



Koh Rumdual, Cambodia

Formerly known as Koh Kho (Death Island), in the middle of the Tonle Bassac River in Kandal Province. This was once part of the infamous “Killing Fields,” which is why the inhabitants changed the name to Rumdual, which is a beautiful white flower found in Cambodia

Cambodia was named Kampuchea during the Khmer Rouge (1975 - 1979). It was renamed Cambodia in 1993

For the photo gallery on the history of Khmer Rouge by Times, please visit the following website: <http://content.time.com/time/photogallery/0,29307,1880529,00.html>

Cambodia is a land of ancient culture, natural beauty and stark contrasts. Unfortunately, years of genocide and civil war destroyed the country's social and economic framework. At present, over half of the country's population of 14 million are under the age of 18.

36% of children under 5 years of age are moderately or severely underweight. Only 27% of rural children finished primary school; 19% finish junior high school; and a mere 2.2% get a high school diploma.¹

History

Cambodia was a flourishing Khmer kingdom in the 12th century, it encompassed parts of present day Vietnam, Laos, Thailand, Myanmar and the Malay Peninsula. The king at Angkor received tribute from smaller kingdoms and conducted trade with China. China referred to Cambodia as Funan.

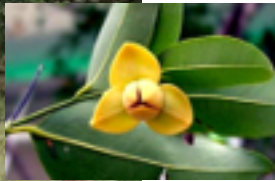
However, on April 17th, 1975, the dark age of Cambodia when the Khmer Rouge took control of the city. The leader of the group called himself Pol Pot, his name was Saloth Sar.

The Khmer regime lasted for 4 years before the fall of the regime. During this period, close to 1.7 million Cambodian were killed, many of whom were

¹ Extracted from <http://www.tourismcambodia.com/about-cambodia/cambodian-history.htm>

intellects, merchants, bureaucrats, members of religious groups and any people suspected of disagreeing with the party's ideologies. Due to this mass killing of intellectuals, the Cambodian economy suffered greatly even till this day.

Koh Rumdual²



A Rumduol plant grows up to a height of 8-12m. It gives out a distinctive sweet fragrance in the evening and night and can be smelt from a long distance away. The flower is yellow-white and it has single alternate leaves.

This island was used as a project to assist in the rebuilding of lives for some groups of widows after the end of the Khmer Rouge Regime. However, the story goes that the NGO supporting the project ran out of funds and left nearly 100 families there on the island. Life on the island has improved over the past years as many volunteers come with donations and aid, working with Tommy and Serena who runs the school on the island for the children. From a place where electricity was delivered from a gasoline generator which only the school had, to a place powered by solar cells that were donated, life on the island looks set for the better. However, beyond the physical improvements, the people need to start to learn to generate a stable income through a sustainable way. A mindset of living on handouts would be counterproductive in building a better future on the island.

The Vision

To see **Cambodians rise up** and be
the voice in their land,
pointing people to Christ.

“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

~ Jesus; The Holy Bible, NKJV;

Matt 28:19-20

² Information on Koh Rumdual is a mixture of info extracted from <http://www.familycare.org/network/cornerstone-project/koh-rumdual-island-project/> and personal knowledge



Van dade in his walker. His grandmother takes care of him and 5 other children

The instruction for all of us was to go and make disciples of all nations. God placed that desire in me to reach out to the people on Koh Rumdual since 2010. It started as a burden to help them break out of poverty and stand on their own two feet to build a life for themselves. God also reminded me that it is He who has come to give them abundant life (*John 10:10*)! Yes, there were so many physical needs (from the need of clean water to proper education to a full nourishing meal!), yet what would having all these amount to if their souls were lost? Jesus set the example of meeting the physical needs of those who followed Him, but His heart was always also to meet that spiritual need for salvation because of the long-standing charge of sin; death (*Romans 6:23*).

The Mission

Our mission for this trip was twofold,

1. Seize every opportunity to share the truths of God's word with the villagers.
2. Establish a network where the people could grow together in God's Word and learn His truths, responding in prayer and worship leading to changed lives consecrated to God.

