in their life-style. I found it in displayed in four ways:

- \* the self-sufficiency and industrious nature of the people [*many are self-employed making small items to sell*],
- \* the knowledge that life in the "kampung" most closely identifies these folks as the genuine Indonesian.
- \* a village pride of "gotong royong" [*"helping each other" projects within each community*],
- \* and the community pride that there is even a telephone here among the 300 homes which are plastered to our side of our mountain.

46.

MY PASTOR used to be a cannibal & headhunter. He grew up on the island of Irian Jaya. If you stand to the side and look at his nose, you can see where he used to wear a bone through it. He wore no clothes until about age 11.



47.

Every public building, mosque, Christian church, public and private school, university, and many homes have TWO PHOTOS IN PROMINENT PLACES: President Suharto and his Vice President.



The president has been in power for 30 years and is respected by many of his people. He has been re-elected every term since the 1960's. He is simple and very rich. He eats rice every day and is 74 years old. *He will be voted out of office before we leave in 2 years.*

48. We BURIED MY MUSIM NEIGHBOR just now. He died this morning. I wandered over when I noticed 200 folding chairs had been set up in the street along with 4 or 5 canopies. Little gifts of food [rice, hot peppers, and a sweet] were wrapped in banana leaves for all who came. I went in the house and was asked to help wrap the body in their living room. Eight of us crowded around the body and we passed the roll of linen back and forth.

Kay and I had visited him in the hospital two weeks ago and explained the Gospel again. By this point he had turned a crusty black. A half-dozen members of his family were there at the hospital. Some would stay for days. They would give him his medicines. Change his sheets, dressings, clothes, make him his meals and feed him. His wife might sleep on a mat under his bed at night.



His daughter played with my 8-year old Lydia Grace. Maya's dad wasn't resistant, he was just a typical Muslim, and the typical Muslim neighbor probably has about 200 contacts with Christianity before placing his faith in Christ. We hadn't been neighbors that long.

During the funeral service his friends held up the stretcher he lay on and his widow walked under the body 7 times. Another friend sat next to me and whispered all the strange [to me] rituals which were going on.

Seventy five of us walked a mile or so in procession to the cemetery. I was not asked to help, but at the grave site, the family made sure I stood very, very close to the grave hole.

The next week I walked across the street and sat on the floor next to his widow. She was softly crying. All the furniture had been taken out of the room and one tile had been removed near the middle of the room. I knew the mirrors were covered so the demons wouldn't see their own reflections and cause trouble for the family. After just sitting and sharing her grief for a while, I spoke. I asked if the tile had been removed to allow the demons to leave. She said yes.

49.

My gardener/handyman didn't show up for two days. When he arrived he explained that his child was sick and had gone to the hospital. It would cost the equivalent of a couple months wages.



Then he grinned at me. I knew the grin was his JAVANESE WAY OF ASKING FOR MONEY. I had set aside an extra month's wages for him already as the traditional annual bonus for the Muslim month of fasting. I gave him the bonus early plus an extra 2 week's pay.

50.

CHRISTMAS - Last year was the first time I sat in church and listened to the story of the babe in the manger and there was a REAL MANGER WITH GOATS and everything just outside.



Jesus was born in a third world country.

51.

I invited 2 college-aged guys to take me to a sightseeing spot nearby in a van I borrowed. THEY INVITED 7 MORE. Of course, I was expected to treat everybody to lunch in a roadside "restaurant." All 10 of us ate a full meal for \$7.00. great afternoon.



52.

## INDONESIAN CALENDAR

The calendar in my room has 4 dates. It is the year:

- 1417 for the Muslims
- 1929 for the Javanese
- 2547 for the Chinese
- 1997 for the world

The Chinese, Balinese, Islamic, and "Christian" New Year's are all Red Letter Days and are national holidays.



53.

BRING ME BACK AN OLAY-OLAY An "oleh-oleh" is a souvenir you bring back from a trip. You are somewhat obliged to bring something to certain people. When I visited the States for our son's wedding, I bought Miami Dolphins hats for 3 of my friends who are the village leaders and el-cheap-o Florida tourism T-shirts for others.

Friends may ask you to bring an oleh-oleh for them when you return from even a day-trip out of town. Once a total stranger asked me to bring back a leather handbag for her.



54.

