



The Khmer Chronicle

The Cambodian Ministry Newsletter
of George and Shary Frahm
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Cambodia meets Jakarta, Indonesia

This past week was filled with a few unexpected preparation points and hiccups for the week that we could claim to be par to the norm for this chapter of our lives, that being wrapping up our business and home stateside as well as packing into six suitcases what we would need to have for the next year on a daily basis, while organizing our computers to include things in that realm as well.

Nothing could have given us a hint as to a very special blessing that directly connected us to half way around the world though, speaking to us of our Father's leadership and driving force in our lives at this point. This brought tears to our eyes and very humble hearts.

Recall that we spent three years in Indonesia at a Christian university in west Jakarta where George taught Engineering and English classes and Shary worked with the school of nursing. We were also dorm parents to 150 Teachers College students who were recruited from the islands and such of Indonesia and brought there to receive a free college education that would equip them to return to either their village or an assigned remote area to provide a solid based Christian education to the children in that area.

Since we left Indonesia this particular program has expanded beyond the shores of Indonesia, with recruiting in other Asian countries, one of them being Cambodia. The leadership at the Teacher's College wrote me a letter excitedly sharing this great news with us when she heard that we were returning to Cambodia to work with the rural Christian schools and do agricultural

development.

For whatever reason, this particular email landed in our junk folder, and looking into this folder to see what 'junk' was flying through and finding this particular note to us was a 'Wow'!

This is the first year for these students to be in this program. Please realize that these students leave their remote village homes in Cambodia and are taken to Jakarta, Indonesia for four years and they will not see their families at all during that time, unlike their previous Indonesian counterparts who were allowed one trip home after two years because they lived 'in the area'. Additionally, they will not have access to easy phone communication and texting as they are outside of their home country, and as yet, many of the remote villages do not have stable internet access at this time. Additionally these families are poorer than families in Indonesia.

Furthermore, as Rebecca shared, these students struggle the most of any she has seen. Realize that they do not probably speak Bahasa Indonesian and their English is most likely very basic. We have seen this program up close and personal, and it is not a walk in the park for these students to get thru either. Wow! What a sacrifice these students are making to raise up Christians in their home villages and in a country that is still over 95% non Christian. All for the glory of our Father. Amen and Thank you Father for your love for each of us!

Meet Kuylay (from Cambodia)-His Story (we did not write this)

Not so long ago when Kuylay was a young boy he

grew up just like other kids in his village. His village is located about halfway up the Mekong River in Cambodia, and about seven kilometers inland away from the river. Most people live along the river banks because that affords them with an easier supply of fish, water and fertile soil. Poor people, and by poor, I mean people who have nothing to their name, live further away from the river. They are kind of rural squatters. Eventually enough people move into a remote area and a few homes are clustered together where they become recognized as a village. Chuturn village is such a village. Chuturn means “bent wood”.

However, living away from larger populations has many drawbacks like the lack of access to education and markets, but it also has dangers. Up until the late 1990’s the greatest danger in this area were roaming bands of Khmer Rouge soldiers. The Khmer Rouge at its height from 1975-1979 controlled all of Cambodia and their genocidal purge killed millions of Cambodians. But they were defeated in 1979 and then moved into rural areas and continued a guerrilla war. By the 1990’s they had all but forgotten the communist ideologies and were primarily just violent criminals.

Kuylay’s father was a teacher. Education was important for him. He was the only teacher in Chuturn and though they did not have a school building he would volunteer to teach the children in the village. However, being a teacher around the Khmer Rouge was in their eyes “criminal”. They hated education and specifically teachers. Under the Khmer Rouge regime they destroyed schools, turned some into prisons (like the infamous Toul Sleng High School in the capital city where over 20,000 people were tortured to death), many universities they demolished and even dumped the contents of the National Library into the Mekong River. Kuylay’s father was marked as an enemy and warned to quit teaching children. However, he couldn’t quit. He dreamed for a better future for his children and the children of Chuturn village.

One day when Kuylay’s father was teaching he was sent a message to go to a nearby village for lunch and an important meeting. He came near to the house where the meeting was to be held and as he started to climb the ladder into the house which was built on stilts, he saw several men with machine guns inside and he realized it was a trap. Immediately he knew they were going to kill him. He jumped off the ladder and began to run away from the home toward the nearby jungle. The Khmer Rouge soldiers fired at him from the house and hit him in the leg. He staggered to the edge of the creek as the Khmer Rouge chased after him. At the creek side, with his family watching, they fired the final fatal rounds into this body. Kuylay, only an infant, lost his father on that day and Chuturn lost their only teacher.

A few years later another Khmer Rouge soldier came into that village. We’ll never know if he was part of that crew that killed Kuylay’s father, though this former soldier was specifically backtracking to places where he had brought terror too. This man was named Pin. A former Khmer Rouge commander that came to know of Jesus and whose life had been so transformed by the grace of God that no one could comprehend what he did in the past. Pin shared with the villagers about Jesus and how he would forgive their sins and save them from their sin and suffering. Kuylay’s mother prayed to receive Christ and asked Pin if he could help educate her youngest son, the others were too old, she determined, to receive a formal education. Pin brought young Kuylay to the Imparting Smiles Center in Kracheh along with a few other children from their impoverished village.



Kuylay’s family at their house in Chuturn village

While Kuylay was studying and living in the Imparting Smiles Center the Khmer Rouge agreed to a cease fire and the government even built a school which potentially could educate the village kids from grades 1-5. However, no one in the village is educated so teachers only come sporadically. The school quickly ran into disrepair.



The teachers “office” at the village school in Chuturn.



A typical classroom in Chuturn village which is quite similar to any classroom in Cambodia.

In 2014 Kuylay completed High School and was accepted at Universitas Pelita Harapan (University of Light and Hope) to a new International Teachers College where he will receive a US accredited Bachelor and Masters of Education upon completion. Before leaving for school he went home to say goodbye to his family. When he returned to say good bye to his mother and siblings in the village he walked the seven kilometers from the riverside back into the poor village. He wanted to bring something special to them from the big city of Phnom Penh that they would enjoy. So, he brought them a

special gift of two loaves of sliced bread.



Kuylay returning to say goodbye to his family before departing to Indonesia

Two days later he left his mother and siblings and will probably not be able to return home for another four years. But when he does finally return home, he will be a teacher and he will be equipped to see to it that he carries on the legacy of his father and see to it that children in Cambodia can receive the best education possible.

Kuylay is in his first semester at UPH and is not only learning core educational and Bible courses, but learning to converse and write fluently in English and adjusting to living in Jakarta, Indonesia which is a megacity with a population bigger than the entire population of Cambodia.



Kuylay at the university in Indonesia

Knee Thoughts



Prayers for a smooth transition back to Cambodia on November 1st as we bring closure to our lives stateside for our time there.

Prayers for others to be fired up for the ministry in Cambodia and become partners in many ways so that we can serve together in the local church.

Praise for the continued growth of the church in Cambodia as they march forward to share the gospel message in the rural villages.

Praise for communication from Jakarta which will strengthen the Cambodian ministry in the future

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Thank you! God's Blessings!