

A WORD ABOUT OVERSEAS MISSIONS

By Doug Harvey, Executive Director of DHF

Passion for overseas missions is in the DNA of most evangelical churches. For centuries we have expressed our faith through support of those who carry the Gospel to places where the need is greatest.

I want to remind you that our overseas missionaries are facing a particularly difficult time right now. Most of them receive minimal salaries and devote much of their support to the actual work of missions. The recent decline of the dollar in world markets has put many of them in a particularly difficult bind. The same number of dollars will purchase far less today than they did just a few months ago.

By way of example, I just checked the exchange rate of the Philippine peso against the US dollar. In early September one US dollar would buy 47.06 Philippine pesos. Less than four months later, the same US dollar would only buy 40.35 Philippine pesos. That's a drop of over 14% in the dollar's value to a missionary in the Philippines.

Imagine the change in your lifestyle if everything in your world suddenly had a 14% tax added to it! That's what it's been like for our overseas missionaries recently. Of course, the exact percentages vary from nation to nation, but the pattern is the same over the world. The dollar is weakening against nearly all other currencies.

Missionaries have no control over the fluctuating currency markets. When they were last with you to raise support, their projected needs looked very different than they do today. If you are passionate about foreign missions, you need to take a close look at the financial situation of those you support. It is time to dig a little deeper to undergird their work on your behalf.