The Trip

The plan for this trip was to build upon the relationships built from the 4 previous trips and to continue to meet the physical needs of the villagers, yet focusing on spending time sharing God's word with them.

On the first day there, we went on a prayer walk around the village asking God to put on our hearts what was on His for this land and its people. God led us to see the fruitfulness of the land and also the brokenness the people had. He brought us to a household of children taken care of by their grandmother. She had a grandson who had cerebral palsy and another one who was falling sick very often. We prayed for the two children and saw the plans God had for them! And the best thing was that this was only the beginning! Praise the Lord!

On the second day, we ordered 300 pieces of KFC and organised a family lunch with the villagers. We took the opportunity to worship God together and I shared with them from the Word of God. We then spent time praying for healing and restoration for them as they came up to us.

On the afternoon of the fourth day, we distributed food packages to the 114 families on the island. The 5 of us spent a whole night repackaging 25 bags of 50kg rice sacks into 10kg packs to be distributed. God sustained us as it was more difficult and back breaking than we thought it would be.



Sharing from the Word of God before lunch



Distributing 10kg of rice, 1 bottle of preserved tofu and 5 cans of sardine to 141 families



Praying for a boy with down syndrome and his sister behind him



Sharing with the children

We had many opportunities to spend different pockets of time with the children, male youths and also the female youths. Each time we met with the different groups, we saw how God used us to restore hope in their hearts and share His love with them. Some of the children even prayed for their friends and prophesied to their friends. We saw how God is raising up these children to be that voice in Cambodia, preparing the way for Jesus' return.

The children had a time of learning from the bible, taught by Faith. They drew pictures of how they felt or what they understood after learning that Jesus loves them and wants them to come to him!



Lastly, Cynthia, Joel and I met up with the young pastor of a small church on the island and his core group of 3 other leaders for 2 sessions. We prayed together and God spoke to them regarding their personal struggles and building His church. We had a time of goal setting and action planning in starting up ministry groups for the youths, adults and outreaches. It was truly God's doing in establishing a network where the different age groups could meet and grow in godliness together through the reading of God's word, prayer, worship and fellowship!



Meeting with Pastor and church leaders

Reflections - Joel

I did not know what to expect for the trip, my last mission trip was about 10 years ago, so i just went with an open heart wanting to see how God would use us and to see God moving in the midst of the people. During the our first day, we did a prayer walk on the island and we stopped by a house, a grandmother taking care of 6 grandchildren. What hit me the most was feeling how God felt for the grandmother and the children. So, we ministered to them just by praying and pouring out the love of God upon her and the children.



Joel giving out rice packs

Another moment that impacted me was on the second day. After we had given the villagers a KFC treat, I told a mother that I would visit her and her boy who was having fever at that time. After the event, I went to her house and found out that there is another young boy that the family was taking care of. This boy had been abandoned by his parents, and he had been drinking water for 2 days because the family taking care of him did not have enough money to buy any milk powder for him. Then again, I felt the heart of God the Father for this boy and I asked one of the translator to help me get a tin of milk powder for that boy.



A toddler that was abandoned by his parents.

It's moments like these where hearts will be moulded by Jesus simply because He never forgets the poor, the widows and orphans. And this just brings me to love Jesus even more; loving the things that He loves.

-Joel

Reflections - Cynthia

Just a few of the many things I overcame on my trip to Cambodia... and for which I give glory to Jesus!

1. Started going on missions trip after an absence of more than 15 years. The last trip I went for left me with questions like "were You really there Lord?" or "Why did You allow that to happen?" I know now that He was and is always with me. He sometimes allows things to happen to me which I cannot understand, but nothing can ever happen to me outside of His will. So that's my confidence. My trust and faith is in that all things work for His good all the time, even when I don't always understand why. Even when "bad things happen" I can trust Him. So taking a step to go to Cambodia was a breakthrough in itself!

