

September 2019

Called to Cambodia

Stories of the adventures of Jeff Henneforth as he responds to God's call to live among, serve, and love the people of Cambodia.



Naked Baptism!

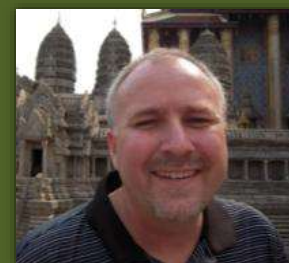
Having a baptism here in Poipet is always an interesting experience. We had one a few months ago and it was no exception. One of the challenges is finding a good location to hold the baptism. Fortunately, we've now got that covered. There is a community pool about a half mile from the church. Half the pool is made for smaller kids to play in and is a pretty good depth for a baptism. The people that run the pool are really nice and allow us to hold baptisms there without any hassle. They even let us bring in our own food to have lunch after. One of our church families has several members that work at one of the casinos on the border. They wanted to get baptized, but planning a good time where they would be able to come was a challenge because their shifts vary from week to week. The only time they could come reliably is Sunday morning when they normally come to church. Since it's Cambodia and usually 90 degrees Fahrenheit even in the mornings, we decided to just have church at the pool and do the baptism. Because it is a community pool, there's no real control over who else is going to be there at any given time. Some days, a ton of people are there and some days it's completely empty. On most days, fewer people are at the pool in the morning. The day of the baptism was early in the rainy season, but the weather had been nice all week.

I went to the pool the day before the baptism to make sure everything would be ready. The sky was clear and blue and no people were there swimming. I thought, this is going to be perfect. The next morning was the day of



the baptism. When I went outside, the sky was completely cloudy. Then when we arrived at the pool, about 100 local kids were there. I don't mind having other people watch us hold a baptism because it's a good opportunity to share with the community. However, I've found that when the local kids are at the pool, they think you are there to play with them and will continually try to hang on you. So I was freaking out a little because it had the potential to completely disrupt the baptism. But our people were already showing up with the food we ordered

for a time of fellowship after the service. Cancelling or postponing wasn't an option. Then to top it all off, it started raining. The day before, I thought everything was going to be perfect, but this felt like the total opposite. At first, the rain was pretty light, but then it got stronger and stronger until it was basically a monsoon. I thought, this is a disaster. All I could do was pray. I told the Lord, "This is Your baptism and these are Your people who want to be baptized. You are in control. I'm just going to trust you and we're going to go for it. Maybe just don't send any lightning while we're baptizing in the rain." My helpers were looking at me for what to do, and so I told them, "Let's go under the covered area. We'll start with the worship and I'll give a message on what baptism is about just like we originally planned. And then we'll do the baptism. We're going to have to trust the Lord to take care of it." So, we sang, and I spoke. Gotta say, God is so cool. Just as I finished teaching, the rain stopped. Because it had rained so hard, almost all the local kids left and we had the pool mostly to ourselves. Thank You Jesus!



Contact Info
(+855) 12-548-540
(949) 945-7380

Email:
jeffhenneforth@
gmail.com

Naked Baptism! (Continued)

Well God wasn't finished teaching me that day. I told the people that wanted to be baptized, go ahead and get changed and we'll start the baptism in ten minutes. One of the people that was getting baptized that day was a young man who comes to our church named John Cena, like the pro-wrestler. It's not his real name. Everyone calls him that because when he was just a boy, he wore a tee-shirt every day with a picture of John Cena on it while begging along the border. John has multiple sclerosis and cannot talk very clearly. Some people think he is mentally disabled, but he's not. He's just never received a good education and still spends most of his time begging at the border. He really loves the Lord, and I'm always amazed because he tithes regularly too. After a few minutes, one of the people came over and told me, "John isn't wearing any clothes." I looked over and saw he had a towel wrapped around his waist and so I went over and asked him, "John, do you have your shorts



on?" He just smiled real big, started giggling and began to pull his towel down. I stopped him before he could get too far once his state of undress was confirmed and told him, "You need to go put your shorts on buddy." Just to be sure, I had one of our church guys help him. The word for baptism in Khmer translates roughly as the ceremony of the bath, so I guess he thought you had to be ready to



take a bath. I've done several baptisms in Cambodia but that was a first.

After that, the baptism went great. We baptized about 20 people that day, including the people who work at the casino, others from the community who attend the church, and several of the kids being raised at the Mercy Ministries Foundation Happy Home. And, of course, John Cena (with shorts on).

Looking back on it, I think God wanted to show me something. John was completely ready to get baptized thinking he was supposed to be naked. How many of us would be willing to get baptized if we had to do it like that? I'm pretty humbled by an uneducated beggar whose love for the Lord means he is willing to do something a lot of us would be too embarrassed to do.

