# Theology  

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:

Buy me a coffee https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology
https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb

PayPal https://paypal.me/robbradshaw

A table of contents for Honeycomb can be found here:
https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_honeycomb.php

[TT


A bilingual Khmer-English Theological Journal to give biblical knowledge to its readers as a honeycomb gives strength to exhausted travelers.


Voll. 2, No. 3
"
Joully 2001

## Honeycomb

How Can They Believe? ..... 1
Alice COMPAIN
 ..... $\omega$
Missionary-National Relationships ..... 19
Wes LINDQUIST
 ..... ตอ
สร่ส์ ชิญชั่รี
God and Money Part Three-The Search for True Riches ..... 49
Neal YOUNGQUIST
 ..... \&゙G

Success and Successors ..... 61
Russell H. BOWERS, Jr.
 ..... ળૌฒ

โiతciscciccix ix ges ..... E'm
Autobiography: Sam Sarin ..... 100

First listing of an article is the language in which the article was originally written.


## How Can They Believe? How Can They Hear? The Khmer Church in Cambodia Today

## Background

TThe name of Christ was probably first brought to Cambodia by Portuguese and Spanish traders in the sixteenth century. The stormy passage of the Roman Catholic Church in Cambodia has been well recorded in François Ponchaud's Cathedral of the Rice Paddy. ${ }^{1}$ It seems that only Brahmanism and Buddhism came across from India at the beginning of the Christian era when cultural links were growing between India and Cambodia, even though we know that a church existed in southern India from the first century. But the Khmer people-apart from those living in Siam where the gospel first penetrated in the early nineteenth century-had to wait until the twentieth century to hear the evangelical gospel.
${ }^{1}$ François Ponchaud, The Cathedral of the Rice Paddy-450 Years of History of the Church in Cambodia, preface by Bishop Yves Ramousse, postface by Cardinal Etchegaray, translated by Nancy Pignarre and the Bishop Salas Cambodian Catholic Center (Le Sarment: Librairie Arthème Fayard, 1990).

Hudson Taylor, founder of the China Inland Mission, issued a call to prayer in 1875 for the "vassal" states to the south of China, including Cambodia. Trading links had been established about a thousand years earlier as Chinese settlers came down into the Indochinese peninsula, but China itself was then only just opening up to receive the gospel. Around the world people were praying for Indochina. In 1902 the Swiss Brethren were the first to arrive, settling in southern Laos. God laid the burden of planting the church on the Christian and Missionary Alliance, who sent their first workers to Vietnam in 1911. These pioneers started to preach to the Kampuchea Kraom people in the Mekong Delta, but found the door to Cambodia itself closed to them by the French, who did not want competition for the Catholics. Eventually, however, God gave the Alliance the opportunity to send two missionary families in 1923, the beginning of today's evangelical church in our country.

The early work centered on Battambang, where groups of migrants from Kampuchea Kraom proved responsive. The first known church group was in Chkaè Kôn, where Granny Yim still lives; she came as a five-year-old to live and share Christ in Cambodia with her parents.

Now in the next century where is the church? A simple answer-everywhere! For the first time we can find Christian groups in every province around the country. When you consider the turbulent history of this country, it is amazing to see how God worked so that people can and do believe in Christ. Only twenty years ago there was a deliberate attempt to stamp out not only Christianity (regarded as Western and imperialist) but all religions. Yet God preserved a remnant-a significant word applying to those who clung to their faith in spite of everything. Isaiah 46:3-4 reads, "Listen to me . . . all you who remain [i.e., the remnant] of the house of Israel. . . . Even to your old age and gray hairs I am he, I am He who will sustain you. I have made you and I will carry you; . . . I will rescue you."

## Leadership

In 1974 there were only twelve full-time pastors, though many had been trained at the Takhmau Bible School. The entire class I taught there from 1974-75 perished during the Khmer Rouge period, apart from Nhem Sokhun, who died not long after reaching the United States. Yet as I look around today, I see quite a few church leaders who were Christians before 1975, truly preserved by God's grace. Nevertheless, most people in leadership today became Christians after 1990. This is true of virtually all lay pastors in the country churches. They therefore have few models to follow, a fact that shows up in the way they organize their churches like associations or societies with elected committees. Few groups have leaders appointed because of their spiritual qualifications according to the Pauline pattern.

## Training of Leadership

As churches started multiplying, the cry went up, "We need leadership training!" Many Christian mission groups have responded to this call, with the result that seminars, short-term Bible schools, and training sessions are on the calendar virtually every month. The Theological Education by Extension program started by the Christian and Missionary Alliance is currently training over six hundred people, mostly in the provinces. The materials originally written for church leaders in South America are well translated and eminently suitable for the Khmer leaders. A TEE association has been set up to make this training available to the whole church here in Cambodia. Another TEE type program has been started by the Assemblies of God, called "Train and Multiply." This relies on personal mentoring of leaders, who in turn mentor others-good news indeed!

Residential courses are run at seven Baptist centers across the country for two weeks at a time. After two years the rural leaders will have studied for eight sessions, giving them basic training in leading churches and teaching the Bible. The Phnom Penh Bible School has already graduated six classes of students
who have studied for three years, and current enrollment is sixty. Campus Crusade for Christ runs a school for evangelists, and the Assemblies of God opened their Cambodia Bible Institute in July 1996. Kampuchea for Christ also has residential training courses, as do the Methodists. Many short-term courses are also held in Phnom Penh and the provinces, which church leaders from around the country attend.

Training materials are available from many sources, besides the workbooks that go with the above TEE and Bible School courses. Leroy Eims' How to Be a Leader was translated from Thai and typed in 1992. There is a range of Christian and evangelistic books that need to be made more readily available to the local churches so that Christians can read for themselves, but few people have access to these books or can afford to buy them. Few, too, have shortwave radios, another great source of teaching through daily FEBC broadcasts, though those living close to FM stations have a choice of Christian programs. Cassettes can be listened to several times over on tape recorders, and some are distributing teaching material this way. But a lot more use could be made of resources already prepared if libraries were set up in each Christian center.

## Evangelism

Most Cambodian Christians have come to believe through the witness of family or close friends. Not only did they hear message of the gospel from them, they also saw how its power changes lives. Sometimes their overseas relatives, converted in the refugee camps or in a third country, have come back and explained the gospel to them.

But in some cases the warm generosity of overseas Christians has clouded the issue and led the poorer relatives to think that becoming a Christian is part of a bargain for receiving assistance. New believers are freguently asked how much they are paid for becoming Christians, and it is not easy for them to give an appropriate answer to dispel these wrong ideas.

Some have become Christians because God healed them. Disease is very prevalent, and the practice of going to folk healers (krou Khmer) still very popular. In this context, God has stepped in and shown his power to heal both people's physical bodies and their broken and emotionally distressed hearts, as well as to deliver the many who have allowed the devil to trouble or possess them. Those healed then proclaim the message of God's peace that passes all understanding, unknown to them before accepting Christ.

The most powerful form of evangelism is still the life transformed by the power of Christ. In rural communities no one can hide himself away, and it soon becomes the talk of the village when a person's life is radically changed. Recently I spoke with a former soldier in Svai Reang province who was convinced he had become HIV-positive because of his previous loose lifestyle, and had spent hundreds of dollars seeking treatment. He was attracted to the gospel because of the "trust in Christ" attitude of some fellow villagers. Now he is following Christ-one truly snatched from the fire (Jude 23).