2. Opened my heart to allow His love for His people to overwhelm me after many many years of running away. Broke through many barriers to love and receive love for His people once again. It was tough to have an open heart to love, allow love in and be broken time and time again. Subconsciously, I had walls set up that I did not even know were there. But in Cambodia seeing the children, the youth, the grandmas, the women.. God's love just flooded me. I could not stop His love from "infecting my own cold heart". Love found its way in.

3. Dared to walk out in faith believing Him for the impossible. I alway knew I could hear Him and knew what He wanted. But in the comforts of Singapore it was so easy to just brush off His still, small voice. In Cambodia, knowing we had only 4-5 days to touch and impact lives and a group who had such a dear heart, and dared to take risks, I had to get out of my comfort zone and walk in faith. Never felt so alive in my spirit man knowing the closeness of His Voice and His heart.



A group of teenagers, including Cynthia (far right)



Sleeping on thin mattresses on floor

4. Arose to give spiritual guidance to empower the young adults to arise to lead and take ownership of the trip (am so proud of Gareth and Joel as they led the team! Also of Faith and Luke who kept saying "yes" and just rising up to do things out of their comfort zone - well done guys!!). Yes, you guys are the best!!

5. Sat pillion on both a motorbike as well as on a bicycle... this was fun!!

6. Overcame the lack of comforts and realised that a lot of things really don't matter. Simple living!

7. Wow! Can pack 10 kg rice packs after a long tiring day!! And with only 5 of us. Physical breakthrough!

These breakthroughs have changed me tremendously. I now walk in faith, with an open heart to love and be loved, trusting and believing Him for the impossible not only in my life but in the ives of those around!

Blessings,
Cynthia

Reflections - Luke

When I heard that Kor Gareth and Kor Joel were going to Cambodia on a mission trip, I didn't feel a need to go. Honestly, I didn't want to get out of my comfort zone; with everything I have, why did I need to go there right? Well, I was wrong! Then, I felt a tugging from God to go, to get out of my comfort zone, or at least experience what was it like on the island of Koh Rumdual. So, I went with a grudging spirit. When I spent my first night there, I did not like the place. There were no clean streets, the food was not clean and the thing that I hated most was the big spiders that crawled in the bathroom. I felt that I had made the wrong choice, I wanted to go back back home.

The first day began at 7am, we woke up, washed up and got ready for breakfast. After that we did devotion and talked about what we wanted to achieve in this mission trip. I felt that since I was already here, why not just make the best out of it. I shared with the group that I came here to grow closer to God (*Maybe I would be able to experience God working here, just maybe*). After devotion, we went for a prayer walk around the island, and visited a family with a kid who had cerebral palsy; he had cross-eyed eyes and he could not walk properly. We prayed healing over him and left, then we went back to the school (the place that we were living in) and had lunch. As the first day passed, I felt gloomy. I still did not like the place, I was not sociable with the kids and I just ignored everyone that passed by. On the 2nd day, God struck my heart as we had a short sharing to the kids in the school. We told them to draw pictures of what they thought of God. When I was looking through the photos, I saw that they were so in love with God, some of them wrote "I love God", while others wrote "Jesus Loves the Little Children". It struck me that if these kids could experience God's love and love God, why couldn't I? We bought KFC for the families that day, and Kor



Praying for a child.



Luke first time on a sampan



Children's drawing

G shared with them about asking, seeking and knocking, that they could trust in Jesus! They then had KFC while we split into 2 teams to pray for whoever who wanted healing or any other prayers. At this point I questioned God, could He really heal them just like that? We sat down for prayer, and started talking and praying with the families that came to us. The principle came to be prayed for his eyesight; he was having blurry vision and could not see properly. We prayed and his eyesight got better! It was at that point of time that God changed my heart, I felt that this was trip was not a burden, but an opportunity to see God working in the lives of others.



