# Theology  

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UON Seila

## Meet Pastor Seang Aung



SEANG Aung

Pastor Seang Aung was born on May 19, 1918. He was raised in a Buddhist farmer's family in Roeusey village, Baray subdistrict, Trang district, Takeo province. His parents are Mr. Seang Beth and Mrs. Am. Pastor Seang Aung has four sisters, and is himself the fourth child in the family.

In 1934 he entered the monkhood, where he remained for eight years. Praise God for giving him this opportunity to learn first hand about the Buddhist faith, because this knowledge would later help him in his evangelistic work. In 1943 he married Bun Sok, who lived in the
same village. He was converted to Christ by a Christian and Missionary Alliance pastor, Chum Beang, and then attended the Bible School in Takhau town, Kandal province, for four years. After graduating he worked as an evangelist with the Christian and Missionary Alliance.

In 1954 Pastor Seang Aung went to evangelize in Takeo province. As a result, many people converted to Christ. The authorities accused him of disgracing Buddhism and inciting people to betray their own religion, and arrested him. He was asked to pay 2,500 riel. In those days that was a high sum, but they said if he did not pay they would not release him. His wife borrowed money from relatives and paid the authorities as the deadline required. But thank God for working miracles in their lives. The authorities seemed frightened, returned the money, and apologized to him.

In 1961 he went to serve the Lord in Prek Kranh village, Psar SreThom KomChay mountain, Toek Laok subdistrict, Prey Nop district, Kampot province. He planted a church there for the Lord, and stayed in Kampot until 1970.

A Christian conference in Phnom Penh decided to send volunteers to work as missionaries in Kampuchea Kraom. He volunteered to serve in Klang province, Kampuchea Kraom. Before he left, the central committee pledged to support him every month. But when he reached this new place that was not his home country he encountered a lot of persecution, and the promised support did not come. His family faced severe hardship. He stayed in MonoTen village, Prek Roeusy subdistrict, Klang province, Kampuchea Kraom. Because of his experience in Buddhism he could share the Good News with the Buddhist monks and people in Kampuchea Kraom very easily, but at the same there was also a lot of persecution.

When he was in Kampuchea Kraom he received no salary from Cambodia, and so entrusted himself to God's provision. God proved to be so faithful in caring for his family. He always encouraged his children to trust God, and he led a Bible study for his family every night before bedtime. He quoted verses from Psalms 1, 23, and 91, and from Matthew 5, to remind his children to put their trust in the Lord. Kampuchea Kraum does not have many palm trees, as does most of Cambodia. He earned his living by farming and climbing palm trees to
collect juice to sell. There was one palm tree about two kilometers from his place. His life of farmer and palm tree climber was not easy, but God provided what he needed and took care of his family during their five years in Kampuchea Kraom. By the grace of God he was able to plant a church in Klang province.

In 1979 Cambodia was delivered from the hand of the Khmer Rouge and the genocidal Pol Pot régime. His mission as missionary in Kampuchea Kraum thus ended, he repatriated to Cambodia. Upon arrival he learned that forty pastors who had graduated from Takhau Bible School had been promoted into glory with God. Only four pastors remained alive. Two are living in the United States, and two in Cambodia-Ngov Vorn and Seang Aung. At that time he started to gather some remnants and new converts, and established one church out of the scratch the war had left us. In the spirit of Nehemiah he worked very hard for the Lord, and before long one church emerged in Prek Talong village, Sangkat Chak Aungre Kraum, Meanchey district, Phnom Penh. He named it "Ta Khau Church."

In 1982 he went to share the gospel and visit some congregations in secret, because in those days the government did not recognize Christianity. Then he traveled to the Thai border area to visit some war remnant Christians. He settled in Kao I Dang camp, Thailand, to serve the Lord, and there met some of his old friends. Eventually he was chosen to resettle in a third country, but refused to go for two reasons: he did not want to go alone, and he did want to leave the church in the midst of troubles. Rather, he decided to return to Phnom Penh in 1984. There he faced tension and more persecutions every day, but they could not stop him from sharing the gospel and visiting churches. At last he was arrested, sentenced to three to five years, and thrown into jail. In prison he did as Paul and refused to worry, even though they banned church members and relatives from visiting him. In jail he still kept telling people about Jesus. By the grace of God he remained in jail only one hundred twenty days.

In 1985 pastor Seang Aung and his wife continued to serve God, and planted a church that today is called "Ta Aung Metrey Takhau Church." In forty-eight years of serving the Lord he never enjoyed regular financial support from any group, but God took care of him and
his family. He is now eighty-four years and his wife seventy-five. They have three sons and five daughters. Two sons died in the Pol Pot régime, and one daughter died in Australia. They have twenty-two grandchildren and four great grandchildren. They all are Christian, and three of his sons-in-law are pastors.

Pastor Seang Aung is retiring as pastor and has given all the responsibilities to his children and the board of elders in the church. He and his wife live with happiness in their old age as they see the fruit of their effort over the past years, and their children and grandchildren maturing in their faith like the sprout of the olive. This is the blessing by which God has honored their hard work and their trust in Him rather than in people. Had he put his trust in people and their pledges while he was in Kampuchea Kraom, he might not have ended up serving God until his old age. Praise God that they both put their trust in the Lord rather than in man. Therefore they have been successful in serving the Lord, and provide us a good example. Amen.


