

Mop's Story

With the high temperature topping 100 degrees, the slight respite the evening brought was welcome. On days like this, one doesn't have much of an appetite other than for cold drinks with lots of ice. The prayer which I silently lifted up – "Lord, I just pray there will be no emergencies tonight so I can just chill." I should know better to pray such a prayer. The phone call came in just before my phone turned into auto-silent mode at 9:45 p.m. "Teacher, can you come and take a new believer in our church to Phnom Penh. He is having a health problem."

Mop, a young man who was introduced to our PVSAM (Preah Vihear School of Applied Ministry) Bible School in 2020, now shepherds a small flock in a previously unreached village in Kulen district. When I arrived at their village at 8:00 the next morning, Mop met me and we discussed Ven's options. The young man's family and many neighbors were gathered under the house. I was able to share why we as Christ followers care about others who are not our family. Both Mop and I shared the gospel before taking Ven to the hospital. (His situation is difficult as he has recovered from bone cancer surgery but has developed some heart problems).

Mop's story is a testimony of God's grace. Around 6 years ago his mother was sick, and the shamans and witch doctors could not help her any further. A local pastor who has planted many churches met them and prayed for his mother. Eventually she was healed, and her son Mop and his young family began to walk with Jesus. When we were recruiting for our 2nd PVSAM modules, the church planting pastor recommended him and several others from Kulen district to join the Bible school. When Mop arrived, he had very little biblical knowledge and his confidence level was low. His family was living hand to mouth as subsistence farmers, and he was discouraged. I was assigned to mentor him for what turned out to be the next 3 years, with one-on-one sessions during our Bible School and regular visits to his home in the village.



Through the course of the Bible School Mop was absorbing an amazing amount of biblical knowledge, and he was learning how to cultivate a deeper and more intimate relationship with God through regular prayer, scripture memorization, journaling, and most importantly applying what he learned as soon as he received it. His confidence began to grow, and his little flock, basically his family, began to grow as he prayed for neighbors and saw God heal them. Mop's transformation from discouragement and ineffectiveness to a effective and passionate spiritual leader and shepherd amazes me. During his graduation ceremony from PVSAM, Mop commented on how he now identifies with Paul, and wants to be a servant of the gospel even in the face of persecution and hardship. And he has seen plenty of those.

When I was leaving his village with the young man Ven to take him to the hospital, Mop handed me a small envelope and said he had a tithe for me. I assumed it was for the expenses for Ven, but Mop said it was for me, to put petrol in the truck and for travel expenses. This touched me even more than his powerful prayers for his neighbors because it was a real sacrifice. Even though it amounted to only around \$25, that is a lot for a village farmer, and I hesitated to take it, but then I told him that God wants us all to receive as well as give, and that I was sure God would provide for both our needs. Mop has joined the ranks of the apostle Paul and all God's true servants, and his love for God and for his neighbors will surely win more and more people to begin a walk with their Creator and Savior.

We rejoice in God's calling of young people like Mop, Ngoeurt, Rado, Barang and all 12 our Plas Prai and Church Planting team staff. Through them the light of the gospel which is the power of God to save is transforming and redeeming many in areas where there was once nothing but spiritual darkness and sin slavery.