Repacking rice

Another incident was while we were repacking rice for the families - God multiplied the rice. We had 24 x 50kg big bags of rice, we split them into 10kg smaller bags and put 5 smaller bags into 50kg big bags. After all the big bags of rice were filled, we found out that we were left with 13kg of rice. I was amazed, this was the first miracle of God multiplying that happened in front of my eyes (we needed the extra rice for our food), it is amazing how God works wonders. The thing that troubled me was, why through all my years of living in SG, I could not experience God at this level? Then it struck me, I could not personally experience God cause my life was filled with so many distractions around me, it was not that God was not there, it was just because I was too filled with the things of this world that it blocked me out from experiencing God personally. It was then, I knew, that I had to change my lifestyle.

Overall, here is what I've learnt from the trip:

1. Besides just hearing stories of miracles and healing, we can actually experience them, if we put our distractions aside and focus on our relationship with our Heavenly Father.

2. It is easy to hear God, it is easy to receive visions that God has placed for us. It just seems hard for us because we are too focused on the things of the world - busy schedules, work, money, entertainment.

3a. This was not what I experience from God, but from the people. They are always so cheerful, though they do not have much, though they do not have things that first world countries do, they loved to bless others. We should be like them, to bless others with what God has blessed us with.

3b. We do not need to bless others with just worldly or physical things, but also with the love that God has blessed us with. We should love others, and remind them that God loves them far more than we do, for that is the greatest gift anyone can give.

- Luke



Pastor sharing God's word on Sunday morning with his congregation



Faith and little children preparing to distribute food to the villagers

Reflections - Faith

“Never limit the big plans of God”

In the initial stages of preparation and planning for this trip, we were all challenged to seek God’s heart so that we would know what He is feeling, thinking and saying rather than the usual “We see a need, we fill the need”. This time it was “God tells us there is a need, we ask God how He wants us to partner with Him to fill that need”. I was filled with so much anticipation and excitement to be able to witness God’s plans unfolding as He graciously revealed much to us. One thing was for sure, God was going to do amazing things on this island, so dear to many of our hearts.

Boy was I surprised to learn that it was definitely challenging, both spiritually and physically, as we did God’s work. It was more challenging than standing under the hot sun, breaking our backs. However, it was most refreshing and restoring. Throughout the days, God revealed an abundant supply of His love for the islanders - babies, children, youths, young adults, adults and the elderly.

Meanwhile, God was also removing wrong paradigms of who He is. How often I doubted His plans, limited God, but God broke in and helped me to see from His eyes. He taught me that He was the One spearheading this mission, He was the One who would touch lives, He was the One who would envelope this island with His love. He had enormous-sized tasks and commissions for the children, from going out to reach the nations, to rising up to the call of being a prayer warrior. Having to bring God’s word to the children was no easy task either. I learnt how vital yet easy it is to rely on God’s prompting and guidance. I had the privilege to witness first hand how God’s love struck the hearts of the young ones as they drew out what it means to know that Jesus loves them, that Jesus longs for them to go to Him.

God’s hand was evident in everything He revealed to us to do. He blessed us with divine opportunities to minister to the children and youths outside of the time in school. Hearts were indeed touched and moved by the love Jesus was revealing to them. I feel extremely humbled to partner with God and used as a vessel to share His love. I recognized that with God at the steering wheel, everything impossible turns possible. We were able to form deeper relationships with a few of the girls in youth. They were supposed to be at an English class in the church building down the road, however, God gave us multiple opportunities to spend time talking about who Jesus is because their teacher had not turn up for 2 days in a row. I mean... YEAH! What better way to learn English than from God’s word itself.

Dear friends, it is so so so so, I repeat, so so so so easy and vital to seek God’s heart, to wait upon Him and to partner with Him. Yet in all of this, remembering that it is God’s love that compels, God’s love that breaks down walls, that changes mindsets and life choices. We, as God’s children have received an abundant supply of grace and His gift of love to love with His strength and might. All we have to do is to stand with our hands open and to say “Here I am Lord, send me.”

