



CAMBODIAN SERVANTS

DECEMBER 2003-JANUARY 2004

IT'S A BOY!

Over the years Noit and I have been offered many abandoned and orphaned children as there are so many orphans from the war in Cambodia. Cambodia also has the fastest growing AIDS rate in the world. In the next ten years there are expected to be some 60,000 more children orphaned by AIDS. Most relatives of orphaned children don't want to institutionalize orphans and so we are often contacted to take orphans and raise them in our family. We have already taken in poor children from the tribal areas to help their families.



Paul Hyde, a new addition!



Paul at Angkor Wat Temple

In October 2003 a Christian woman working with World Vision contacted Noit to see if she could take an orphan boy. I was in Singapore at the time finishing my Master's degree. We joke that I went to Singapore for four months and returned home to a son four years of age! Paul was born in December of 1999. His parents died a little over two years ago from AIDS, but Paul has been checked several times and is negative.

We believe that Paul is very special and God has prepared him for us. He does not look like a Cambodian child, but looks like a multi-race child.

When he came to visit the house for the first time he told Noit "Mommy, I like it here, I want to stay." He is very energetic and not shy at all. At the airport when I first met him he ran up to me and gave me some flowers and said, "welcome home daddy!"



Noit and Paul in Thailand



Steve and Paul playing around



MEDICAL MINISTRY



While I was gone to Singapore the ministry was tested, and I knew it would be. This was the first time the ministry would have to continue operating while I was not in Cambodia. Noit stayed with the ministry for several months (including overseeing the completion of our new office and ministry building) and hosting volunteer teams that came to minister in three parts of the country. The whole Words of Life Ministries team did a super job while I was not there and I had many people comment to me how surprised they were that everything ran very smoothly while I was gone. I was very proud of all of them.

During the time while I was gone we conducted a ministry in Phnom Penh with the help of a team from Singapore. We then did a first ever woman's conference in Kracheh province (where we have another training center being built). The woman's conference was a great success and we hope to do more in the future.

The third team was the most difficult and challenging as it involved 13 people from the US, Nepal and Thailand who were coming to do a combination of pastors training and medical ministry. This involved permits with the local government officials and coordination with villages and local churches in many different locations plus the logistics challenge of transporting that many people from place to place. On top of that the road conditions in Cambodia, and especially the area they went were very bad. It took 6 hours just to travel 50 miles! Bridges were out. People and equipment had to be transported by rafts and vehicles got stuck in the mud and had to be pulled out by tractors. The best part that made it worth it all, was that thousands of people got to hear the gospel and between four and five hundred individually accepted Christ and also destroyed their charms and idols. Since all the ministry was done in local churches the people can immediately be in a church.



ONE MORE STEP FINISHED



Over the last four months, from August to November, I studied constantly in an attempt to finish my masters degree. I had a huge task in front of me, trying to complete a whole years worth of studies in four months. The school and the dean, Dr. Isaiah, were gracious too me and let me go to my physical limits to complete 60 hours and a major thesis in that amount of time. With the help of God and great friends in Singapore who provided meals and housing for me I made it. On November 30th I received my official certificate for the Master of Arts in Intercultural Education. You may be curious about the degree title. In today's world the traditional Master of Divinity doesn't work for missionaries because we work in countries which are anti-Christian. To have a degree titled "Master of Divinity" or "Religious Education" is dangerous! My degree is basically a missions degree with emphasis on education for developing educational curriculum and training programs. This is perfect for the ministry God has called me to do. I love the school and they love me. I taught one course on Church Planting while I was there and I have begun work on my Ph.D. which I target for completion in three years. I can do most of my Ph.D. from Cambodia as it involves research in Cambodia.



CHALLENGE AND DANGER



Challenges and danger are everywhere in the world. In Cambodia just traveling between villages is extremely difficult, even the best vehicles get stuck or break down. We joke about all the flat tires that we get. Any trip of 500 miles will average 3-4 flat tires. There is also the danger that Cambodia is one of the most heavily land-mined ridden countries. There are more landmines than people!