## Worship

Nearly every Sunday there is a new group of Christians meeting somewhere in Cambodia for the first time to worship the true and living God. Every year many hundreds celebrate their first Easter and Christmas. God's church continues to grow numerically, but it still has to mature to attain the whole measure of fullness that Christ has prepared for his body. His aim is to bring church into the unity of the Spirit. Year by year we are seeing a movement in the right direction, towards acknowledging the headship of Christ. Sadly there are still those who seek to get their own groups or denominations established without encouraging fellowship and mutual building up of all the Christians in one given area. But in time local Christians will insist on the truth that they are "the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grow[ing] and build[ing] itself in love, as each part does its work (Ephesians 4:16)."

This is already true in the experience of worship, where the Cambodian Christians have their own hymnology and sing with great gusto the indigenous songs given to them by the Lord. How precious this gift of music and poetry and art forms, a heritage of the Khmer people, and now used expressly to worship God! An official in the department of religion and culture in Kampong Thom province recently praised the local churches for upholding Khmer culture in their worship songs.

## Future Development

Having watched the blossoming of churches over the last ten years, I expect growth to continue as more villages are reached with the gospel. Today many people who previously had resisted the gospel message are becoming Christians, just as in the early days of missionary activity so few responded even though many heard. We need to continue to reach out to those who never have had the opportunity to respond to the gospel.

As Christians mature, they should develop a burden to carry the gospel to other districts in their own provinces and beyond. Increasing maturity will also bring a sense of responsibility to "parent" and discipline new Christians. At present many new believers are left to fend for themselves with inadequate follow-up. I would dare to hope that the churches will develop truly into Christi in communities caring for one another like their own family and welcoming in the new believers as part of this family.
$t$ present many churches and denominations are heavily dependent on foreign input and NGO's. Therefore they do not fully perceive their own responsibility to carry out Christ's commands in sharing what God has given them. Foreigners need to evaluate whether their input is actually strengthening the new believers' faith in God who "will provide," as we can actually hinder rather than help their trust in God by becoming substitute patrons.

As Christians develop, they will know God on an ever deeper level, and come to acknowledge him as the center of their lives, their families, and their churches. Today we have a
multiplicity of church groups often competing with each other (like shops setting up together to attract customers). When God becomes the focal center, then differences will recede and Christians will willingly join together for fellowship, also to make an impact on the $99.5 \%$ of Cambodia that still does not acknowledge Christ as savior.
"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom His favor rests" (Luke 2:14).



## 











[^0]























 กยุุสาเยี่ด 4























## ตรงนึกร่


 โุกะตรี ตโร

















## 





## 

















 รiด
































## 






 ญูนส่ตุตรต 4






























## 













 นิสธิร

 ถู่รตษกี






 ภรร์






## 
















 ุุกนูตตโโต
















 ภก่รฺูหติธินล









# MISSIONARYNATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS 

Stages of growth

Wes LINDQUIST

## Introduction

Whenever we talk about working together we are talking about relationships: In John 17 Jesus taught that the world would know we are His disciples by our relationships. Cambodian nationals, Do you have a good relationship with the missionaries with whom you are working? Missionaries, Do you have a good relationship with the nationals with whom you are working? The goal of this article is to stimulate better relationships between us.

## The Flow of Partnership

Relationship-As the following graphic illustrates, all partnerships are built on relationship. This is the foundation of all strong churches, NGO's, or any other type of organization. Without strong relationships our partnerships will be weak and short-lived.

Purpose-Once strong relationships have been built we need to have a purpose. A relationship without purpose is simply a group of friends. For a partnership we must have a mutually-agreed purpose-something we both want to accomplish.


Strategy-Once our relationship has an agreed-upon purpose, we then need to determine a strategy. How are we going to accomplish our purpose? This is where experience and training begin to show a great profit.

Resources-As Christians our next step in our relationship is to prayerfully determine the resources needed to complete our strategy and fulfill our purpose. In the world we often start the process by looking at our resources: "How much money do we have?" But as Christians we need to seek God's purpose and strategy first. Then by faith we pray the resources in.

Work-Finally, the partnership we have built upon strong relationships, mutually-defined purpose, wise strategy, and calculated resource management, can begin to work together.

The result of a partnership built on strong relationships is the ability to do great works for God. Whether in the church, an NGO, or any other Christian organization, the strength of the organization is found in the strength of their relationships.

## The Centrality of Relationships

The remainder of this article will focus on one element of the above model. The most important and yet most fragile component is our relationships. Brothers and sisters, we can have the best purpose, the finest strategies, and all the resources imaginable, but our partnerships and work will come to nothing if our relationships crumble. We must place a higher priority on our relationships than on our work. Jesus didn't die for any of our projects; he died for people. We must give more care and attention to people than to the work. That priority begins with those with whom we work, and not just the disadvantaged or hurting sinners our projects so often target.

## RELATIONSHIPS ARE OUR PRIORITY

- Jesus didn't die for your projects


Winter uses a four-stage model for working through missionary-national church relationships. ${ }^{1}$ The great value in his model is its recognition that all relationships must change and

[^1]develop. This is a sign of growth and health. Yet there will always be stress associated with change. The change required to move from one stage to another on this model causes us great stress. If we learn these stages of relationship, we can better understand one another and better partner together. It will also help us find a good path through the stressful changes of growth and development.

# Missionary - National Relationship Four Stages of Development 

## - Stage 1: Pioneer Stage

First contact with a people group.
Evangelism and relief work are some of the principal tools used.

- Stage 2: Paternal Stage

Expatriates train national leadership. The establishment of Bible Schools and assorted other training methods take shape. Relief is moving into development.

- Stage 3 Partnership Stage

National leaders work as equals with expatriates. Turning over control and projects to national leadership, with expatriates acting as mentors.

- Stage 4 Participation Stage Expatriates are no longer equal partners, but only participate by invitation. Specialized and highly trained missionaries are needed to support the national church in areas like Christian media production and advanced theological training.


As a missionary myself, I will begin by talking about the role of the missionary. It is an ever-evolving role, much like that of a teacher who teaches a student, and then trains that student to become a teacher, and then finally becomes an employee in his student's school.

Sometimes we use the analogy of a parent and child to describe this growing relationship. Missionaries must not forever maintain a dominant role over the local work, nor should they relinquish the local work too quickly. As with all living things, there is a natural process of growth and development. No parent wants to find himself or herself feeding and bathing a twenty-year-
old child. Missionary relationships should mirror this natural pattern.

Understanding this model allows us to see that our roles and relationships will naturally change over time. As we progress toward a mature national church we will move through each of these four stages. The important fact to remember is that each organization and denomination is on a different pace. There is no "right" method nor is there a "uniform speed" that all relationships will follow. As with our children, some grow up faster than others.

One word of caution-2 Cor 10:12 warns us of the "foolishness" of comparing ourselves among ourselves. One of the most dangerous activities in which we can engage is to compare the way different missionaries and nationals develop their relationships. As with all living things, growth takes place according to specific conditions of proper food, water, nurture, and care. The "soil" or personality of the people involved plays a large part in growth. I am weary of the sweeping generalizations like, "All missionaries are colonial and domineering," or "All nationals are Biblically uneducated and greedy for money and power." There is no basis to make such statements, and genuine relationships will never form in such a hostile environment.

## Pioneer Stage

The fact is there are times when a strong visionary pioneer is needed. Pioneers tend to have strong, domineering personalities. These people will let nothing stand in the way of bringing the light of the Gospel to souls trapped in darkness. These are strong people with strong opinions. Look at them one moment and you can see them sacrificing their freedoms and rights for others; look at them another moment and you see them crashing headfirst into conflict and poor decisions. These people are like the mighty water buffalo-if their strength is guided in the right direction they can do great benefit. But should their strength be misguided they cause great harm.