- Faith



A flower grown on the island, displaying the beauty of its creator



Gareth looking pretty with the flower

Reflections - Gareth

I went with the thoughts of accomplishing so many things! To meet their needs and to preach the gospel and see many come to be saved. Everything seemed in place and comfortable for me. Yet when I reached the place, and allowed God to show me what His plans were, I was awed. He was already working in the lives of the people there! The network that we wanted to establish for the Christians and new believers, was already there! Led by a passionate young pastor at the age of 21 years old! This young man taught God's word with wisdom and authority, exhorting his congregation to come to God in prayer no matter what the situation! God answers prayers!

I was challenged and stretched to the limits to lean on God for direction as a leader. I soon learnt that God was putting me through the pressure period before a diamond is formed. I grew so much in leaning on Him and rising up as a leader in the field. I thank God for placing Cynthia here in the team to push me and stretch me. Also for my team who was so understanding and supportive. I learnt that a leader had to see the calling of those he leads and call them to arise in it.

One other thing that struck me was the love God has for us, down to the individual. We had watched a documentary titled Father's Love the night before. One lesson that resounded in my mind was that we are to share our Father's love, and not condemn people. A missionary was reaching out to the transvestites in Thailand and he approached them with the Father's love despite the social stigma attached to transvestites. He shared with them about God's love and did not admonish them for what they were doing! The next morning, the only transvestite living on the island walked into the playground and hung around! Of all days - this morning! Of all places - here! We all stopped our breakfast and went to talk to him, sharing with him that Daddy in heaven loves him for who he is. We told him that he didn't have to put on a front when talking to Father, just share the pains and worries with Him! He allowed us to pray for him and we left knowing God has a plan for this man! Amazing! I am a vessel of God's love!



A blessed time with a group of children gathered for a time of ministry.

Lastly, I learnt that the most important thing to do before, during and after a mission trip is - PRAY! 30 mins of sharing is easy to prepare and deliver, yet it would come to naught without that hours of prayer beforehand! Things happen when we pray. Justice is served, hearts are healed, lives are empowered. I saw how God so graciously invited my team and me to partner Him as He begins the good work which He will be faithful to complete. I would like to share part of this song that speaks about this whole trip, When You Walk Into The Room (Bryan and Katie Torwalt) :

"When you walk into the room, everything changes, darkness has to tremble at the light that you bring. When you walk into the room, every heart starts burning, and nothing matters more than just to sit here at your feet and worship you." Hearts change when Jesus comes in.

- Gareth



Join us

Do join us in prayer for the people on the island to rise up to be the John the Baptist of Cambodia. Here are some prayer pointers:

- 1) Pray for God to protect the hearts of these people from wrong teachings and occultic movements which are spreading fast in developing countries.
- 2) Pray for the young pastor, that he will be a good shepherd which God calls to feed his sheep.
- 3) Pray for ideas and open doors for our team to share God's love through meeting their needs and empowering them to break out of the poverty mindset.

Thanksgivings

We thank God for inviting us to partner with Him on this amazing mission. We went there filled with excitement to give what we could, and we came back having received the love of God and filled with the awe of who He is!

We give thanks to those who have prayed together with us throughout the preparation of this trip, during the trip and now even after the trip. For those who have donated, we thank you and we ask God to bless your hearts and bless you with more than what you have given. The funds were fully donated and our own expenses were provided for by God through others, no sponsorship was taken.

Many thanks to Tommy who helped us get the KFC and the Mr Kon (the caretaker) who took care of us in the school and bought all the dried food products to be donated. To our friends made there, we thank you for the service of translating for us and also for the friendship you have shown! We pray that God will put that burning passion for Him in all your hearts there in Cambodia and be used by Him to be the forerunners in the land God has placed you in.

Daddy God in heaven, we thank you for protecting us and walking ahead of us and extending your hand to invite us to walk along with you and witness you pouring out your love to your precious ones in Cambodia. May your will be done here on earth as it is in heaven. Prepare the bride here on earth for your Son, Jesus Christ, that we may be found blameless and pure, ready for His coming back. Amen.³



³ If you are interested to find out more about our mission trips to Koh Rumdual, feel free to email us at info@onethingministries.net. Thanks!