



Phnom Penh Bible School

Issue 2 of 2012. July

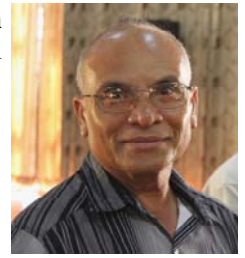
The Ripened Field



God's

Goodness to Cambodia

Timothy Ith
PPBS Principal



God's Goodness to Cambodia

Greetings from all of us at PPBS to all of you, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the world. Praise the Lord that with rapid development in Cambodia, Phnom Penh Bible School continues to seize the opportunity to develop our educational ministry in keeping with our mission of "Reaching Beyond" to develop the Christians' lives, transforming them and bringing the good news of Jesus Christ to all people in all nations.

In recent years, Evangelicals have come to recognize that a common goal for our Lord's Commission is more than just "going" but it is also to obey the command to "make disciples of all nations, teaching them to obey all that Christ has commanded us". (Matt. 28:18-20). I have noticed that *Transformation* has become a favorite term to convey the end result of proclaiming the whole gospel of the Kingdom of God. It means the restoration of shalom (peace) in the world through the establishment of communities that are Christ-centered in love, righteousness, justice and peace. (Isa. 65:19-25; Rom. 12: 1-15) Transformation produces harmony and reconciliation after people have come to repentance and faith in Christ. Then they can be incorporated into communities of faith that seek to build right relationships with God, their neighbors, the creation and themselves. (Matt. 22:37-39; 2Cor. 10:5). Every person, community and people group will have been enabled through being transformed by Christ to be what God intended each of them to be (Eph. 4:17-24; Col. 3:5-17).

After 3 decades of wars most Cambodians have realized that they need to discover a new faith to believe and to discover who the real God is. We at PPBS are aware that we must seize the present opportunity that is before us. God has reopened the door for the Gospel one more time after it was closed during Pol Pot's regime from 1975 -1979 and He is still having compassion on the Cambodian people. He is concerned about the lives in this nation no matter how human ideas want to destroy us.

A friend reminded me that the Psalmist said, "*Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord...*" 33:2 and the wise King Solomon declared, "*Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a disgrace to any people.*" Pr. 14:34 Therefore, transformation to such a character of righteousness is necessary for our people. Phnom Penh Bible School exists for one purpose: to train Christian students to have the knowledge, motivation and zeal to learn God's Word in order to be able to transform their nation to be a nation that can become righteous. This can only be done by becoming reconciled to the true God in Christ which produces the power to practice love and compassion for one another; establish justice and ensure peace for all her citizens, so that she can receive God's blessings. Then we can be a light to all the other nations around us.

Our dear brothers and sisters in Christ, I am personally inviting you all to join hands to pray and to co-operate to work to equip and develop men and women who respond to His call and have a passion to expand His Kingdom in Cambodia and beyond. We treasure your prayers.

May His name and work be magnified through our faithful service. ■

Under His Wing,
Timothy Ith

Thanks to everyone who has contributed your effort in making this publication of the Ripened Field possible.

- Newsletter Committee

And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations (πάσα τὰ ἔθνη- all the peoples/ethnic groups) , baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” Matthew 28:18–20



Culture and Mission



Have you ever stopped to think what an amazing, beautiful and diverse world God created? If we take time to stop and take a look around us, we can see goodness reflected in the people and things that God created so beautifully. Cambodia is a country that God has blessed with this goodness, especially through the people that live here. Did you know that while there are close to 13 million ethnic Khmer people living in Cambodia, Cambodia also has other people groups living within its borders? In fact, there are many different people groups in Cambodia that God also loves, including: Brao, Bunong, Jarai, Khmer Keh, Kraol, Kuy, Kachok, Khaonh, Lao, Mel, Pearic Cluster, Stieng, Tampuan, T’moan and Vietnamese. Each with their own language and traditions. Part of God’s goodness to Cambodia is that while most of the people in these groups have never heard of God, or experienced His love, each and every group now has been engaged by Christians in some form or another.

During the first semester of this school year, the fourth year students and I had the privilege to study together about God’s love for all peoples. We learned about the mission of God, the role of the local body of Christ in that mission, and the implications for ministry across cultures. Our goal was to become informed and motivated to understand God’s mission to all peoples and His mandate to follow Christ in that mission by the power of the Holy Spirit with the hope that Cambodian Christians will continue to reach out and “reach beyond” in effective and appropriate ways to all people groups within the country.

