

FAITHFUL FOOTPRINTS

A newsletter from Stephen Chandra on behalf of the Chandra Family



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"YOUR CUP IS ALWAYS EMPTY"

Many of you know my love for coffee. Young-Ly, my dear wife, often jokingly remarks that my coffee cup is perpetually empty, a testament to my rapid enjoyment of this warm, comforting beverage. This year, this observation has led me to a deeper reflection on the state of my spiritual cup.

In the hustle of life and the pursuit of ministry, I've often felt that my spiritual cup is empty. It seems I have little to pour into the lives of others. More crucially, I've realized that I haven't been drawing enough from the true source of nourishment and refreshment – our Lord Jesus, the fountain of "living water" (John 4:14).

This Christmas, as we celebrate the birth of Jesus, who came into our world as the ultimate gift of love and salvation, I am reminded of the importance of aligning my life with Him. In John 7:37-38, Jesus says, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him." This promise is an encouragement and a call to continually draw from His endless well of grace and truth.

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"YOUR CUP IS ALWAYS EMPTY" -- CONT.

The quality of our service and ministry is not solely dependent on our efforts or abilities. Rather, it lies in how filled we are with His presence and how consistently we can impact others with His love and grace. In 2 Corinthians 4:7, Paul reminds us, "But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us." We are vessels, meant to be filled and refilled with His love, to overflow into the lives of those around us.

As I celebrate this wonderful Christmas with our family, I am committed to keeping my spiritual cup filled with the living water that Jesus offers. It's my prayer for each of us that as we draw near to Him, our cups will overflow with His love, peace, and joy, not just during this season, but throughout the coming year.

May your Christmas be filled with the warmth of God's love, the joy of His presence, and the peace of His promises.

With love and blessings,
Stephen Chandra
&
The Chandra Family



MEETING IN MANILA

In late August, 24 national partners from five countries convened in Manila for a significant event sponsored by Compass Church, Naperville, IL. This gathering focused on prayers, fellowship, and mutual sharing. Over the course of three days, each participant had the opportunity to discuss their ministries and receive prayers. The meetings proved to be a profoundly beautiful experience for all attendees. Personally, it was especially moving to witness leaders, whom, many of them, I have helped mentor for over a decade, sharing the impactful stories of God's work in their lives and ministries. It was a clear testament to God's active presence and influence. Below is one of their testimonies.

NAI'S STORY: GOD NEVER ABANDONS

Nai's remarkable journey began as a 'secret' believer when she joined a campus ministry at the tender age of 17. Today, she serves as a staff worker in that very same student ministry. In 2015, she made a heartfelt promise to God, pledging to follow Him wherever He led her. Over the years, Nai has marveled at how the Lord has unfolded His plan for her, navigating both moments of joy and danger as a Muslim Background Believer (MBB).

The year 2020, despite its challenges, offered Nai abundant opportunities for spiritual growth and fruitful engagement. During a period of isolation, she deepened her discipleship. Remarkably, meaningful discipleship and outreach flourished in the online realm. As a tech-savvy millennial, Nai excelled in utilizing various online platforms. She led 'Kitab' studies, facilitated peace education initiatives, and even delivered talks on a radio program. Notably, this season allowed her to conduct online Bible studies with all four of her siblings, each of whom embraced faith in the Lord

From 2021 to 2022, Nai embarked on a journey of academic pursuit, enrolling in a master's program in Islamic Studies at the University of the Philippines, which she completed online. Additionally, she delved into the study of Sharia law and secured a part-time instructor position at a university. In September 2022, she attended



