

No other gods

But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord. Joshua 24:15

We zigzagged our way through several small dark alleys to reach the home of Mr. Thiet and his wife Phuong. The only illumination along the way came from the windows of neighboring alleyway homes and the headlights of motorscooters we jumped out of the way to avoid. A metal, ladder-like staircase was the last step before reaching the second-floor room that is their home.

The walls of their tiny room were lined with all their belongings. During the day the room is the center of the family's activities. At night it becomes a bedroom when they roll out the simple mats they and their two young children sleep on. Ever present in the room is a red wooden altar with incense and little chubby god figures.

Mr. Thiet asked us to come this past Sunday night because he and his wife wanted to get rid of the altar in their home and were afraid to do it alone. Although he had been "seeking understanding" about God and his son Jesus for several months, he had just decided to believe. Deciding to follow the most high God left him no room for any other gods. What a precious thing to hear them both pray and affirm their decision to follow Christ. What a powerful testimony to see their altar to a false god removed from their home and lives.



Pastor An - bagging up and removing the altar.

Mr. Thiet and Phuong are wonderful examples of how God loves us first, even before we believe. They are a testament to how God is working among the Vietnamese here in Cambodia. Their changed lives are the result of God using local believers, our medical program, our teammates and visiting volunteers to pour out His love and make Himself known.

The rest of the story:

Back in January a medical volunteer team from South Carolina came to work with us. Ms. Trang, a local believer, asked if her neighbor Mr. Thiet could come see us while the team was visiting. Mr. Hieu the leader of Trang's church and member of our medical outreach team went to visit Mr. Thiet. Although only 46, Mr. Thiet was unable to work, chronically fatigued and had to sleep sitting up and leaning forward. Life was miserable and hopeless and the numerous local doctors he had seen said that there was nothing that could be done. When he came in to see us, we found that he was suffering from heart failure. A young local Christian doctor working with another organization specializing in cardiac care agreed to see him and put him on the right meds. He improved immediately and began to acknowledge that the most high God had saved his life.

Although Mr. Thiet was resistant initially, his wife Phuong began to attend church with Trang. My teammate Hai began teaching a Bible study in their neighborhood in the home of Mr. Hieu and they began to attend. At Phuong's invitation, Hai's wife Cam Thach began to teach a ladies' Bible study in their home. Phuong came to us for medical care and heard more about God. Mr. Thiet went from being on death's door to being able to work again. Things had changed so dramatically for him in 6 months that this past Friday he was able to buy a tuk tuk taxi to support his family.



Mr. Thiet and his family out for a tuk tuk ride.

It was at this point that he came to his crossroad of faith. He was preparing to celebrate and make traditional spirit offerings to ask for protection and blessings for the tuk tuk when Ms. Trang gently asked him why he didn't ask the God above all gods who had saved his life to protect and bless him. By Saturday night he had made his decision to follow God and God alone. Ms. Trang, Mr. Hieu and others joyfully gathered round the tuk tuk and dedicated it to God. Sunday he asked us to come help remove the altar. God used volunteers again in the lives of Thiet and Phuong as some from Texas and Vietnam were with us Sunday, praying and helping with the removal of the altar.

Thank you for the part you have played in the lives of Thiet, Phuong and countless other here in Cambodia. Thank you for praying for us. Thank you for your generous gifts to the Cooperative Program, the Lottie Moon Christmas offering, our medical program, our special gifts account, and the CSI Clinic/Mercy Medical Center. For those of you who have had the chance to come and serve alongside us, thank you for your service and for bringing medication, equipment and other wonderful things from the US!



July 27: Our mountain of meds from Texas. Many thanks to Pastors An and Hung and their teams from Texas and Vietnam!



Hieu, Thiet, Phuong, Trang and the kids

Prayer requests:

1. Pray for the Bible study at Mr. Hieu's house.
2. Pray for the brand new youth Bible study started by Ms. Trang in another neighborhood.
3. Pray that Thiet and Phuong will continue growing and sharing their newfound faith with others. Pray that God will continue to grant him the health to support his family. Pray that he will have lots of customers.

Praises regarding previous prayer requests:

Some of you may remember the story about Spinach Lake back in October 2007. Mr. Kha and Mrs. Trinh have a group that meets there every Sunday now. A team of volunteers just built a small building/house where Mrs. Trinh is now teaching and where the Sunday group meets.

Blessings,

Anna