Over the fourteen weeks of our course, we became familiar with various issues and principles related to cross-cultural mission. Our “study partners” included Cambodia Research Network

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(through their publication: *The Peoples of Cambodia* - www.ratanak.org/ICEuploads/Peoples-of-Cambodia-2nd-edition.pdf), *Perspectives on World Christian Movement*, and mission authors such as Paul Heibert, Charles Kraft, Cameron Townsend, Donald McGavran, Ralph Winter and others. Our topics included God's Heart for the Nations, History of Global Mission including Eras of Protestant Mission, Models of Culture, Attitudes toward Culture, Worldview, Cross-cultural communication, strategies for reaching Oral learners, Unreached and Least-reach Peoples, Approaches to Cross-cultural Mission, Contextualization & Syncretism.

The final project for the course was an assignment in which students were asked to imagine that God was actually calling their own local church to participate in His mission by reaching out to an unreached people group within Cambodia. To complete the assignment, students wrote their own "Cross-Cultural Mission Plan." In creating their plans, they considered biblical, historical, strategic and cultural factors of how they could bring the good news in biblical, effective and appropriate ways.

We give thanks to God for His amazing goodness to Cambodia in the form of such rich ethnic diversity among the Cambodian people. As the writers of the booklet *The Peoples of Cambodia* put it "may you discover ... the beautiful people of Cambodia and learn to love and appreciate them just as their Maker does!" And, may you join us in praying for His strength and wisdom for cross-cultural missions, so that all the world may know that He is God, including all of the peoples of Cambodia. ■

Rev. Mark Wilson is an Adjunct Faculty of PPBS. He has taught *Culture and Mission*, and *Church and Society* classes.



“...I had wondered, “Would that ever be possible to have the dream of 1974 come true for me, again?”

25 years later, God kept His promise.”

I(Rose Ellen Blosser) first came to Cambodia in early 1974, as a much younger, single OMF missionary, with the goal of teaching Bible at the Takhmau Bible Institute. But in 1975, my co-workers and I had to leave. That was a heart-breaking time and I remember opening my Bible to a passage that promised a “return to the land”. Could it ever be? 25 years later, God kept His promise.

During those 25 years I had served in Hong Kong where I met and married my husband, Dan, a TWR missionary. We served with TWR in several countries in Asia during those years. While for many years we were in various aspects of the radio ministry, my heart had always been to teach in a Bible School or Seminary, as I had done some in Hong Kong. Often I had wondered, “Would that ever be possible to have the dream of 1974 come true for me, again?” And then the unthinkable happened, TWR appointed us to Cambodia and in January 2000, we dedicated a studio, in rented rooms on this PPBS Campus, to develop a radio program production ministry. Several of our first employees were TWR graduates.

The very first day I walked on campus, the then Acting Dean came running up to me saying, “Your husband says you are a teacher, will you teach for us?” My heart leaped for joy. I couldn't believe my ears! Was God finally not only returning me to the land, but also to teach in a Bible School, again? Yes! I began as a regular visiting teacher, every morning, and then walked a few feet from the classroom to the office to wear a TWR hat.

We left Cambodia, again, in late 2004, turning over the TWR ministry to the young staff we had trained and developed, who carry on so ably today. (Other TWR alumni have also joined that staff.) The TWR Cambodia ministry had been the most fulfilling and satisfying of our media ministry careers, but for me, a double fulfillment, as I not only got to work with our TWR staff, but also for those five years to work with PPBS leadership and to love and teach scores of students that I enjoyed so much. At that time thinking our Cambodian ministry was finished and not knowing what exactly was next or where, we returned to the U.S. for furlough.

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My life verse is Jeremiah 29:11, “For I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for good and not for evil; to give you a future and a hope.” Where would God take us next? When I went to say goodbye to the staff, the Academic Dean asked if we would come back to Cambodia and I become a full faculty member. I didn’t hold much hope for that, but after a few months of furlough, TWR asked us where our hearts were. We knew other countries were welcoming and wanting us, but nothing seemed the right fit. We were asked where our hearts were and we had to say Cambodia. I mentioned PPBS’ offer. Not much comment. However, not long after that, the Vice President called us to say he felt that God still wanted us in Cambodia. Just work out the secondment agreement. We were in awe of God’s plans.