Currently, only $0.6 \%$ of Cambodia's population believes in Christ. To argue we don't need pioneer missionaries ignores this fact. To my knowledge, nearly every one of the twenty-one
provinces has at least one Christian home fellowship or church, and all four city principalities have a church. But how many of the 173 provincial districts or how many of the 36,000 villages have a Christian witness? The vast majority do not have any witness for Christ at all! This is a country that is desperately in need of pioneer missionaries. I would even dare to challenge the budding national church to focus its resources on pioneering new districts and villages for Christ too.

## Pioneer Stage

## Positives:

$\checkmark$ Strong independent personality
$\checkmark$ Will sacrifice greatly to see others hear the gospel
$\checkmark$ Self starters
$\checkmark$ Little conflict since there is no one else to argue with

## Negatives:

$\checkmark$ Strong independent personality

mission
$\checkmark$ Tend to have blind spots
$\checkmark$ Confrontational

In the present pioneering stage of missions work in Cambodia, many foreigners are confused by arguments such as, "The colonial days of pioneering are over. Now, we need to empower and equip nationals." Another argument runs, "Nationals can do it with better language and cultural sensitivity and certainly with far less cost." Yet those who argue this way fail to realize that such logic comes from nations with more than two hundred years of missions history. The current trend across the world is that "Developing World" or "Second World" nations are beginning to send missionaries.

Here in Cambodia we see fruit produced by Filipino, Korean, and Thai missionaries. These sending countries have
enjoyed more than 150,100 , and 80 years of national church development respectively. Let's compare these countries to Cambodia. Yes, Cambodia had its first Protestant missionaries nearly eighty years ago, but the national church never really grew and became well established. Then with the Khmer Rouge regime, the small national church was destroyed. Only four pastors survived and most of the Christians either fled to the camps in Thailand or died under the Khmer Rouge.

Realistically, the national church in Cambodia is a new pioneer work. The majority of us here are working with firstgeneration believers. Therefore, the idea of pioneering is more appropriate to Cambodia when compared to the rest of the world, since Cambodia has experienced such a terrible past. This is a pioneer field and not a mature field. We need to understand that to accurately set our strategies and plans.

## Parent Stage

As growth continues, we see new life springing up from the seed of the Word-babes in Christ requiring great care and attention. As with physical infants, these new believers require constant attention from their parents or teachers. This work of nurturing depends totally upon the mission for sustenance; the national church is in the learning stage. This stage requires the gift of teaching from the missionary. The young national church has a growing child's relationship to the mission. The missionaries must "parent" without being "paternalistic." This means they must guide, instruct, teach, model, and apply God's Word in culturally appropriate ways, but must not view the national church or its members as "children to be bossed around" or "employees to be ordered around." Many of the five-to-ten-year-old ministries in Cambodia are entering this stage. They are trying to disciple new believers in such basic issues as church attendance, personal devotions, prayer, and Bible reading. Though many new churches are developing materials to facilitate this growth, there remains a vast need for more basic discipleship resources.

In helping plant two churches I have experienced the conflict that arises in moving from Pioneer to Parent stage. It is the

## Parent Stage

## Positives:

$\checkmark$ Growth is rapid with solid teaching
$\checkmark$ Genuine change in lives beginning
$\checkmark$ Most opportune time to build lasting relationships (parent without being paternalistic)

## Negatives:

$\checkmark$ Early stages require the church to be totally dependant upon the mission
$\checkmark$ Conflicts arise as church grows

church mission
$\checkmark$ Without trusting relationships failure is imminent
age-old tension between the "evangelist" wanting more people to have opportunity to respond to the Gospel message and the "pastor" who wants to bolt the door shut, recognizing he cannot properly care for the people he already has. We must recognize that in these stages of growth sometimes we "grow out," and other times we let our roots "grow down." One is not more important than the other. They simply represent different stages of growth.

I believe some of the Cambodian pastors have experienced this transition too. Remember when your church was small and all the time you put into evangelism and going to new houses and villages with the Gospel? Then a day came when you had thirty to forty people coming regularly. They began sharing their problems and wanting you to come counsel them. You saw the need to better train them and teach them the Word of God, but your habit was to go out witnessing and not stay at the church and counsel people. A tension arose-that tension is the transition between these two stages. You need to recognize this and grow. Don't make the mistake of continuing to pioneer and not parent. You will bring them in the front door, but if you don't care for them they will leave
out the back door just as fast. Why do we have churches that continue to attract new members, yet whose attendance remains the same? Because they are not parenting the infants they bear.

## Partnership Stage

The next stage is a very difficult transition for both the missionary and the local church. It could be compared to having teenagers in your home. They are not really children, as they are big and physically developed; yet they are not quite adults, as they have so little practical experience. The teenage son wants to be a man. He is willing to "prove" how strong or tough he is. He is like a young rooster strutting around and crowing. The father wants to "let him go" and gain experience, but it is hard when the father knows the pain and long term effects one poor decision can make.

## Partnership Stage

## Positives:

$\checkmark$ Strength of national church emerging

- Creativity and cultural bridges being developed
$\checkmark$ Vast new areas of ministry opening as greater human resources are available


## Negatives:

$\checkmark$ Most difficult transition (for both parties!)
$\checkmark$ Cracks in the first two stages will show
$\checkmark$ Most causalities occur now

church mission

For the NGO this means turning over multi-million dollar programs, handing over the keys to vehicles and equipment, allowing the work to be governed by nationals, and allowing the nationals to make decisions that will affect the future of the NGO. This is not easy to do! Yet, some nationals believe they are ready
to do this within three to four years. "Let me show you how to do this right!" is the attitude of some. Oh, the pain involved in this transition . . . it is not an easy time.

Just as in our families, this transition is best prepared for when the relationship is young. We must build trust in one another and learn to appreciate one another's gifts and experiences. We must acknowledge early on that when the time for transition comes it will be painful. There is no easy way to do this; it takes the grace of God on both parts. Becoming equal with one another is something that opposes human nature. We both want to be in charge, but God is saying at this stage that one needs to let go and trust, while the other needs to respectfully take up the leadership role on a transitioning basis. The new leaders must start slow and gradually take full control. God will help us make this transition, but we certainly can make it less painful by being aware of what is happening.

## Participation Stage

Once the partnership stage has reached its climax, full control belongs to the nationals. The control of the denomination or NGO is now fully in their capable hands. The organization is being run with experience and wisdom. God is now blessing the nationals with growth and success.

At this stage the missionary needs to know when to move on to the next field. Not all missionaries are gifted for each stage of this developmental process. Strong Type A personalities often chafe under the vision, direction, and guidance of the national leaders. This is a recipe for continual conflict. Why do it? At this stage the local church or NGO needs to say, "We would like this one and that one to stay and work with us. But we need to see these others move on." At this stage the national church is in full control and they will only need the services of those highly specialized missionaries or technical experts. We will need missionaries with advanced theological training when we see true Bible colleges and seminaries in Cambodia, training at the master's level and higher. Do you believe that day will come? Yes, friends, it will. And we will need missionaries skilled in areas like television, radio, and
other mass media to help the national church develop the programs they want to produce. This does not mean there will not be Cambodian technicians. But these are examples of what it means to be in the Participant stage.

Local NGO's will need people helping in areas of specialized medicine, micro-finance, or other areas of expertise. The major decisions will at this stage be made by the Cambodian leaders, but we never want to isolate ourselves from the wisdom and experience of our Christian brothers and sisters.