In the northeast of Cambodia along the border with Vietnam we have worked among the Stieng tribe for seven years. In that time we have stayed primarily in one village. I took my parents there last Christmas before my Dad was killed. We walked around and I showed them where I was going to build a small hut to stay in each time I am in the village. As the footings for the little hut were being prepared, the pastor (Doun with the C&MA church in the area) hit something when he was chopping the branches and sticks away with a big knife. From experience he knew it was an explosive. He carefully moved the twigs aside and saw that his knife had hit an unexploded grenade (pictured below), the type shot out of a rifle (like the M-79). This area of Cambodia was heavily bombed and attacked by US forces during the Vietnam war. Around the little hut there are still fox holes the Vietnamese forces had dug, and also holes where the US bases had been on the hill overlooking the village. We have walked though this place many times and God protected us even when we did not see the danger. There are probably more unexploded ordinances on the land where our hut stands, so we will be careful as we continue to dig for other purposes.

Every place in the world has challenges and dangers. I fear driving on the highways in America more than driving across a broken bridge or walking through an area with unexploded ordinances and landmines. The important thing to remember is that we each obey what God calls each of us to do, and don't fear the things of this world, as there will always be challenges and dangers to overcome in every place.



INVESTING IN LIVES!

Cambodia has one of the fastest growing Christian populations in the world. This is the result of a mighty outpouring of the Holy Spirit, but it also has to do with the attitude of the Christians. They are not institutionalized country club Christians who just gather on Sunday mornings. They are doing things for Christ every day of the week. The rest of the world could learn a lot from Cambodian Christians about how to bring people to Christ. They not only profess to be Christians, they tell people about Jesus daily and they seek to help others.

In October Noit heard that a church needed help to plant some rice fields or they would not be able to get them planted. The staff joined together and went to the village to help.

Many people accepted Christ through their witnessing and they wanted to know more about Jesus. Noit and a friend stayed a few additional days in the village to teach the people day and night about being a Christian. The village had no electricity, beds, or clean water, and for food they only thing they had to eat was duck eggs. However Noit and her friend rejoiced in the opportunity the Holy Spirit gave them. This is how Cambodia is being won for Christ!





PRACTICAL WAYS YOU CAN HELP



- Invest **\$1.00 per day** (\$30 per month or \$360 per year) into Words of Life to change a nation!
- If you are a member of a Southern Baptist Church, your missions budget is probably linked to the Cooperative Program (CP). Great! That is for the SBC. Please consider giving from a **Benevolence Fund** to support Words of Life Ministries.
- Take up a special **love offering** for Words of Life.
- **Support a local pastor** personally to receive a Bible and Ministry Training (\$35.00)- Why not support a few?
- Provide a **Academic Scholarship** in Your Name (or someone else) for students in the Bachelor Program (\$450).
- Provide for a **full month of training** in Words of Life (\$1,200). \$1,200 trains, houses, and feeds 200 students per month!
- **Supply Bibles to a whole church!** (\$300) Bibles cost \$6.00 each and the average church size is 50 people.
- Help **Print Leadership Training Books**. We can publish a 200 page book for less than \$1.50 per book! (You will never look at a bookstore the same again!) One print run costs us \$1,500. We have published 50 new books in the last 4 years!
- **We Need Dirt Bikes for the Jungle Ministry**. Each used Dirt Bike –motorcycle (250cc)- costs \$2,500.
- **Pray daily** for the ministry and **ask** for current requests.
- **Donate Christian books** to our school library. First Baptist Dallas has donated books twice. We are very grateful.
- Help support me (Steve) to finish my **Doctorate degree**. (I have already begun my Ph.D. and can do most of this from Cambodia with limited residential requirements in Singapore. This helps in providing accreditation for our students and giving them future options for advanced study.) Total: \$12,000.

CONTACT & SENDING DONATIONS

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NOTE:

New E-Mail

For information on any item listed above, please contact Steve and Noit directly in Cambodia. Address and E-mail listed above.

Details of Supporting or Sponsoring Individuals in Words of Life Ministry:

Sending Money Directly to Immanuel Baptist Church will be kept in **Confidential** records and not released to anyone (even myself) unless you give the church permission in writing to do so. This is for tax deduction and tax law purposes. The only way I know about specific donations is if you tell me!! (Send me an e-mail or letter.)

If you want to support a church leader for training or specific project of the ministry (listed above) please contact me so that we can send you information and the testimony of the person you are supporting so you can pray for them effectively.

Sending Donations from America:

Send Checks **Clearly Marked FOR Words of Life Ministries**, but made out to *Immanuel Baptist Church*.

Immanuel Baptist Church

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For Transferring funds (*Electronic Funds Transfer*) directly into the Words of Life account in Cambodia, contact Steve Hyde Directly. (For Singapore, Malaysia and other countries.)