WHEN YOU'RE LOST DOWNTOWN, ask 4 people for directions then take a consensus. Better yet, find 4 teenage Muslim boys who want to practice their English and laugh at your Indonesian. Ask them to tell you how to get to "The Plaza" which somebody else said was just 200 meters away. Walk up and down various streets for 90 minutes with them while they *[who live here in town]* keep asking for directions.

Stop for a full-course meal of rice, veggies, tea, salad, fried chicken, etc. *[you pay, of course.]* Then give them bus fare home and savor an afternoon of delightful language learning. *Then ask someone else about the Plaza.*

55.

THE CHURCH ON JAVA - Hymn books are photocopied with just words.



56.

Last week a student from the seminary asked me to help him TRANSLATE A BILL GAITHER SONG into Indonesian so that he could sing it for special music in chapel at the Bible college where I teach. We worked together for an hour. It was a song I had never heard, but Melky would be able to take the sense of it and then make it rhyme. It was fun.

57.

Our kids' have Indonesian teenagers for their SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS. Their teachers have come to visit us twice. It is a mile walk. I don't think that any Sunday School teacher in America ever came over to our house to see any of my 9 kids in 22 years.

We've visited 4 churches this summer. Three of them meet in houses.

58.

THE KATOLIK [catholic] CHURCH - The term Kristen [Christian] is never used to refer to a Roman Catholic. To say you are a Christian means that you are a Protestant.

I visited the nearby katolik church with the eyes of an Indonesian to see if the Protestants could learn anything about reaching the people here in our "kampung" or village.

a. The first thing I noticed was that the service started at 7.30 a.m. Many Indonesians must work 7 days a week. An early service would allow them to get in a full days work after going to church.

b. The next most striking lesson was that services are also offered in the Javanese language. Everyone speaks both Javanese as well as Indonesian *[except the old folks who may not have gone to school]*. But Javanese is the "heart language" of everyone. My friends invariably speak in Javanese in their homes.





c. Protestant churches look like Dutch churches with squat steeples. The Dutch ruled Indonesia for 350 years. A Catholic church looks like Indonesian mosques in many ways. Perhaps there is a lesson to be learned.

59.

If EVANGELISM AND MINISTRY is the hallmark of the Evangelical Theological Seminary of Indonesia [ETSI], then MUSIC COMES IN SECOND place. Chapels are filled with music. Many students play musical instruments. Groups from the school have traveled all over America, England, and Canada. There are large and small singing groups, trios, duets, and music/drama teams.

Chapel each day begins with exuberant singing. Music has characterized the school's ministry from the beginning.

The new large music building is going up now. It is about half done. Although it cannot be completed until funds are available for it, the roof is on and the interior work has begun. It is exciting to see how important the ministry of music is here.

60.

We went to a Christmas party. When Isaiah [4 yrs old] saw there were presents for all the children he blurted out, "I DIDN'T BRING A PRESENT!"

*[Oh, Lord, make me that unselfish.]*

61.

MY DISCIPLESHIP GROUP at the Bible college is composed of 8 students

We prayed for each of their ministries today:

- demons affecting neighbors
- Christians who are still wearing amulets and good luck charms
- one student's new baby, William
- financial need to finish school - \$100
- special church meetings
- 6 folks who will be baptized next month
- money for a church building \$7,000 "turn key."



62.

I WITNESSED TODAY TO A GANG OF COLLEGE-AGED GUYS in a park. We chatted "friendly-like" for a while. Then the conversation turned to religion. They commented on my large family and I said children were a blessing from Allah.

*Both Christians and Muslims use the name "Allah" to refer to God. They used to pronounce it the same; however, some years ago the church in Indonesia made a clear decision to alienate Muslims. Muslims are keenly aware that most Christians intentionally pronounce it differently from the Arabic pronunciation in order to show that they reject the Muslim religion.*

Allah is the 7th century Arabic pronunciation of Elohim. I use the Arabic pronunciation in order to build bridges, and I refer to the Koran as often as I can when there are points of agreement between Christianity and Islam. It always brings smiles and a genuine feeling of friendliness, and I haven't compromised a thing.

*I've read the Koran twice. Christians have no problem with 80%-90% of its teachings.*

The guys read the "Heaven Test" tract that I gave them, but as I left they started singing a Muslim chorus about Muhammad maybe just to show me that it would take a lot more contacts with Christianity before they would be convinced that Jesus died for their sins.

What group of Christian college students would spontaneously break into singing Christian songs in a park in America?



63.