## Participation Stage

## Positives:

- Ultimate goal achleved!
$\checkmark$ New People Groupi being targeted by national church
$\checkmark$ Mont misalonarles moving on to next unreached field


## Negatives:

- Some "old timera" hangling on
$\checkmark$ Politicking among natlonal leaderif for supreme control

church mission


## Conclusion

There you have it-the four P's of relationship development between missionaries and nationals. This model is given in the hope that by understanding the process we can improve our relationships with one another. And remember, don't be so foolish as to compare your church or organization with another. There is no value in this-it will only breed jealousy or anger.

I would challenge each of you to go back and talk with those you are working with and see where you think you are at on this developmental process. It might be enlightening to see that one
person thinks we are pioneering while another thinks we are in the participation stage!

Once you determine where you currently are, talk about the future. How do you want to get to the next stage? How long do you think it will take? What will be the signs that you are growing into that next stage?

Taking the time to answer all of these questions will help us build strong relationships between missionaries and nationals.

This material was presented at the 2001 General Assembly of the Evangelical Fellowship of Cambodia in Phnom Penh.


## 

มิร ตษสรคยః 



































## 
















## 





ญ




[^2]













- ม่ณาก่ตารษูถรูต

 ตัด 1












 โัชดยู่ 4







 ถโระ 1


















## 
















 เชุูียูร 4

## 









```
    บ்ภุธหธิฐยตต:
```




```
    UM
```









 การโตฺโโต






















## 

 เกี่ מใช







 โตึโโ



## 


















## 


 บเึ
 LTK



ธ่ถุกุตริธู่ยา:



church mission











































## 



















## 

## 

ธ่กุษโปษ่ร:

 นุธเกีสยาเเตู๋ด 4



ธัถภุธสใฐ์ยาด:
 ต่มกิง)
 ถิ̛



















 รึฟ



## 
























## 

ช่กฺฺึยูตร:




ธ่กกุตสไดยยา:





$\begin{array}{ll}\text { church } & \text { mission } \\ \text { NGELS } \\ \text { IUrinng }\end{array}$












## 















 เธ็โโุด่


## 






[^3]

## God and Money Part Three--The Search for True Riches

Neal YOUNGQUIST

## The Mad Race

we don't have to look far to find people in a mad race to acquire riches. At times the race becomes very competitive, fueled by a strong desire to increase status and power by possessing more material goods or riches than one's neighbor. This pursuit of riches has its consequences. The quest for riches leads people down the dangerous slide of moral compromise leading eventually to destruction. Soon everything is acceptable for the purpose of acquiring more. Corruption, bribery, gambling, lying, oppressing the poor, and other evil practices lead people-regardless of ethnicity or nationality-blindly on this broad path to ruin.

Is possessing material wealth ungodly? No--there were many in the Bible who lived righteous lives and possessed great wealth. Abraham, Job, and Cornelius are a few examples of those God blessed with wealth. These men and others recognized that God is the source of wealth'. They had the strength of character and trust in God to prevent riches from becoming the controlling master of their lives. ${ }^{2}$

[^4]There are

The Perils of the Race Toward Riches
Poverty
Proverbs 22:16
Proverbs 23:4, 5
Proverbs 28:19, 22
Family Troubles Proverbs 15:27
Turmoil

Threats
Untrue Friends Proverbs 19:4
False Trust

Harmful Desires 1 Timothy 6:9
those, however, who have fallen prey to the deceit of riches with the clear intention of obtaining riches in their own way and time. Balaam, Achan, Gehazi, and Judas, just to name a few, succumbed to the power of riches to their own demise. They all made riches their god and paid the price for it in the end.

## True Riches

To the surprise of many, material wealth is not allpowerful. It has limitations! Wealth cannot save in the day of judgment, ${ }^{3}$ does not last forever, ${ }^{4}$ cannot satisfy, ${ }^{5}$ and is not a source of happiness. ${ }^{6}$ Is it not better to seek after true riches that last forever than chasing after temporal earthly gain? What are these eternal riches that are available to those seeking after God's pleasure?

[^5]
## Wisdom

The supreme treasure is wisdom. Throughout the book of Proverbs, the reader is encouraged again and again to search for it with all his or her ability. There was a common saying among the Jews: "Seek that to which other things are necessarily connected." A king once said to his friend, "Ask what you want, and I will give
 it you." He thought within. himself, "If I ask to be made a general I will easily obtain it. I will ask something to which all other things can be added." He then said, "Give me your daughter as my wife." This he did knowing that all the blessings of the kingdom would be added to this gift. ${ }^{7}$

Similarly, all the blessings of God are found in wisdom. Finding wisdom is like finding a source of never-ending treasures such as purity, peacefulness, gentleness, submissiveness, compassion, sincerity, fruitfulness, and impartiality. ${ }^{8}$ These riches of the heart are priceless, worth far more than mere silver and gold.

Where can these riches of wisdom be found? Job writes that God understands the way to them, and he alose knows where they dwell. ${ }^{9}$ The storehouse of wisdom is found in respect,

[^6]adoration, and obedience to the Lord and his commands. And it can be obtained from God-the master creator and source of wisdom who gives generously to all those who ask without doubting. ${ }^{10}$

## Knowing Christ

Wisdom is also found in knowing Christ, who became for us wisdom from God. ${ }^{11}$ Coming into fellowship with God does not only mean the richness of eternal life, but also the opportunity for intimacy with our creator. Paul valued this intimacy so much that he surrendered everything that men count as valuable for the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ. ${ }^{12}$ As Christ is revealed to us, we begin to understand the manifold blessings of the Kingdom of God and his supreme power working on our behalf. ${ }^{13}$ Like wisdom, knowing Christ requires a persistent dedication to seek him and follow after his commands.

## Contentment

The lust for riches and power was just as strong in the days of the early church as they are today. In the midst of a greedy and corrupt generation, Paul encouraged his student Timothy with a gem of truth that, as usual, turns the world's system upside down: Godliness with contentment is great gain. ${ }^{14}$ Working in harmony, these twin powers of godly living and a sense of inward sufficiency result in enormous strength and steadfastness.

It was with such astounding qualities that the early saints gladly chose to endure great persecution and loss of possessions rather than indulge in the seducing materialism of the age. ${ }^{15}$ With great anticipation and confidence these pilgrims and aliens saw from afar an approaching unshakable Kingdom with better and

[^7]lasting possessions. They properly appraised the temporal corruptible riches of the world and found it woefully insufficient when compared with the eternal riches of the Kingdom.

## A Choice

Today, God has given us a choice-to build our lives on the true riches of his Kingdom, or to seek after the elusive rewards of materialism. The shifting sands of power, gain, and self-worth are short-lived and will not last the storms of life. Only the one who is supported by the pillars of godly wisdom, intimacy, and contentment will stand forever. The choice is obvious but only fully realized when we cultivate a lifestyle that is pleasing to him and effective in our pursuit of the Kingdom.


## โูః నิల โ్రొగ



## ตมมูรcam Mex exincs

 งโศัఢฺย


























 पโููษ เรตาร เกษा


 ษ̛ดృ๙ยูริ รทูโลณ่



[^8]



## 


 รบส่โ̧์







## คริริษณลุุร








[^9]







 เึ่ส" 4 บตู่ยก

 ตงธีดรูดงชถํำ 4 การ เุ: ตาต่ตรเติเผ่แสร


โธ่งย็ดุดหก ม่่







[^10]










## 











[^11]




## 


















[^12]






## ผว6รูปัสสริส















## Success and Successors

Russell H. BOWERS, Jr

## How Do We Gauge Success?

By what standard can we decide how successful someone has been in ministry?