These past 12 years in Cambodia have been, in so many ways, the most fulfilling years of our lives. I feel I have not given nearly as much to Cambodians as they have given to me. I have taught my students, loved them, scolded them, cried with and for them, prayed with them, and tried so hard to instill into their minds a knowledge of God’s Word, hoping they would have a love for His Word and continue studying to use it in serving Him. It has been my joy to meet so many alumni who have said, “Neakrou, I am using....or I am doing... or I remember....” ! Music to a teacher’s ears!

I want to take this time to thank everyone involved in PPBS, and especially the Board, who has placed such trust and faith in me, not only to allow me to teach, but have also entrusted other responsibilities. I want to thank my students for their desire to learn and to “put up” with Neakrou. I want to thank the members of Ex-Com for their team work, competence, desire to serve Christ, their love and willingness to overlook and bear with this foreigner’s faults because they know she has a “Cambodian heart”. I want our PPBS faculty and staff to know that they can lead PPBS and that God has given them this task and what a great privilege it is to serve Him at PPBS. God has not only been good to Cambodia, He has been good to me in Cambodia. I love you, I will miss you and I will never, ever forget you all. ■



**Because of the Kingdom,
Rose Ellen Blosser**

Extension Education (EE) Update

“Studying in EE has given me more understanding of God's word and to know clearly about the ministry, the troubles, and the persecutions of Paul that encourages me to love, serve, and harvest for God.”

This was one of the comments of a student who was attending an Extension Education Program (EE) course. The vision of EE is to teach God's word to the local church for those who do not have a chance to study at PPBS and to help them develop the skill to study their Bible.

The churches in Kraty, Kandal, Kampong Cham, and Battambang provinces have requested that we teach God's word to the followers. During the vacation in August and Water Festival we will have a Bible course on our campus and in the other provinces during the Khmer New Year. Please see more information in our leaflet and please pray for us. ■

Eap Srey
EE Assistant

My teaching experiences at PPBS

I came with my family to Cambodia in the beginning of 2010 and after having been introduced to language and culture, I started teaching at PPBS last year as a Visiting Teacher. Later I was also accepted as a Faculty Teacher and in addition I was entrusted the responsibilities of the library as head of this department. After the end of this academic year I will sadly return to Denmark. We did plan to be in Cambodia for a good while longer but we have realized that we need to return to our home country this summer.

For those reasons my teaching experiences have been not as many as I would have liked. Nonetheless, my time at PPBS has been a true joy for me.

It has been a pleasure to teach my classes and I hope that the students have been blessed by my teaching as much as I have by my preparations. The Word of God contains many great riches, and God has a lesson that both teachers and students will learn when we approach His Word.

My subjects have been: Hebrews & James and 2 Corinthians, and I would like to add a few comments from the teachings of these scriptures. Now, if you could list the most important books of the Bible, I'm sure these scriptures would be on such a list! Hebrews stands out when it comes to interpreting the role of Jesus Christ as our all-sufficient mediator; our great high priest. And with a strong emphasis on the new covenant as simply the better covenant in all aspects, Jesus, the center of the new covenant, is truly put on the pedestal he deserves.

...but because Jesus lives forever, he has a permanent priesthood. Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.” (7:23-25)

James, the brother of our Lord, is unmistakably clear when he points out the negative effects of our sinful behavior. In his letter, he calls us to “look intently into the perfect law that gives freedom” (1:25). God has called us to freedom – not a

freedom to follow the desires of our flesh, but to “humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you.” (1:21).

We have received salvation out of mercy, James says, and we should speak and act towards others according to the law of freedom that will judge us on the principle of mercy.

When we read through 2 Corinthians we find that the teaching of Paul and the aim of his letter to the Corinthians in many ways mesh with both Hebrews and James. One of the key verses here is 1:20 where Paul says: “For no matter how many promises God has made, they are “Yes” in Christ. And so through



him the “Amen” is spoken by us to the glory of God.” Paul wants the church to be absolutely certain about his message to them, i.e. the gospel. They can rest assured that there is no confusion here; God testifies to this gospel by making both Paul and the Corinthians stand firm in Christ and he grants his Holy Spirit to them “as

a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.” (1:22) The aim of Paul is to see to it that the church will not forsake their first love, Jesus Christ (7:8-16). One of the ways they can assure Paul of their love for the gospel is to contribute to the gift offered to the poor believers in Jerusalem; and he says: “I am not commanding you, but I want to test the sincerity of your love by comparing it with the earnestness of others.” (8:8) The church in Corinth needs to not only listen to the word, as James says, but do what it says. Their devotion should be fleshed out in action.