Teaching the Teachers

God has opened a new door, and I've recently begun working with a couple of Cambodian Christians who are planning on opening an English school nearby and want to use it as an opportunity to share about the Lord. They think they will also have the opportunity to teach about the Bible, and they've asked me to help prepare them. We're now meeting four days a week. I'm teaching them the inductive Bible study method. If you're not familiar with that, it's a simple but also very deep approach to Bible study that transfers very well to teaching. Basically it's asking three questions: What does it say? What does it mean? And how does it apply to us today? There are many tools that we use to answer those three questions.

One of the guys, named Andre, has been attending Calvary Chapel Poipet and is starting to help by translating the message into Khmer on Sunday mornings. Since he doesn't have any translation experience, we're taking it slow. This gives me the opportunity to apply a developmental approach to ministry seeking to help people grow in their service of the Lord. Andre has been volunteering at a local high school and has been able to lead some of the kids to Christ. He uses the church meeting room during the week to teach the kids. I'm excited about his passion for Jesus and thankful that I have the chance to help him as he seeks to serve the Lord.

Church Plant Update

As you might remember, Dara Sith worked for and trained with me for four years before we sent him to start a church in his home village. Dara's church continues to grow and for the second time, Dara asked me to get him some Khmer language Bibles for people that come to the Lord. My home church, Calvary Chapel Pacific Hills, donated money for it and more. We've been able to get some tables and provide fellowship meals for the church members once a month. We've also used the money to buy a fan for when it gets too hot, a microphone and speaker which is needed when it rains because they meet under a tin roof and it gets so loud that people can't hear Dara teach. Furthermore, the money let Dara pay to get his motorbike repaired so he can ride to another village about 20 miles away where he teaches the Bible twice a month. I've been working with Dara on how to use the money wisely, giving him the chance to make decisions. Most Cambodians haven't been trained to use money well. But I'm glad to say Dara has been making some great and well thought-out choices. He is very thankful for your prayers and support.



Poipet Growth Explosion

Over the last couple of years, Poipet has been bombarded with a massive influx of people. During that time, about 30,000 Chinese have moved to Poipet. They come to work or gamble at the casinos and to run online gambling operations. And even more are expected to come. This migration is not just in Poipet but all over Cambodia. With the large numbers of people, we are also experiencing some challenges. For one, it's put a huge strain on the power grid. We've experienced a ton of power outages, often for several hours a day. We bought a generator for the church earlier this year. The Lord must have been behind the choice because not long after we bought it, I found out that the prices for generators here more than doubled. A Canadian guy who lives in town and comes to the church also happens to be an electrician. He volunteered to set up our power panel to be able to connect to the generator. Since buying the generator back in April, I don't think a single week has gone by that we haven't used it. It's been a huge relief. Another impact of this mass influx of people is that rent prices are going through the roof. My lease came up for renewal this year and our rent almost doubled! The same thing is happening all over the city. People are saying that the prices here are now just as high and sometimes higher than in Phnom Penh, which is the capital and a much more developed city. But with the challenges comes opportunity. If anyone is looking to do missionary work with the Chinese, they don't have to go to China anymore to do it.



Prayer Requests

Government Documents – I've been working a lot on trying to get our church registration completed with the government. The government workers have all been very nice. But additional requirements and requests for changes to what we've submitted have been happening at every step along the way. One thing that is especially challenging is that everything needs to be submitted in Khmer (the Cambodian language). Seven different government departments need to sign off on it and each has the power to make additional requests, require changes, or just deny the application. I definitely need your prayers for wisdom to handle everything in an appropriate way as well as to have that peace that passes all understanding.

Health – My health is doing really great. I've been losing some weight and it's starting to show. I'm exercising regularly and feel really good. Pray that I continue to do well with my food choices and stay motivated to keep going to the gym.

Dara's Church – Pray that God would continue to lead and bless Dara's church and that he would continue to grow as a pastor.

The People in Poipet – Pray for Poipet and that God would continue to use our church to bring more people to Him. Pray that the people that come to Calvary Chapel of Poipet would grow in their love for the Lord, for each other, and for the people around them.

Financial Support: [donations are tax deductible]

Missionary financial support for Jeff can be made as a one-time contribution or as monthly support. Please make checks payable to: Calvary Chapel Pacific Hills with "Cambodia-Henneforth" in the memo. Mail to: Calvary Chapel Pacific Hills, 24481 Moulton Parkway, Aliso Viejo, CA 92637
If you have any questions about making a donation, please call (949) 362-7475