Is it the number of people who have sat under someone's teaching and will testify of its impact? Jesus attracted large crowds in the early stages of his work. However, he often demonstrated the shallowness of the multitude's "faith" and, by insisting on a deeper commitment, drove them away. ${ }^{1}$ No, numbers do not prove success in God's sight. Other things being equal, we would naturally rather see many people rather than few respond, claim allegiance to Christ, and join the church. But if they do so for the superficial reasons of John 6, or without the submission to his word that Jesus demanded in John 8, the numbers who follow us may

[^13]speak not of how many we have won, but with how many we have failed.

Should we say rather that success is measured by the minister's personal faithfulness to the Lord and his word, regardless of whether people have responded? Surely this represents a more spiritual yardstick. Paul told the church at Corinth that "it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful" to the one who commissioned them, and that therefore he cared very little about how people evaluated him. ${ }^{2}$ God told Ezekiel to faithfully proclaim his word to Judah, whether or not they would listen. In fact, he clearly implied that they would not listen. Yet Ezekiel was to preach anyway. ${ }^{3}$ Jesus is twice called "the faithful witness," ${ }^{4}$ and those whom he rewards at his return are his "good and faithful" servants." So faithfulness clearly comprises a criterion for success before the Lord.

Can we probe this a bit deeper? A comerstone of faithfulness is integrity. Faithfully discharging the work we have been given is inadequate if our hearts remain divided. The exalted Christ warned a faithfully busy church at Ephesus that it risked forfeiting its status as a witness ("lampstand") because it had forsaken its first love. ${ }^{6}$ God does not seek automata that crank out studies, sermons, and service. He first seeks love, integrity, and faithfulness of heart, which then evidence themselves through faithfulness of action. The Christian community should tolerate no divorce of character from function in its leaders. Elders must meet strict character qualifications before they are qualified to serve; ${ }^{7}$ by contrast the godless have no right to minister God's word. ${ }^{8}$ A person cannot prove truly successful in God's work without integrity.

```
\({ }^{2} 1\) Cor 4:2-3 and following.
\({ }^{3}\) Ezekiel 2-3.
\({ }^{4}\) Rev 1:5; 3:14.
\({ }^{5}\) Matt 25:21, 23.
\({ }^{6} \operatorname{Rev} 2: 4\). Note the church's faithfulness in its work in 2:2-3.
\({ }^{7} 1\) Tim 31-13; Tit 1:6-9.
\({ }^{8}\) Ps 50:16ff.
```

What have we said so far? Numbers are good. God wants not a few but "all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth," and someday "a great multitude that no one could count" will ascribe salvation to God. ${ }^{9}$ But until the day when wheat is separated from tares, confidence in numbers may prove ill-founded. Faithfulness in work and integrity of heart shall certainly be rewarded, but in the meantime they often prove hard for humans to assess. Is there some visible criterion that certifies success in ministry?

I suggest that $a$ successor signifies success. It is not enough that we have done well. We need to labor so that when our chapter is written, another continues the novel we have begun. Without someone to carry on what we have started, our work may fade into oblivion as did for centuries the temples of Ankor Wat. A godly, trained, and working successor may not be the only signpost of successful work, or even a necessary one. But where one is found a certain degree of success can be ascribed.

## The Importance of Successors

The Bible speaks often of the importance of successors. When warned of his impending death Moses prayed, "May Yahweh, the God of the spirits of all mankind, appoint a man over this community . . . so that Yahweh's people will not be like sheep without a shepherd." ${ }^{10}$ God then appointed Joshua, Moses' aide since his youth," to the task. It is no wonder then that Israel succeeded under this strong and sage leader, and Moses' life work did not evaporate on the plains of Moab east of the Jordan. By contrast, we hear nothing of Joshua's mentoring a successor. Thus we are saddened but not surprised to read that after Joshua and his generation died, "another generation grew up, who knew neither

[^14]Yahweh nor what he had done for Israel." ${ }^{12}$ Consequently Israel descended into the disastrous decline of the days of the judges.

The priest Eli was righteous, but his sons "were wicked men" who "had no regard for Yahweh." Consequently Eli's line died out. ${ }^{13}$ Likewise Samuel stood tall for the Lord, but his sons stooped to dishonesty, bribery, and perversion of justice. So Samuel's line and office were replaced by Saul and the monarchy. ${ }^{14}$ Godly Hezekiah was followed by godless Manasseh, and Judah's gains under the father were forfeited under the son. ${ }^{15}$ If we want lasting success, we must groom our successors.

Jesus knew that. That is why as time moved on he increasingly focused his ministry on the few who would carry on his work rather than the many whose allegiance was easily won and easily lost. Jesus had no problems attracting a crowd, who would sometimes neglect a meal to hear him in the wilderness. But as his ministry approached its climax at Calvary Jesus invested less effort scattering seed along the road and more sharpening the scythes of his reapers. He wanted his work to last. He personally could have attracted larger crowds, and perhaps credited himself with more converts by doing so: He could have gone out with a bigger splash, but he would have gone out. By investing himself in his disciples he ensured that his word would reach us in Phnom Penh 7,500 kilometers from Jerusalem and two millennia later.

His desire for lasting fruit is seen in Jesus' upper-room discourse. He told the eleven, "You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit-fruit that will last." ${ }^{16}$ One way to assure that our fruit lasts is to take care to practice the great commission, which calls on us to make disciples (not merely converts) and to teach them to obey all Christ's commands. In other words we must groom our successors. Among Jesus' commands we are to train our disciples to perform is that of

[^15]reaching and discipling others. Our work is thus incomplete when we have studied, we have preached, we have taught, we have served. We must move beyond honing our own skills and train others so that they can effectively study, preach, and serve. Further, our disciples are not fully formed until they, as well as we, are committed to and skilled in training successors.

This multi-generational vision is spelled out in 2 Timothy $2: 2$, where Paul urges his protégé to entrust the words he had heard from Paul to faithful men who themselves would be able to teach others. Thus this one short verse speaks of four "generations" of leaders-Paul, Timothy, faithful men, and others. Production of lasting fruit requires such a long-range activity.

## Why People Fail to Train Their Replacements

Why do we sometimes neglect the obvious need to train our replacements? The reasons vary from individual to individual or group to group, but often they include a blend of the following:
(1) Investment in successors requires humility. It requires a willingness to not be the Big Number One. To the extent I exert energy to edify those who will succeed me, I neglect time I could have invested in my own work. Accepting yet another invitation to travel, speak, or write may provide an interesting diversion for me or keep $m y$ name before the public. But in the long run, patiently and privately honing a small band of disciples may prove more fruitful for the kingdom. Am I willing to step out of the limelight so that others may share it with me . . . or even surpass me some day? The church needs more leaders like Paul, who was content with curtailment of his travel and ministry if it resulted in others preaching Christ more courageously. ${ }^{17}$ It needs more like Jesus, who said to the eleven, "It is for your good that I am going away." ${ }^{18}$ Surely the crucified one could have made quite an impression on his murderers had he confronted them in person after rising from the tomb. But he wanted his apostles' ministries to succeed.

