

FIRST PERSON: Reaching the unreached

*By Steven Barnes**

Correspondent

When I first surrendered my life to the Lord at age 13, I was so overwhelmed by the goodness and glory of God that I instinctively wanted to share that with others. When I found out about missions and the opportunity that I could have to be a part of what God was doing in the world, I knew that missions needed to be a part of my life in some way.

In college, I went on some short term mission trips with my BSU. We partnered with church planters that had been working in specific areas for years, patiently waiting to see the fruit of their labor. I realized that these people were committed to long term investment in the communities that they were trying to reach because that was the only way they could see any long lasting change.

God also impressed on me the overwhelming need for missionaries to be sent to unreached people groups. I learned that most of the funding and resources of churches goes towards sending missionaries to places that already do have a gospel witness. The places that are unreached are not given that same priority because they are hard places to reach for a number of reasons. I became convinced that because I was willing to go and because God gave me a burden in my heart for the unreached, I should pursue missions.

I looked for opportunities among unreached people groups. I focused on opportunities in Asia, working with college students. I have always been drawn to Asian culture, and I think it's important to have a passion for the people you are serving. Likewise, as a college student myself, I feel well

suites to interact with and relate to others my age.

I think it's easy to think that you are not qualified to serve overseas, but really I think all it takes is humility and a willingness to serve. One has to be willing to learn, be uncomfortable, and try new things. I think the only way to be willing to do those things is through humility. Humility allows you to recognize that the mission is bigger than just you and it also allows you to see your need to abide in Jesus and rely on His power to sustain you.

Please pray for me and all of my fellow students as we spend our summer sharing God's word all over the world! Pray that we would stay humble and focused, not on our own needs, but on glorifying the name of God.

State BSU Missions Team member Steven Barnes is a rising junior at the University of Southern Miss, majoring in English.

** Name has been changed for security reasons related to summer missions assignment in a closed country.*