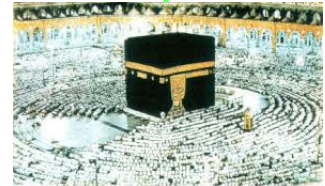
We CHANGE CLOTHES at least twice a day and often take a "mahn-dee" [*cold water shower*] in the middle of the day during the hot dry months.

64.

Last month on the way home from the capital I stopped to see my former landlady and her family in Bandung. You remember that I lived alone with a Muslim family for 3 months while I was doing language study 2 years ago. I knew I would be welcome to spend the night.

Mrs. Choo-choo, my landlady, had since gone on THE MUSLIM PILGRIMAGE TO MECCA. I asked lots of questions, and she talked into the night.

- She visited 30 mosques while she was there
- 75% of the pilgrims are women
- Since the women are completely covered except for their eyes, some of the men masquerade as women so they can get into the women's dormitories
- The sacred Grand Mosque [*similar to the Jewish Temple*] is completely air-conditioned even though several acres in the center are open to the Saudi-Arabian sun.
- The hajj [*pilgrimage*] lasted 28 days. When you're finish the pilgrimage you receive the title "haji."
- She spent 5 days at the Kaaba. This is a stone cubic structure 30 ft. high which used to house many idols. *Muslims like to brag that the complex can hold a million pilgrims. Perhaps it can.*



Muhammad threw 360 idols out of the Kaaba in the 7th century. The "black stone" [*probably a meteor*] was the idol called "Allah" [*and alleged to be the rock on which Abraham offered up his son, Ishmael*] and is now cemented into the corner of the Kaaba. When Muslims make pilgrimage to Mecca, they are really making a pilgrimage to the black stone. Some even get to kiss it.

Breakfast was a staming bowl of rice with lots of spinach leaves smothered in red hot peppers. Mm-m.

65.

SMALL TALK:

- "Have you taken your bath yet?"
- "How much did you pay for that dress?"
- "How much money do you make?"
- "Do you practice birth control? What method?"

66.

LANGUAGE LEARNING -I think I heard someone say that there are 30 different words to describe rice here in Indonesia. *I have also heard that the Eskimos have 50 words for "snow."*

67.

During Sunday School each of the 12 kids in class was asked to come to the front and sing AN IMPROMPTU SOLO, DUET, OR TRIO.

68.

WHAT A NICE GIFT! - A fine hotel sent Kay and me an invitation to stay for two nights with or without kids. [*Guess which option we took?*] There were many singing birds in cages in the outdoor tropical restaurant.

69.

Most missionaries work with Christians, VERY FEW ARE actively involved in direct or indirect Muslim evangelism.

More missionaries in Indonesia are working among the one million tribal people of Irian Jaya where 65%+ are at least Protestant, than all who work with the 150+ million Muslims.

70.

Without a doubt, the most difficult task I've tackled has been to be in the position of NOT BEING ABLE TO HELP anyone else spiritually. These "dry months" come from the hand of Our Heavenly Father even though we, as mortals, don't appreciate them as much as we appreciate the "fruitful months."

However, last night as I sat typing up my 28 page syllabus for the 9-hour Bible Teachers' Workshop seminar I had given 100 times in America, and I became thrilled with possible impact this might have on Christian Education in Indonesia. I dreamed of the thousands of Bible teachers, and pastors who have had no training in Christian education.

I almost wept. Perhaps it was the task for which I was born! I later had the great privilege of conducting it in a half dozen churches by interpreter.

71.

HOW TO PRAY for more missionaries - "Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that He will send forth laborers into HIS harvest." Luke 10.2

"BEG GOD  
TO SEND MISSIONARIES  
TO OTHER CULTURES!"  
*Myers' loose paraphrase*



Every Christian must be faithful right where he lives, but not every Christian is a missionary. There is a popular misconception that anyone can become a missionary simply by trying to reach his neighbors, fellow-employees, and relatives for Christ.

Definition: **MISSIONARY:**  
"SOMEONE SENT BY HIS LOCAL CHURCH ON A MISSION"  
Barnabas was the first missionary sent out by the Jerusalem church.

The Lord's command was PRAY that GOD WILL SEND specially appointed BELIEVERS into the HARVEST.

I understand that to mean that a local church is to commission [*ordain*] some of its elders to GO to other cultures, people groups, and language groups.

I believe that the leadership of the local church is to take a directive role in PRAYING that God will appoint men to leave the local fellowship and enter the harvest.