[^16](2) It requires patience. Let's be honest. It is often easier to do the job ourselves. We know of our commitment to excellence. We are certain that we will get the job done. We have confidence in our own experience and expertise. But to entrust responsibility for an important job to another whose commitment abilities are less than our own . . . and to do so in part so that other can grow in the process . . . requires patience. He or she may let us down. What may be to us a simple job may take a long time. We may need to content ourselves with a poorer product . . . or no product at all. We may find ourselves echoing the exasperated ejaculation, "Oh unbelieving and perverse generation, how long shall I stay with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring the boy here to me." ${ }^{9}$ We of course are perfect, our motivations impeccable, and our product flawless. None of that is ever true of those we mentor, so to our ministerial perfections we must add the virtue of patience if we are to equip a successor.
(3) It requires time and money. Training a successor requires many hours over many months (or years). It may require a second plane ticket when one would have sufficed, a second computer on which to pound out thoughts, another set of basic texts. Rather than widening the resource and recognition gap between the spiritual "haves" and "have-nots," serious commitment to building mature successors will spend to raise the level of the next generation. Christianity, in contrast to current culture, is not enamored of its few, otherworldly, and wealthy "stars." Rather it prefers to resemble a body where "we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature," where "every supporting ligament" counts, and which grows "as each part does its work." ${ }^{20}$ Such a vision to groom a corps rather than stroke an elite few will require that we redirect attention and money from the latter to the former.

[^17](4) It requires willingness to sacrifice short-term statistics for long-term substance. In all Christian work there is pressure to produce. People want numbers; people want statistics; people want dramatic stories of lives changed and programs implemented. This is especially true in missions and NGO work, where a river of reports must relentlessly roll to finicky donors, who may lose interest and invest elsewhere if results are not immediately and continuously forthcoming. Such a quest for the quantifiable is not always wrong-we need to be producing something. And that something had better eventually prove be fruit and not foliage. But it may be that all the frenetic activity and cash invested in yet another large campaign or conference may not prove as substantive in the long run as the same investment in the patient, unspectacular discipleship work of TEE or other small-group ministry. This does not question the value of the former, but rather encourages us to remain faithful to the latter if that is what present needs require. And we must do so even if for periods of time there is little dramatic to report. Donors must be assisted to appreciate this truth.
(5) A successor reminds a leader of his mortality. Perhaps for some a subliminal reason not to train a successor is that doing so is a tacit reminder of one's own replacability and mortality. If we were going to live forever or stay where we are forever then no replacement would be necessary. Reluctance or refusal to proactively prepare another to take over early in my ministry may be a subconscious ploy to mask my mortality from myself.

## Jesus' Training Pattern

Jesus followed four steps in preparing his successors.
(1) Selection. The apostles were not a band of volunteers. After spending a night in prayer, Jesus chose from among his disciples (and he had many) twelve whom he wanted. ${ }^{21}$ His tack opposes a current pattern that pleads for volunteers, or accepts as students virtually all who can pay the tuition. Asking for

[^18]volunteers invites the dual dangers of encouraging those who have no business in leadership to apply, and, partly for that very reason, causing the more prudent and qualified to demur. Paul followed Jesus' pattern in his choice of a successor--"The brothers at Lystra and Iconium spoke well of [Timothy]. Paul wanted to take him along on the journey...." By thus choosing well and training well, Paul ended up with a man who had no equal. ${ }^{22}$ The general New Testament pattern is that potential leaders are selected by established ones. ${ }^{23}$ Both volunteerism and election by a whole congregation (which naturally will contain persons at all stages of Christian maturity and discernment) are less apparent in our texts. ${ }^{24}$

If the church today is to follow Jesus' pattern, we must first long for successors-in-training and pray that God will show them to us. We can assess candidates in the light of revealed qualifications. ${ }^{25}$ As we assess and pray God can reveal his choice. ${ }^{26}$ Then we can approach them to see if they are willing to be trained and serve.
(2) Observation. Mark's account of the appointment of the apostles says that Jesus' plan was "that they might be with him" before he "[sent] them out to preach and to have authority to drive out demons." The first stage of the apostles' work was to watch and listen. At first Jesus did all the work. Jesus did all the teaching. Jesus healed and confronted demonic forces. They might help by rowing boats or handing out bread and fish, but their first ministry was to learn. There can be no output without previous input. It is rare to find a good leader who was not once a good follower. One too quick to speak may end up having little
> ${ }^{22}$ Acts 16:2-3; Phil 2:19-22.
> ${ }^{23}$ E.g., Acts 14:23; 15:22; Tit 1:5.
> ${ }^{24}$ Acts $6: 3-4$ may be an exception. But the church was quite young at this point, and through various testings and persecutions was probably purer and more spiritually minded than has been the norm in most of church history (see, e.g., Acts 5:13).
> ${ }^{25}$ E.g., 1 Tim 2:11-3:13; Tit 1:5-9.
> ${ }^{26}$ It was in the context of worship and fasting that the church discerned God's call of Barnabas and Saul (Acts 13:1-3).
important to say. An overwhelming need to stand up front and be seen may characterize an egotist rather than a servant of the Lord. Better to learn and be quiet at first. By being free to see and hear without having the pressure to perform, a leadership candidate can imbibe the message, method, and mentality of leadership. Better to know where you are going before you ask people to follow. The first stage of leadership development may be to ensure we have the right individuals committed to faithfully hear and watch us.
(3) Internship. Jesus neither allowed his chosen to remain passive observers, nor did he immediately thrust them into fulltime ministry. The gospels rather suggest a transition by which he gradually entrusted the twelve with increasing levels of responsibility. By Matthew 10 he sent them out in pairs for limited ministry. ${ }^{27}$ The fact that as he does so he recalls for them his own ministry shows that the first stage of "being with him" had not been ancillary to the training process. They are to be like their teacher and master. ${ }^{28}$ At the end of this internship they reported back to Jesus, spent time in reflection and renewal, ${ }^{29}$ and resumed their learning. They now know by experience that what they have heard from Jesus are not just words but truth and power. Nothing increases appetite and capacity for new data like using what you already have learned. As well, the twelve's perception of ministry needed to be deepened. They have tasted the joy and power of the kingdom; now they must come to understand and accept its cost. ${ }^{30}$

If we wish to follow Jesus' example, we too must direct and monitor a staged transition from passive observation to independent activity. In doing so we also obey Paul's dictum that deacon candidates "must first be tested" and found blameless before being installed into office. ${ }^{31}$ Our successors must be experienced in the practice as well as the theory of ministry. That practice may start with small responsibilities, even as humble as

[^19]"pouring water on the hands" of their exemplars. ${ }^{32}$ Faithfulness in a little qualifies for entrustment with much. ${ }^{33}$ We need to give our trainees "small" responsibilities-care for some physical assets, welcoming people to church services-and, if they prove faithful, gradually advance them more. In this light, if a formal Bible training institution does not consider provision of practical service to be part of its mandate, that school's curriculum must be supplemented by a significant local church practicum before even a summa cum. laude graduate can be considered prepared for ministry.
(4) Commission and release. The twelve did not perform perfectly throughout their period of learning and supervised ministry. One joined the enemy. The remaining eleven failed to kneel at the crucial hour, and therefore failed to stand. But, in answer to the Master's prayer, faith had not failed utterly. ${ }^{34}$ So the day finally came when they were fully commissioned to a broader and more full-time ministry than in Matthew 10-this time to the whole world ${ }^{35}$-and the Lord physically left them to carry on his work "on their own" under the direction and empowerment of the Holy Spirit. Similarly, our own disciples will doubtless have weaknesses and failures on their records when the day arrives for them to take over for us. But take over they must, and with Paul we "commend [them] to God and to the word of his grace, which can build [them] up and give [them] an inheritance. ${ }^{36}$ Our work is done; theirs has begun.

## A Cambodian Case Study

A positive example of training successors has been the work of the Evangelical Fellowship of Cambodia Youth Commission in producing its annual conference at Kompong Som.

