



The Shull Family

Serving Cambodia by Sharing Christ

Dear Pastor and Praying Friends,

June 8, 2019

So much has happened since our last prayer letter, and we are excited to tell you about it! In **April** Cambodia has its biggest holiday of the year: **Khmer New Year**. It was a joy to participate in several get-togethers and have some Khmer believers over to our house. In **May** we took part in the **Pressing Forward Leadership Conference** which is an annual event hosted by New Hope Baptist Church (the church in which we are currently serving). It was a wonderful time of preaching, singing, and testimonies. Most Khmer churches have smaller congregations, so it was a great blessing and encouragement for all the believers to see nearly 15 churches gathering together. Both Naomi and I were able to serve through music and set-up. On a sad note, our dear Olm Pan passed away in May. He was an older man who was saved under my parents' ministry. Many of you have heard his story. I have written a fuller length summary of his testimony on **Page 2**.

Beginning in May, **I began preaching** on a weekly basis during the Wednesday night Bible Study. We have been going through the life of Abraham and exploring his journey of faith. Much like Abraham, many Khmer believers had little to no knowledge of God before their salvation. Abraham is wonderful example for these first-generation believers. I thank God for the opportunity to preach in Khmer on a regular basis like this! It is a stretch, but preaching has allowed me to take a noticeable step forward in my language abilities. On the third and fourth Sunday of June, **Naomi will teach** the children's Sunday School class. Later in July, she is also planning on teaching the ladies class as well. I know she would appreciate your prayers for her.

We are excited to tell you about a future ministry opportunity that God has provided! In **mid-September**, we will be moving out of the capital city of Phnom Penh. We will go to a city called **Svi Re-ung** about 2 hours away to cover for a fellow missionary while he is on a 7-month furlough. This will be a great opportunity to preach, teach, disciple, and evangelize on a weekly basis. Life and ministry in the capital city and in the province is very different, and this time will help us to learn those differences. **We are praying** that God will use us to help this young church, grow our ability to minister in Khmer, and use this time to clearly guide us in future ministry.

Thank you for your prayers and support!

Please make support checks payable to **Valley Bible Baptist Church** and write **Shull Family** in the memo line.

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Olm Pan's Testimony

"I don't want to go to church. You can come back and continue doing a Bible study, but I don't want to go to church." It was early 2011, and the hot season was just around the corner. With it came the promise of dry, scorching days. Missionary Ray Shull and national pastors Thoe and Proh had all spent time giving the Gospel to this elderly man named Pan. Olm is the Khmer word for older uncle, and so to the young members of Freedom Baptist Church of Ta Kmaoe, he was called Olm Pan.

Olm Pan's story began when the twin teenage sisters, Thome and Toe-ik, excitedly gave their post-visitation report: "As we peered from the road, we saw an older man sitting by himself underneath his stilted wooden house. He says he wouldn't mind if our pastor came back and did a Bible study with him!" With their ever-present smile's and infectious joy, they had burst into the shadows of Olm Pan's dark world.

He was a proud soldier who had done his duty and done it well, all until a stroke robbed him of his mobility and confined him to a wheelchair. He was a shell of the man he once was. In this world, honor is the community currency and karma is the accountant. Pan's karma had slammed down upon him with the force of a monsoon, washing away his honor. In its wake, only one thing remained: shame.

Things were finally beginning to sink in! For many weeks the three pastors had labored together in teaching Olm Pan the Gospel. Today, Pastor Thoe was at Olm Pan's house again. "Jesus died for you! He bore the guilt and the shame of your sin on the cross so that you could be free from sin and hell and have eternal life." In typical Khmer fashion, Olm Pan avoided eye contact when confronted with his own sin and the accompanying shame. He finally understood. But did he believe it? Would God really suffer such shame? Could Jesus really take away his sin? Is it possible that God could really love him like that? "Do you want to ask Jesus to save you and forgive you of all your sins?", enquired Thoe. "Yes. Yes, I would.", Olm Pan replied. After calling out in simple faith, Olm Pan was saved. After the two men finished praying, Olm Pan looked into Thoe's eyes and said, "So, when can I go to church?"

I first met Olm Pan shortly after he was saved during my year-long stay in Cambodia in 2011. We would go to his house in the church's "bus" to pick him up for church. The "bus" looked like nothing more than the back end of an old Mazda truck with half the body of a motorcycle welded to the front. Handicapped accessible vehicles are not nearly unheard of here. With a person on each side of Olm Pan's wheelchair, we would pick him up and roll him into the back of the "bus" and bump on down the road back to church. I remember the day Olm Pan got baptized – in his wheelchair. Several of us men hefted him into the repurposed water tank – he would not be denied his chance to stand for Christ!

Through the years, others came and went, but Olm Pan had found a family that he would not abandon. Every time the doors were opened, Olm Pan wanted to be at church. He encouraged his Pastor, smiled at a visitor, told the teenagers how beautiful their song was, and wanted to learn more of God's Word. He spent his days participating in the memorization challenge at church. At one point, he memorized the entire 119th Psalm. Though he was more than twice the age of his Pastor and the other members, Olm Pan had found in them a family who loved him – and he loved his new family.

As this year began, Olm Pan's health began deteriorating. Though he wanted to, he could no longer go to church as often as he wanted. My family would go to encourage him, but often found it was we who had been encouraged. He would talk of past sermons he had heard and of the dear folks at Freedom Baptist Church of Ta Kmaoe. Though he and multiple others had witnessed to his wife, she would not leave her Buddhist beliefs. In May, Olm Pan knew his time was short. He told his wife, "I know you and our extended family have the right to do whatever you want when I die, but my only request is that you allow my church family to come and have a Christian funeral service first. Do what you want after that." Two days later, Olm Pan went to be with his Saviour. With the community watching and religious leaders looking on, a handful of believers crowded underneath that same stilted wooden house and sang *Amazing Grace* and gave testimony to God's amazing grace in the life of Olm Pan. While his wife and children sat beside the body, Pastor Si-kon, an elderly national pastor, preached the Gospel. Pastor Si-kon had also been a soldier once and was Olm Pan's former commanding officer. "The man I once commanded disappeared when he was saved. The new Olm Pan was a new creature – changed by God.

They may take his body, but we know Who has his soul!"

One day, when all the saints are gathered home, perhaps a man who you have never met here on Earth, will come and tell you a story. It will be a simple story; a story unique to each individual – yet oh, so familiar. "Some saints gave; some determined to go; some decided to be faithful; but God used them all so that I could know Jesus. Worthy is the Lamb who was slain!"