



there is Horse

BY **SINTA JONES**

Sinta Jones has been working together with her husband for 7 years in Asia, leading a team with an end vision for CPMs in their region.

Among the many skills needed to establish a Church Planting Movement is a willingness to unflinchingly evaluate our work. This has been integral to our journey. It is for His glory, and worth the change and pain to see fruit where there has been none or very little.

During a worship time at an all-women's CPM training, Jesus pointed over my shoulder to the future and I heard the words "for the joy set before him." For the joy set before Jesus He endured the cross and despised the shame. For the joy set before us we choose to despise shame and fear, and willingly embrace evaluation and correction so that we can bring the treasures of darkness to the feet of the One who loved us to His death.

Dissatisfaction with fruitlessness has forced us to continually evaluate our practices on the field. Our first evaluation led us to start a local, near culture team. These were local partners,

not from the UPG, but from another people group within our country, whom we recruited. We never could establish a CPM alone. Other changes have come as we reviewed what role we played and what language was most effective: as we listened to the Father's voice about where to go and confronted fear and intimidation. At every turn we have found it helpful to be ruthless with our evaluation of what is happening and what can be done more effectively.

The beginning of this year found us at a very low point. Two interns and five team members were leaving. I was recovering from cancer and my husband showed signs of burnout. After six years on site we were desperate and our team was discouraged. Why were we not seeing people excited about Jesus? Why did those who professed faith not seem to be changed by their choice to believe? Why were people keen to have story groups but their enthusiasm didn't last more than



four or five gatherings? We went searching for answers. We spoke with church leaders and other experienced workers, and asked for help from our organization, then decided to hold another CPM training in our city.

The breakthrough came for us as we brokenly shared with Dr. Bill Smith and our country director. The question asked was “What are you preaching?” It was humbling to admit how we had tried so hard to be contextual that we had never emphasized repentance. We avoided talking about the cross. And what we had modeled to our national partners, they were simply reproducing.

We had also been too slow in our follow-up. We went by the calendar instead of the clock – by days instead of hours. So simple, and yet we could not see it by ourselves. We knew we would gain nothing by hiding our failure or pretending all was well when it was not. As we made ourselves vulnerable in our request for outside evaluation, Jesus came and met with us. The harvest is ripe and God longs to gather those of us in his family back to total dependence upon His heart. We don’t want to miss the harvest because of our pride or shame, our fear or independence.

Half way through the training we called our team together and repented in tears before them. We revisited what needed to be shared so that we could be sure our listeners had heard the full gospel. Everyone was excited, especially when Indah brought back the beginnings of the following story to the training.

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Ms. Indah, determined to practice what she had just heard, went with our female intern down to a village to share the gospel. For the first time she shared the message including the cross. Mrs. Faye repented and wanted to be baptized. The next day they returned, shared the gospel again and Mrs. Faye was baptized in the ocean as the sun was setting. Yes!!!

Mrs. Faye immediately started sharing her testimony with family and friends. She even had an encounter where Jesus stood before her in her house. After hearing about healing she prayed for her daughter and Indah, and both were healed. Her husband allowed her to open her house so that they could meet and share stories from the Scripture.

Mrs. Faye tried to share with her husband but he didn’t understand. In one of our weekly accountability meetings I suggested to Indah that she take a male team member down to share with the husband. He went and the husband repented and was baptized. Soon after that their son was also baptized, followed by his friend.

One morning before dawn Mrs. Faye’s fisherman husband went out by himself very early to fish. Suddenly he saw a white-robed figure in the boat. Terrified, he stood up to jump out of the boat, thinking it was a ghost. The man grabbed his arm and said “Don’t be afraid, I am Isa Al Masih.” That morning he caught 250 fish, which was 100 more than his usual daily catch.

When things don’t seem to be working, we can find hope through honest evaluation. Willingness to change opens the door to a way forward. If you are desperate to see a harvest in your field, be relentless and evaluate everything. Listening to the Lord and seeking wise counsel from others can open new paths to greater effectiveness toward Church Planting Movements. 