[^20]Conceived and planned largely by expatriates in 1995, the conference has year by year increasingly become the work and responsibility of Cambodians. Some who attended the first conference in 1996 as campers now serve as staff. The registration fees paid by attendees has risen year by year to double the original rates. Thus through their registration fees attendees from Phnom Penh now cover approximately half of their costs. The theme of the 2001 conference, the theme song, security arrangements, first aid, sports, and other responsibilities were nearly entirely the work of Cambodians. Expatriate leaders still help with calling early planning meetings, fund raising, trouble shooting, assigning study topics and leaders, and accounting. But even these areas are subject to review by national leaders. The conference could arguably now be run entirely without expatriate input, even though foreigners still seek to enhance its effectiveness through their input and energy.

## Conclusion

Jesus' parting instruction in Matthew was to make disciples, teaching converts to obey all he had commanded. Our obedience to that commission remains incomplete if we have not taught at least one-by our words, examples, and supervision of his efforts-to carry on and extend the work after we are gone.

There are pastors who busily preach, teach, travel to other venues, chair committees, and serve in many important ways, yet who do this basically by themselves. They may be consider it a compliment when others say, "Pastor, no one can do these things as well as you!" When such a leader dies or moves on, the church or organization he led often takes a nosedive because of a sudden vacuum in leadership and expertise. Others may unthinkingly remark, "Wasn't he a great leader? No one else is as good as he was. Things are falling apart without him." But does falling apart indicate success or failure? Is not a measure of our success whether what we have done survives us, whether others have been empowered to continue and advance our work? Is ministry about our personal success, or the church's success?



## 

## 

## 













[^21]





 १ฐูงษบกน็ผงเตริโูเร 4















[^22]
 เตை：โT
 โโ๐\％ยู่ 4















（6）9アゥんク：๑：৫；ロ：๑৮


























[^23]








## 















[^24]




 খুess 1












 โิธญฺ 4

[^25]
















 ร็




















 ธ્ธํีเช์ด 4








[^26]
#   





 8ล























 พิ ร่ รา













[^27]





















[^28] รษส่ช






















[^29]













 เนดหิรตูงมี มั เรารบส่รุ่ 1

## 


























[^30]






 มต่ 4

 ธ્ઞlֹis్











[^31]







 ษิธนรงตฺษ













[^32]





















[^33]




 กิธู 4
๔) ตรโบรญ่
















[^34]



 ตาง่เสี่ยุ 4













 โโย\}










## 



























#  



## โ్రీఫcite <br> โลราโโ

## 







 โุด มต่ำส็! 4





























 รกญิดกุุ̣|




## 

























 เตึดเซึงรม





















## 

นญ่งตตูสั่ บ



























































 ษ゙เณักั 4


## Meet Sam Sarin

SAM Sarin

Ibecame an orphan at the age of five. In 1955, at the age of fifteen, I went to live in one of the pagodas in Phnom Penh in order to pursue my studies. As I did not obtain a high school diploma, it was very difficult to find a job that would enable me to make a living. So as a poor young man I quit my studies in 1963 and moved to the countryside in Battambang province. There I met my wife and married in 1965. We settled in Pailin until Cambodia fell under the rule of the Khmer Rouge. We were then deported to Phnom ProrDark where my wife and my three children died in 1976.

In late 1979 I went to Kao I Dang camp in Thailand where Jesus Christ revealed himself to me and I accepted him as the creator of the universe. I first heard his name in 1955, but assumed that he was just another one of the gods of the religions. I started my new life in Christ in January 1980, and after baptism in March, was deported to another refugee camp, Sakeo II. In early 1981 I attended a short-term course at a Bible School in Sakeo II and was chosen as church elder. I applied for immigration to the USA but failed my resettlement interview in the Kamput camp in 1982. In early 1983 I was deported back to Kao I Dang along with some church materials. The leadership role of the church fell on my shoulders entirely.

## How I became a Christian Songwriter and Composer

I studied music for a while and had enough understanding to compose some songs while still a student, but I thought it was not good enough and decided to give it up. I did not even continue singing. I was not really good at playing any one instrument, but played a little bit of this and a little bit of that. However, I was quite good at sight-reading while singing. This allowed me to compose songs according to my skill, and arrange words to notes. Miss Alice Compain, with whom I had become acquainted, knew that I could play violin, and out of the goodness of her heart bought me one that had been made in China. Together with this she included a large number of songs and asked me to choose some for use in the Khmer church. Some of the songs that Alice gave me prompted me to compose new ones, because when I checked them I found that they were not suitable for Christian singing. I found it interesting to discover that it was easy for me to put music to poetry. Some days I would compose up to five and also add new melodies to some on the same day. I found that although I had not used my musical knowledge for so many years, much of it I recalled and I progressed strongly and quickly. All the songs that I composed I gave to Sister Alice to type in Bangkok where a missionary helped to write the notes by hand. In early 1985 a Khmer hymnal was published containing 166 Khmer folksongs.

## God's plan for my life

When I became a child of God, I reflected on the words of God on my life since I was very small. I knew that my life was in God's hand completely. When I was around six or seven years old I fell from a cart that was loaded with rice bundles. We were crossing a dike at the time. I remember that fact clearly. When the right wheel of the oxcart rolled up the dike, it rocked me to the right. When the left wheel rolled up the dike, it gave a big swing and tossed me to the left until I fell down onto the buttock of the left cow and then to the ground. My neck was very close to the wheel-about one finger's width away. If the wheel had moved
only a little my head would have been chopped off. As I fell to the ground, both cows suddenly stood still, not even moving their tails until my mother removed me from that dangerous position. This accident did not cause me any injuries. I did not know that God sent his angel to look after me. The angel even stopped the cows from moving forward thus saving me from a certain death. I give him praise and thanks when I recall this because I know he really has a plan for my life.

Many things occurred in my life, but one event that stands out above them all is the one that occurred three years and eight months into the reign of the Khmer Rouge. Had God not preserved my life I would have died during that dark period. In 1976 I was hospitalized in one of the Khmer Rouge hospitals where there was neither medicine nor food. My eldest daughter, who was the last remaining member of my family, took care of me during the time I was sick. Many people were dying around me everyday.

When I became worse, I said to myself that in five day's time they will carry my body to be buried like the rest, as I was paralyzed from the waist down. I could only move my hands to hold my body. I passed stools very frequently because I had severe dysentery. There was a fortuneteller who "prophesied" for somebody. nearby me. I had one pair of sunglasses left that I wanted to give him as payment so that he could predict my fortune. I did not believe in fortune telling, but I just wanted to ask him to "prophesy" for fun. I asked him if he knew when I would die. He looked in my face and held my hand, looking for the answer in my palm and then he said, "You are not going to die. In two or three days you will be taken east and then be healed." But I said to him that I thought I would die in five days' time; I didn't believe him.

But like he said, two days later a truck from Battambang hospital arrived at Phnom Prordak, where I lived, to ask for vegetables and to take some seriously ill people for treatment in Battambang. I pleaded with the head nurse by bringing my palms together in front of my chest in a gesture of respect, asking for a favor to take me as well. She looked at me and said, "Comrade, you are not very sick. We only take the serious ones." But I
insisted, telling her how I felt. She accepted my plea and took me with her. Two nurses carried me to the truck, but I was almost out of breath when they tried to make me stand. My eyes looked like bright green stars. I asked them to put me down and crawled to climb up the truck by myself. When I arrived in the hospital my diarrhea and dysentery were gone but my knees were still very weak. I walked up to the higher ground with difficulty.

I was discharged from hospital in Battambang and went to stay in Phnom Krapeu. The group leader of my mobile team allowed me to plow in dry land. If they sent me to work in the muddy field like the others, I might not be alive today. Therefore I always praise the Lord for softening the heart of my group leader to show mercy on me while I was so weak. Could the fortuneteller predict my future? Maybe the Lord's angel put his word in that fortuneteller's mouth to encourage me to have hope? I am unable to answer that question even until today.