For DECADES I have encouraged families and churches across America to be obedient to Jesus' imperative COMMAND TO PRAY for these missionaries. Perhaps our prayers should be, "LORD SEND MORE MISSIONARIES FROM MY CHURCH OUT INTO THE HARVEST."

HOW SPECIFIC AM I IN MY PRAYERS?

And for years I have chided the saints about repeating the "generic missionary prayer." It goes something like this:

"Lord, bless all the missionaries around the world, and bless the Myers.  
We ask You to keep them safe, and help them to be good missionaries."

That is a nonsense prayer. If our children came to us with a request like that we would have no idea how to answer it.

The prayer comes from the heart but it completely bypasses the head. Although Christians mean well when they utter such fluffy, gossamer prayers, I'm sure it disappoints the Heavenly Father that grown-ups sound like babies when they enter the throne room of God to intercede on the behalf of His servants who are engaged in spiritual battle with God's arch-enemy, Satan.

From time to time I have to check my own prayer-life to see whether I have slipped into "Prayer-Neutral" myself.

I am a man-of-many lists. Everything I know is written down someplace. I operate by objectives and even schedule in "goofing around" times into my week. My prayer time can reverberate with passion because I have done my preparation ahead of time. I never get stuck wondering "Now, what else should I pray about?" There is always the list in the back of my Bible, or the list taped to my desk, or the list of prayer reminders at the meal table, or the bookmark list of 31 ideas I have mailed out to my friends on my prayer support team.

No, I'll never lack for things to pray for, but alas, I also find that I slip into praying generic prayers. I may find myself kneeling prostrate before the throne reading my list rather than looking at the nail-pierced feet of the Savior.

It does me good to read some of the prayers in the Bible [*even David's whining and moaning prayers that sometimes bug me*]. Gently my Heavenly Father lifts me back up onto His lap and holds me there to remind me that He is my friend and I am His child. He is the Lord of the universe and delights in giving gifts to His children and providing answers to my shopping list of requests, but more than that He wants ME. He needs my attention.

He is a holy God who deserves our adoration, but I have a sneaking feeling that though He loves me to kiss the scars in His feet, He would rather have me look into His eyes.

72.

The dentist let me walk out of her office with GLOBS OF WHITE POWDER around my numbed mouth. Although trained in Germany as a dentist, she was embarrassed to tell an American he had debris on his face. East Asia is a "shame" culture. Later in a large store I noticed people were staring at me, then I happened to glance in a mirror. She also left 3 pieces of tooth in my gum which were big enough to pick out with my fingers!

But it had been painless. She did use plenty of sedative.

73.

#### SPECIAL REPORTS !

\*There was a tsunami [*tidal wave & earthquake*] about 1,500 miles away from here last year, I think.

\*Another island had some riots and church burnings about a thousand miles in the other direction.

\*Our local volcano, Merapi, goes off several times a year big time, but is daily going off with little spurts of smoke.

\*There was a flood in Jakarta not too long ago and sewage floated around at table-top level in our friends' houses.

Several of our US friends have asked about the weather and disasters from time to time. Sorry we don't keep up to date on that too much. Sometimes this is news to us when you ask.

Indonesia is a big place - 3,000 miles long - and we don't always find out about what's happening on other islands. But, then again, Philadelphia folks don't usually know how many inches of snow Wisconsin, gets either.

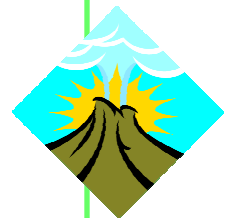
74.

President Suharto went on the pilgrimage to Mecca in Saudi Arabia last year. The pilgrimage is one of the 5 requirements of Islam. HE KISSED THE "BLACK STONE" which Muslims say used to be an idol, but is now set into the side of the Kaaba in Mecca. All pilgrims try to touch or kiss the stone. Few do.

75.

The seminar was to start at 3.00. I was the first speaker of the afternoon. When they came to pick me up at the house where I was staying, it was already 3.10. They call it "jam karet"

RUBBER TIME.



76.

I'm only 5' 8" & 165 lbs, but I have to use a shoehorn to get my body into the SEATS ON SOME OF THE LOCAL BUSES. On a typical bus there would be 5 seats across with a 14" aisle. Average weight of an adult male is probably 120 lbs. what a shock when we returned to the US to all the fat people.

77.

