

The Heroes of BTEA

Dear Fellow-workers,

I am writing you from the Philippines, where I am nearing the end of our five-week summer project. This is our fifteenth year of taking summer missionaries to the Philippines; and this year, we have over 90 people, the largest group we have ever had. Our next newsletter will have pictures, stories, and details of our amazing trip!

Most of you are probably aware that a massive typhoon hit the Philippines in June and caused a ferry carrying 800 people to overturn and drown all of the passengers. That same typhoon hit the Island of Panay, where two of our national evangelists were heroes in the midst of the flash flooding that occurred as a result of the typhoon.

Roger Baynosa, who had been assigned to the province of Antique, recently completed his task of preaching in every barangay (village) in Antique. He then moved to the nearby province of Iloilo, where he continued his evangelistic preaching and was also involved in establishing a church plant. Both provinces are on the Island of Panay, which is part of the Visayas, the middle islands of the Philippines. Panay has not had any typhoons for the last 25 years until last month. The torrential rains from the typhoon resulted in flash flooding, and within a time span of only ten minutes, rivers washed over their banks and began washing away people and houses. Roger and his family had to act quickly. Their vehicle, ministry equipment, house, and all their belongings were instantly washed away. Roger's two young sons did not know how to swim, but they watched their father and their mother swim and were able to imitate them and swim to the safety of a nearby roof. After his family was safe, Roger risked his life and dove into the raging waters to rescue twelve more people from drowning.

At the same time Roger was rescuing people from one river flooding its banks, another BTEA national evangelist, Darry Palmes, was also rescuing people from a separate raging river, also on the Island of Panay. Darry's house had been attached to the church, where he was the pastor and his wife was the Christian education director. When the flash flooding occurred, Darry's attempts to save his equipment were unsuccessful, but he got his wife and two young sons onto the roof of GI sheeting and then focused on rescuing 20 neighbors that he brought to safety on his roof. The flood waters came within six inches of the survivors, who watched all of their possessions float down the river. A neighbor that Darry had led to the Lord last year also dove into the river to help him rescue people, but in the process, the man was pulled under and drowned. Darry mourned the loss of his friend but is thankful for the certainty that he will see him again in heaven. Darry's family and those he rescued stayed on the roof all night and the next day until the river subsided.

As soon as their families were safe, these two heroes began preaching, without any of their sound equipment, to all those who would listen, and the response has been unprecedented. People on the Island of Panay are more attentive and responsive than they have ever been; and our BTEA staff evangelists have not only had the privilege of rescuing many from the raging flood waters, but also from the wrath to come because



they have preached the good news of a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. These men are truly heroes, and I had the privilege of bringing them clothes and other necessities for their families and helping them to secure temporary housing. We hope to raise the funds for housing, vehicles, and ministry equipment within the near future.

Thank you for partnering with us through your prayers and financial support, which continues to reap huge eternal dividends. We are so grateful!

In the harvest,
Bob Tebow