My resettlement in Australia provided me a broad freedom to serve the Lord in the ministry of songwriting. By contrast, if I had resettled in the United States, as many brothers and sisters had tried to help me to do, I believe that the Khmer hymnal may have ended up with only 166 songs. You see, only when the enhanced hymnal was taken to the printing house was my name chosen for resettlement in a third country. I believe that God let me stay in the refugee camp for six years until his plan was fulfilled. In Australia God provided me with hi-tech equipment to produce hymnbooks of better quality, such as a computer, music programs, and a Khmer font that enabled me to produce more songs. The number of Khmer songs in the book increased from 166 to 303: It is now easier for Christian Khmers to sing these songs than those that have been translated from foreign languages.

I was amazed at the broad and deep meaning God revealed to me in the songs I wrote. As I composed song number 126, "If I Knew God When I was Young," I realized that if I had accepted God when I was young it would have been fantastic! But even though I have served the Lord for twenty years, I still do not know him enough, nor his will or his leading. That is why I lived without

God's power in my life. God has impressed on me not to treat the hymnbook as my personal accomplishment, since the Holy Spirit encouraged my writing, and I was only the instrument or vessel that he used.

Through the gift of song composing, God taught me how to worship him in spirit and in truth and how to communicate directly to him through praise and worship songs. He showed me the kind of song that is anointed by the Holy Spirit. When this kind of song is sung it is powerful and the presence of the Lord is known. The weary will be released. The sick will be healed. Now I do not compose songs in the way that I used to. I use poetry to speak directly to God in words that communicate to him more closely. For he showed me clearly that if we are in the presence of the Lord why not speak to him and praise him? Why only speak to each other-shouting and delivering commands among ourselves? The songs that follow our own words have no impact in the presence of the Lord.

Some songs that speak about our testimony do not give him praise or glory, but rather encourage us, edify us, and build up our faith. In the presence of the Lord I like to sing in such a way as to express our love for him and the love of God towards us. We may sing songs of intercession, but only at the beginning of a worship service. As we enter the Lord's presence we should use only songs that praise him as we enter into his court with joyful hearts and with hope. We also praise with music and shouts of victory over the enemy (Psalm 100:1, 4).

I intend to serve God, not a denomination. I do not wish any fame from what I am doing. All I want is for the name of Jesus to be lifted up on high through the songs that God gives to brothers and sisters through me. I want you all to be blessed as you sing and praise him.

Finally, I want to tell my brothers and sisters that I want to live for God, do his will, deny myself carry my cross, and follow him every day. But I believe that I am weak and cannot fulfill all that I have decided to do in my own strength unless the Holy Spirit helps me. I depend only on the Word of God and the enablement of
the Holy Spirit and his grace. I do not depend on my own abilities. "'Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,' says the Lord."


[^0]:    ${ }^{(1)}$ François Ponchaud, The Cathedral of the Rice Paddy-450 Years of History of the Church in Cambodia, preface by Bishop Yvers Ramousse, postface by Cardinal Etchegaray, translated by Nancy Pignarre and the Bishop Salas Cambodian Catholic Center (Le Sarment: Librairie Arthème Fayard, 1990).

[^1]:    ${ }^{\text {'Ralph D. Winter and Steven C. Hawthome, eds., Perspectives on }}$ the World Christian Movement (Pasadena: William Carey Library, 1981).

[^2]:    ${ }^{(1)}$ Ralph D. Winter and Steven C. Hawthorne, eds., Perspectives on the World Christian Movement (Pasadena: William Carey Library, 1981).

[^3]:     ศย゙ウ

[^4]:    ${ }^{1}$ Deut 8:17,18; Prov 10:22.
    ${ }^{2}$ Matt 6:24.

[^5]:    ${ }^{3}$ Prov 11:4; Ps 52:5-7.
    ${ }^{4}$ Prov 27:24; Matt 6:19.
    ${ }^{5}$ Eccl 5:10.
    ${ }^{6}$ Eccl 2:26.

[^6]:    ${ }^{7}$ Adam Clarke, Adam Clarke's Commentary on the New Testament-Electronic Edition (Indiana: Parsons Technology, 1999), s.v. Matt 6:33.
    ${ }^{8}$ Jas 3:17.
    ${ }^{9}$ Job 28:23.

[^7]:    ${ }^{10}$ Jas 1:5-8.
    ${ }^{11} 1$ Cor 1:30.
    ${ }^{12}$ Phil 3:8-11.
    ${ }^{13}$ Eph 1:15-23.
    ${ }^{14} 1$ Tim 6:16.
    ${ }^{15}$ Heb 10:32-39.

[^8]:    
    （6）E゙ガガ世 b：bs

[^9]:    
    (6)
    (d) กัNू 8:00
    (b)

[^10]:    ${ }^{(7)}$ Adam Clarke, Adam Clarke's Commentary on the New Testament-Electronic Edition (Indiana: Technology, 199), s.v. Matt 6:33.
    ${ }^{(8)}$ Jas 3:17

[^11]:    
    
    
    

[^12]:    
    （ロ6）のนีย゙ูけでる：の
    

[^13]:    'See John 6:14-15 and Jesus' withdrawal. By the end of the chapter "many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him" (v. 66). Then in John 8:31 Jesus instructed the Jews who had believed him to hold to his teaching if they wanted to be free. By verse 59 they were picking up stones to stone him.

[^14]:    ${ }^{9} 1$ Tim 2:4; Rev 7:9-10.
    ${ }^{10}$ Num 27:16-17.
    ${ }^{11}$ Ex 24:13; 33:11; Num 11:28; Josh 1:1.

[^15]:    ${ }^{12}$ Jud 2:10.
    ${ }^{13} 1$ Sam 4:12, 27-36; 1 Kings 2:27.
    ${ }^{14} 1$ Sam 8:2-5; cp. 12:1-5.
    ${ }^{15} 2$ Kings 18:1-21:18.
    ${ }^{16}$ John 15:16.

[^16]:    ${ }^{17}$ Phil 1:12-18a.
    ${ }^{18}$ John 16:7.

[^17]:    ${ }^{19}$ Matt 17:17. In deliberating on the question of to whom this verse is addressed, Expositor's Bible Commentary correctly notes that "the disciples' unbelief is central to Jesus' exasperation."
    ${ }^{20}$ Eph 4:13-17.

[^18]:    ${ }^{21}$ Luke 6:12; Mark 3:13.

[^19]:    ${ }^{27}$ See also parallels in Mark 6 and Luke 9:
    ${ }^{28}$ Matt 10:24-25.
    ${ }^{29}$ Mark 6:30-31; Luke 9:10.
    ${ }^{30}$ Mark 8:31-35.
    ${ }^{31} 1$ Tim 3:10.

[^20]:    ${ }^{32} 2$ Kings 3:11
    ${ }^{33}$ Matt 25:21, 23.
    ${ }^{34}$ Luke 22:30-31.
    ${ }^{35}$ Matt 28:19; Mark 16:15.
    ${ }^{36}$ Acts 20:32.

[^21]:    
    
    
    
    

[^22]:    
    

[^23]:    
    
    

[^24]:    
    

[^25]:    
    
    

[^26]:    

[^27]:    
    

[^28]:    
    
    
    

[^29]:    

[^30]:    
    
    
    
    
     (

[^31]:    
    
    

[^32]:    
    
    

[^33]:    
    
    
    

[^34]:    
    