To get PARTS FOR YOUR MOTORCYCLE in a small town you hire a guy to take a bus to the "big city" an hour away. He returns and installs the parts then delivers the motorcycle to your front door. Total bill for his labor and bus fare - \$5.



78.

GUARD DUTY: There are no patrolling night policemen, so once a month I stand watch over our little community. I meet with 2 other guys from nearby communities and we wander around the streets from 11 pm until 3 am.

Once in a while we pick up a rock and bang it a dozen times on a metal street light post. It makes a resounding noise that can be heard in all three of our communities.

We're there not so much to catch thieves, but to be ready to help in case there is an emergency. A neighbor in trouble could shout an alarm or bang on a large hollow bamboo tube and we'd be there within less than a minute.



Since it's a semi-police state, no one owns a gun. Violent crime is very low. Police carry pointed sticks.

79.

Mini-van BUSES don't always come to a complete stop to let passengers on or off.



80.

One greyhound-sized bus was so crowded that THE BUS DRIVER SCOOTED OVER so that a passenger could share his seat.

Our family was traveling on a Greyhound sized bus. One of our children was sick. It was so crowded that when she threw up she couldn't even bend over.



If there's room, strolling minstrels hop on the bus to provide live entertainment [4 songs] with a ukulele. Afterwards they pass the hat and get off at the next stop.

81.

Distance between cities is usually given in TIME RATHER THAN MILES or kilometers



82.

In John 2.24 Jesus calls his mother, "Woman." In Indonesian culture OUR KIDS CALL THEIR MOTHER "IBU [woman]." We also call our domestic helper "ibu." The word doubles for mother or woman.

83.

T-SHIRTS: if the writing is in English, you've got a good shirt. Nobody cares if it is in proper English, properly spelled or not.



84.

Usually we have at least one guitar at churches, and we clap to most songs. If you listen carefully you can pick up 3 to 6 DIFFERENT CLAPPING SYNCOPATIONS or rhythms: double clap, triple clap, off-beat, and superfast all at the same time.



85.

## COLLEGE LIFE

When my students are noisy and I want to quiet them down, I make a HISSING SOUND.

86.

Some of our seminary students have been OFFERED A WIFE [*my teenage sons also*] on-the-spot by young girls' parents in a poor village. For some of these young people it would be their only opportunity to better themselves and get out of the poverty of the desa [*village*].

87. KKN is a federal program required for all college graduates. During their last semester they spend 10 weeks in a remote village. It is often difficult to get trained people to move back into these places, so COLLEGE STUDENTS LEARN TO GIVE A PART OF THEIR LIVES to help those far less fortunate. They help build community buildings, teach reading and writing Indonesian to old folks, teach health and baby care, build roads, and generally make themselves useful.

\*KKN means something like "Studying Really Works."

88.

Purnomo is one of my students. I asked him where he lived. He described it as being a 3-DAY WALK from Pontianak, a city of one million.

He didn't return this semester simply for lack of a sponsor to underwrite his tuition, room and board. There are virtually no parttime jobs.

89.

I MISS MY CALLOUSES. This is the first time in 30 years I haven't had rough hands. I've always had a hammer or wrench in my hands on weekends and, of course, I worked as a carpenter during seminary. I even built Kay a 2,400 Sq. ft. log cabin in the Ozarks before that.

Labor is quite cheap here. Since my time is at a premium and my neighbors need the work, I hire someone to do almost all my repairs. Neighbors did enjoy watching me build a huge shipping crate once and were amazed that a foreigner [*former carpenter*] could drive a 3" nail with one whack.



90.

Since JESUS GREW UP IN A THIRD WORLD COUNTRY Sometimes biblical ideas are easier to understand here in the third-world.

- roof tiles could easily be removed to drop someone down into our house
- "I must ask my father's permission" isn't an uncommon response for a young adult
- rice "fields white to harvest" are never far away for 80% of the population
- "my family is in bed with me in bed"
- tax collectors come to the door
- revenge killing even for the accidental death of a family member
- feet need washing - the flip-flop is the footgear of choice



91.

Relatively poor parents GO INTO DEBT FOR YEARS in order to give a nice wedding.

92.