There is much for all of us to learn here. God wants all of us to live out the resurrection life we have in Christ, so that His will might be done in us.

A deeply felt thank you to PPBS for the confidence shown to me and I pray God’s richest blessings over all of you. ■

Troel Toft
Head of PPBS Library

Inter-Bible School Fellowship

In March 2012, Faculty members and students from three Bible schools came together for an Inter-Bible School Fellowship. Phnom Penh Bible School coordinated the event at AOG. We came together to show unity in the Lord Jesus Christ and for fellowship. In our fellowship we avoided competition. We had a time of worshiping God together, praying for one another, playing games to get to know one another, and having lunch together. Faculty members and students had a great and blessed time. All were excited to get to know one another from other Bible schools.

Everybody was so blessed and they expressed the desire to have another fellowship next year. We will also extend invitations to other like-minded Bible schools for next year's Inter-Bible School Fellowship. We are praying and believing that there will be at least five Bible schools that will come together showing unity in Christ Jesus next year. We want this act of fellowship to be an example to the Cambodian churches of the unity we have in Christ Jesus. Please pray for the fruitful Inter-Bible School Fellowship next year.



Tep Samnang
PPBS Academic Dean



Congrats Graduates!

Well done!

A happy ending and new beginning for all the graduates.
May you keep your heart close to Jesus everyday and stay faithful to God.
God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son,
Jesus Christ our Lord.

- 1 Corinthians 1:9

My favorite teacher at PPBS:

“Teacher Channy, I was in his small group for one year. He always encouraged us with God’s Words. To us he is not only a teacher, but also a friend, a brother and a good shepherd to all of us.”

Tonh Saoly (Associate Degree in Christian Ministry)

Teacher Rose Ellen, she is passionate to teach God’s Words and always encourages the students to study God’s Words in depth.

Tak Channdara (Associate Degree in Christian Ministry)

“I was afraid of all teachers in primary school and high school. When I first came to PPBS, I was still afraid of all the teachers, teacher Vuthy always told me not to be afraid. When I failed my first subject in Year 1, he helped me find out the reasons and encouraged me to work harder.

Chin Chun (Bachelor Degree in Christian Ministry)

My favorite friend at PPBS:

“Bin, he is always willing to serve anyone around him in any capacity. In him I can see Christ’s love.”

Shib Sophat (Bachelor Degree in Christian Ministry)

“Rotha, his passion for ministry and study inspires me always. He works very very hard.”

Keo Sreymom (Bachelor Degree in Christian Ministry)



Chin Chun



Tonh Saoly



Nem Khon (left) and Shib Sophat (right)

Class I appreciate the most:

"Pastoral Care, it prepares me to serve as a pastor in my church. I learned how to care for and give counseling to my sheep. It's most helpful for me."

Chanthol (Bachelor Degree in Christian Ministry)

"All the classes were helpful, but if I have to name one, it'd be *Church Worship* which helps me understand clearly what it means to be a true worshipper of God. I'd like to teach in my church to how to worship God."

Nem Khon (Bachelor Degree in Christian Ministry)

"Lokrou Mark's *Culture and Mission* changed my thinking about mission. After that class I know instead of trying to change the host culture, I need to learn about their culture before bringing Good News to them. And building relationship is very important. I hope to be missionary to one tribe of Cambodia in the future."

Heang Kongkea

(Bachelor Degree in Christian Ministry)

What I am grateful for:

"The love that PPBS' faculty and teacher have shown to me when my family was in a very difficult time. I will carry this love with me wherever I go and I will never forget your love and kindness to me and my family."

Yun Rotha (Bachelor Degree in Christian Ministry)

"I am grateful for God's grace and mercy which carried me through those 5 years. I am also grateful for each meal, each friend, each teacher God has given to me in PPBS."

Beang Bin (Bachelor Degree in Christian Ministry)



Yun Rotha



Tak Channara



Keo Sreymom



Beang Bin



Thon Chanthol (right)



Heang Kongkea

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Phnom Penh Bible School, #225, 28 Krousar Road, Sangkat Phnom Penh Thmey, Khan Sen Sok, Phnom Penh, Cambodia P.O.1154 Website: www.ppbs.edu.kh

Tel: (+855) 23 880 771, (+855) 12 939 504 Email: ppbs@ppbs.edu.kh