

The B.I, R.I and S.I people of South East Asia

The People Groups

The B.I people are scattered over a number of small islands, many of which are accessible only by small boats. They have a strong cultural identity which binds them together in highly communal societies that are resistant to change. While they are overwhelmingly Muslim, their animistic beliefs remain influential in daily life. Entrenched spiritual allegiances keep them blinded to the Good News. Only a handful of the B.I are followers of Jesus.

The R.I people live on the picturesque and cool slopes of a mountain range that runs along the coast of a large island. They number around 3 million but there are few known followers of Jesus. The overwhelming majority of R.I people profess to follow Islam. However, animism is an integral part of their daily lives and beliefs.

Around 45 million **S.I people** live in one of the most densely populated regions on earth. Almost all S.I people are Muslims. They comprise one of the largest least-reached people groups on Earth. Their communal solidarity and strict social codes have served as barriers to the Good News. Followers of Jesus are a small minority but there is a growing openness and willingness to learn about Him.

Global Interaction team among the B.I and S.I people

The team serving among the **B.I people**, live and work on a remote tropical island. The cross-cultural team has established an Education Foundation that provides skills training for the local people, greatly improving their level of education and employment opportunities. The Education Foundation is also a safe place for the local people to ask questions about Jesus, as the cross-cultural team share their faith with local staff members and students.

The cross-cultural team working among the **S.I people** have a strong focus on hospitality and creation care. They are engaging in creative and wholistic activities that look to respond to the physical, environmental and spiritual needs of the people. The local people also have access to the Education Foundation where they can learn new skills to assist them to find work in the area. The S.I people are open to conversations with the cross-cultural workers about the spirit world as this is an important part of their culture. God often communicates with the S.I through dreams and visions which prompt good discussions with the cross-cultural team about Jesus.

Prayer Needs for the B.I, R.I and S.I people

- God would continue to use dreams and visions to point R.I people to Jesus
- The hearts of R.I people to be softened to hear the message of Jesus
- God's Spirit to be opening the hearts of S.I people who come into contact with the team, to hear the Gospel and respond
- Sensitivity to the Spirit's leading for the team as they build friendships and seek to share the Good News through the Education Foundation, Cafe and Creation Care initiatives
- Protection over S.I believers and courage as they fear opposition from their families and communities
- Doors to open enabling the team to receive their necessary visas in a smooth and timely manner
- Spiritual breakthroughs within the communities we serve among
- Deep cultural understanding and good language skills for the team, enabling them to effectively communicate the Gospel with B.I neighbours and friends

Pray for the Team Members (secure names used)

S.I PEOPLE

Ally (candidate)

Ando (candidate)

Andy and Wanda (medical leave)

Daz and Bee

Dave (Team Leader) and Caz

Pat and Joy (candidates)

B.I PEOPLE

Dave (Team Leader) and Caz

Dave and Edwina

Max and Ezzie

Mick and Tara (leave of absence)

Stories of Hope from South East Asia

Finding Treasure

In Matthew chapter 13, there are two short parables that Jesus uses to illustrate what the Kingdom of Heaven is like. He tells of two people finding treasure. The first person unexpectedly finds treasure in a field, then sells their possessions in order to purchase the field and in turn, own the treasure. The second person is a merchant seeking out fine pearls. In finding one of great value, the merchant sells their possessions and buys the pearl. These two different people illustrate how some find the treasure of the Kingdom after a period of searching and seeking, and others find it unexpectedly, without even looking for it. However, upon finding it, both kinds of people must choose to respond.

In South East Asia, Dave and Caz have had the joy of witnessing local people meeting Jesus in the two different ways outlined in the passage. They write “Mr H had been on a search for years. His soul hungered for more. When he found the treasure of the Kingdom, he gladly surrendered his past goals to commit himself to that Kingdom. Mrs I in contrast was just trying to make it through life one day at a time when the Spirit unexpectedly compelled her to engage in a conversation with Caz, which led to her finding a treasure she didn’t know existed. With great joy she has embraced this treasure, along with the cost.”

Small Steps of Faith

Mr A is a young B.I man and a devout Muslim. Dave and Edwina met him through the Education Foundation where Mr A has been both a student and a tutor. Initially, Mr A made it clear to Dave and Edwina that he was not interested in any conversation about their faith. However, as their friendship grew and Dave and Edwina showed genuine interest in his culture and faith, Mr A slowly became open to learning about their faith too.

They began introducing each other to their Holy Books and discussing the similarities and differences between their beliefs. Mr A now recognises Jesus as a prophet, however is challenged with how to respond to the revelation of Jesus in the Bible compared with his Holy Book.

Dave and Edwina continue to journey with Mr A in his faith. Pray that Mr A will recognise Jesus as more than a prophet, but as ‘the Way, the Truth and the Life’. Pray also that he will understand that if he chooses to follow Jesus, he can still remain within his culture and community.

**>>> For more stories of barriers being overcome,
visit: www.globalinteraction.org.au/News**