## A Guide to MOTORCYCLE TRAVEL

- Most parking lots look like this
- Helmets are made of cheap plastic
- About 1/3 don't wear helmet straps
- Broken helmets can be sewn together by drilling a series of holes and using shoelaces
- Traffic lanes seem quite optional - you'll surely be killed if you think you have any kind of "right" to your lane
- The law of politeness prevails - other drivers will always give you a little extra room if you need it, on the other hand, you are expected to slide over if someone else needs a bit of your lane
- Accidents are not common



- Women make up about 20% of the motorcyclists
- Women passengers always ride side-saddle if they are wearing a dress
- Kay has ridden hundreds of miles side-saddle on my big purple Honda even here in the States.
- Rain rarely stops motorcycle traffic, we just pull off to the side of the road and put on a poncho - I've ridden thousands of miles in the rain

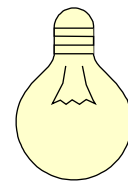


93.

PAY SCALE in the Third World - There has been a big uproar in the States about the wages being paid to Indonesian factory workers. We paid our servant \$34 a month - 6 hours/ day, 6 days/week. If she had worked for an Indonesian family she would have been paid \$24 and worked almost twice as many hours each day.

For \$34 a month you can get afford to buy all this:

- 3 meals a day
- rent a 3-room house
- pay your kids' public school tuition
- snacks
- get local subsidized health care
- electricity in the home, 300 watts
- nice enough clothes, some name brands *[some pirated]*
- enough money to give to friends if they ask, and contribute to local projects to spruce up the neighborhood
- offering at church
- a Pet, probably a scavenger
- a black & white TV
- an old motorcycle *[maybe not]*



Almost nobody has:

- a refrigerator *[we did]*
- a car
- health insurance
- car insurance
- a bank account
- a telephone *[1 out of 8 middle class]*
- books
- video player
- computer
- washing machine

94.

One of our servant/house helpers goes to the SAME CHURCH as we do. *[Shades of Philemon/Onesimus]*

95.

In America DOCTORS NEVER APOLOGIZE for making their patients wait an hour in their boring little waiting rooms. In Indonesia. GUESTS NEVER APOLOGIZE for arriving "late."

96.

Indonesians are very happy that I have a LARGE FAMILY. When I tell them that the Bible says that children are a "berkat dari Allah, *[a blessing from God]* they break into a big grin and agree heartily. They say, "Americans don't want children, do they?" I have to mumble, "You're Right."

97.

As I was riding my motorcycle home I was passed by a hospital patient who had just been released. He was riding on the back of a motorcycle holding up his own I.V. drip bag still attached to his arm.

98.

Many respectable out-of-town “beggars” show up at our door. We’re the only American family in our desa. They only stop at the homes of foreigners and bring an official-looking letter, with an official-looking stamp in the corner, as well as a photograph of a deformed child, or car wreck victim, or dying friend.

I walk over to my desk and bring back an envelope which has a wad of money in it. On the outside is written a large sum of money. I tell the solicitor, “You’ve come to my home but you haven’t gone to any of my neighbors’ homes. You think all Americans are supposed to be generous. I want you to know that I am a Christian and I am very generous. I give to Christians as well as Muslims. Here is an envelope which was full at the beginning of the year. I will give away all this money this year. Many people stop by my home and I give them money. I write it here on the front.



But they are my neighbors and others from nearby villages. But you live 50 miles away. I’m sorry I don’t have any money for you.

By the way, you know you should have seen Mr. RT across the street and received permission to solicit money in our desa. He is my friend.

One of the purposes for this booklet is to entice MANY of you to go to the mission field.

Please consider stepping across the invisible culture barrier. You’ll do just fine.

There is very often a strong feeling in the heart of missionaries, but the myth of the “Missionary Call” is just that—a myth.

It is not supported in Scripture except Barnabas & Paul. None of the 26 traveling companion “missionaries” whom Paul recruited evidently had similar “calls.” You don’t need one either.

**God will not be displeased if you decide to move to a different country, go cross-cultural and wind up starting a church. That’s actually His exact plan. And you do remember there were no qualifiers in “go ye into all the world . . . if . . .”**

There is a great deal of latitude God gives us in the choices where we choose to serve. If you have a passion to reach those living in another culture, ask God to open lots of doors. It may cost you something. It did for us. It used up every penny of our saving as well as the equity in our house.

What a hoot!

He will let you know if He truly needs you stateside.

#### **ANSWERS FROM #5**

What countries straddle the equator?

- a. Africa = Tanzania, Congo, Kenya, Gabon, Uganda, Somalia
- b. South Amer. = Brazil, Ecuador, Colombia
- c. The Galapagos Islands