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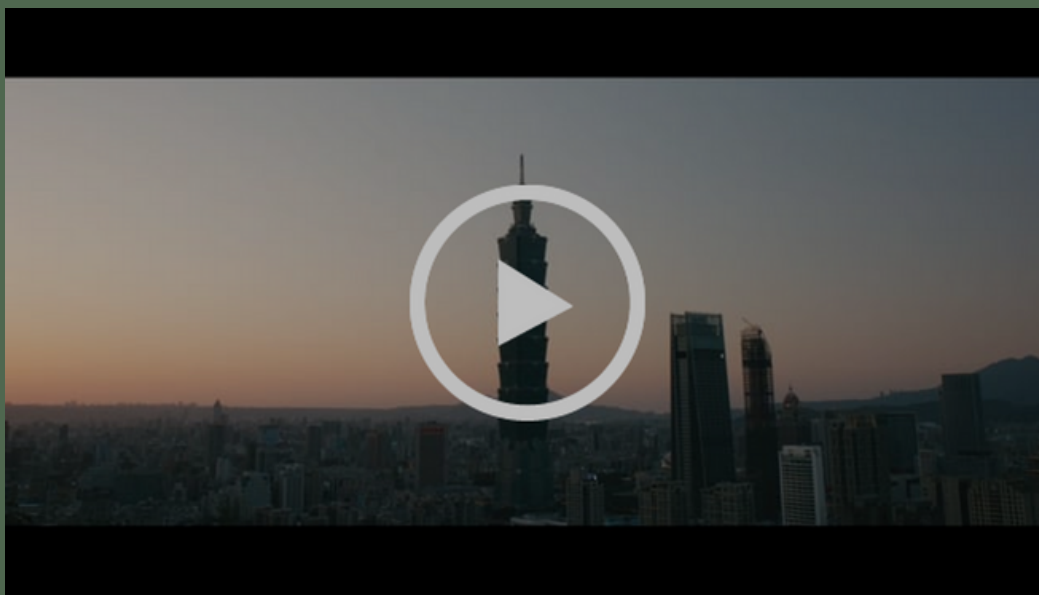
NAI'S STORY: GOD NEVER ABANDONS -- CONT.

In a recent development, Nai was appointed as the Department Chair of Islamic Studies at a university. She views this as a divine favor, positioning her to wield significant influence among students, colleagues, and within the academic community. With humility and quiet assurance from God, Nai perceives these opportunities as gifts imbued with purpose. She acknowledges that her present station is for the greater glory and honor of God.

As Nai undertakes her multifaceted roles and responsibilities, please join us in earnest prayer. Pray for strength, wisdom, and divine favor both in her spiritual journey and as she uses her influence to bear witness to God's grace, especially among the young people from Muslim backgrounds.



TAIWAN INITIATIVES



We invite you to join us in prayer for the recruitment and deployment of more disciplemakers to Taiwan, where less than 4% of the nearly 24 million inhabitants are Bible-believing Christians. This means that about 23 million people in Taiwan may not fully celebrate Christmas, lacking a personal relationship with Jesus as their Savior. Stephen is leading the steering committee of Taiwan Initiatives comprising leaders from Evangelical Free Church networks in Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore, and the USA.

Looking forward, we hope to dispatch a diverse, multi-organizational church planting team to Taiwan in the next year, collaborating with local churches to establish new congregations and foster missionary outreach. The Covid pandemic initially hindered our progress, but we are now seeing encouraging signs of people being called to join this team. Our strategy focuses on establishing bilingual churches fluent in Mandarin and English. To learn more about the EFC Taiwan Initiative, we encourage you to watch our informative video. We ask for your prayers for more laborers to join our mission in Taiwan and for unity among our team members. You can also support this cause by participating in monthly online prayer meetings, joining short-term prayer or English outreach teams, donating financially, encouraging your church to partner with us, or committing to our long-term ministry efforts in Taiwan.

YOUNG-LY'S ART AND FAITH

Young Ly introduced a 'Time-based Pop-Up Art Installation' towards the end of the Lead Team Conference. This installation was part of her MFA research project. Although it wasn't an official part of the conference, it received overwhelming support. Numerous attendees explored the installations and provided valuable feedback. Ly's project explores the intersection of art with mission, church, and community. She is immensely grateful for the support, especially considering the busy schedules of the attendees. Here are some notable reactions (names hidden for anonymity):

K expressed admiration for the contrast between the ordinary brown paper bag and the vibrant fabric. Initially hesitant to walk on the delicate fabric, K eventually did, feeling a sense of freedom and celebration.

T likened the experience to navigating mountains, creating paths while moving through the multi-layered and ambiguous setup.

D felt a connection to the experience of someone lost in a crowd.

J was emotionally reminded of the Holocaust Memorial in Berlin. Interacting with a human-shaped figure in the installation, J felt like they were breathing life into death by tying a string around it.



PRAYER REQUESTS

December 21 - Jan 1: Christmas time with family in Rhode Island

Jan 14 - 17: ReachGlobal Ministry Leaders Team meeting in Penang.

Jan 18 - 20: ReachGlobal F2F leaders meeting in Penang.

Jan 21 - 23: ReachGlobal Asia Division Team leaders meeting in Penang.

Jan 23 - 25: Taiwan Initiatives Steering Committee meeting in Penang

Feb - April: Mission trips to several countries in South and East Asia



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To support Stephen's ministry, go to give.efca.org/now

and enter

“ 5661-Stephen Chandra”

in the “Designation” box