

CAMBODIA MISSIONS TRIP REPORT

From Pastor Jesse McCaul – Senior Pastor of New Life Fellowship of Churches, Cambodia

"I really wanted to thank you for being such a blessing to us. We were truly blessed to have you here with us! I personally was blessed both by spending time with you and with the message that you taught and lived. Our people were tremendously blessed. Just yesterday in our corporate service, one of the ladies at New Life shared how she was able to put into practice Steve's teaching about "Obedience" and about "Growing to be more like Jesus" and how as a result both her sister and mom have opened their hearts more to the Lord. The people at New Life are still talking about the truths that both Steve and Margaret ministered. The family lessons that Margaret ministered are being sent out to all our provincial pastors and will potentially reach and influence thousands of families across Cambodia. Our 60+ provincial pastors who you ministered to were very impacted and I believe have moved to a new level of spiritual authority."



Steve & Jesse McCaul

From Margaret McCracken

It was with great excitement and relief to finally touch down in Phnom Penh after virtually a sleepless night sitting in a plane. I personally did not have culture shock but was struck by the extreme heat and high humidity. We spent the day settling into our hotel and having fellowship and meals with Jesse & Soar and other team members.

Cambodia was an awesome experience. I took six meetings and attended many more. I spoke at a women's conference, to the Pastor's wives, three parenting meetings and one session with the Pastors. The people were so hungry to learn and passionate in their response and worship. I felt I came into a new level of experiencing the grace of God in confidence and in physical strength. Jesus is truly all we need and in Him we CAN do all things.



Margaret Preaching

We had most meals with church leaders and were overwhelmed by 'who' they were and 'what' they were accomplishing for the Kingdom of God. New Life Fellowship is an alive, vibrant and passionate church filled with mostly young people selflessly serving God. We were all impacted by their zeal and wholehearted abandonment to the purposes of God. They are all first generation Christians as most of the older Christians were killed in the genocide of the 70s. I do believe we will see great fruit from all the teaching on family. This was the first time many had heard the biblical perspective of husband/wife and parent/children

relationships and the practical 'how tos'. We had a lot of good and interesting questions after each session and I know that the result will be many strong families and a strengthened church.

It was great to be a three generation team...Grandma, son and grand-daughter. We all got on really well and strengthened relationships. Kirrily took to the Cambodian way of life like a duck to water. She loved the country, the people, the church, the ministry, but I'm not sure about the food! She stayed six nights in a non air-conditioned young women's dorm, sleeping on the floor and absolutely loving it. The young people all accepted and loved her from the first minute and she was off on the back of motor bikes and driving in tuk tuks (motor bikes pulling a carriage). Kirrily wants to finish school and go back to Cambodia to live and serve in the church in some area!!!



Steve, Kirrily, and a child from the orphanage

We as a team sincerely thank all those who gave financially and who most importantly prayed for us and the Cambodian people on this trip. We are sure that we will go back!

From Steve McCracken

Cambodia was definitely a time when I was out of my comfort zone. There were many cultural differences and other challenges (like visiting in the hottest month of the year)! But that said, being out of your comfort zone is a great place to be for a Christian. When we are weak God promises us His strength if we will only walk in a place of intimacy and dependency on Him.

One of the first things I felt was: Do some people try and bring their western culture over here and preach it as the right way; in other words make it a doctrine? Is there a thought that says, "Because we do it this way; it's right"? Is there a doctrine of culture not the doctrine of God that tries to influence needy countries?



Steve preaching and Jesse interpreting

My daughter Kirrily summed it up perfectly when she said they have so little yet they live like they have so much but in our western comfort we have so much and live like we have so little. The Cambodian people take nothing for granted. Everything is a gift from God and they are a very grateful people who expect God to move. They simply believe the Word of God and they have complete trust in the God of the Word. My time with them was refreshing and I know God did more in me than I did in them.

I asked Jesse if this ever happens and he said it does many times. This was a great thought provoking start to my time in Cambodia. I purposed not to fall into the trap of preaching the doctrine of culture but to be true to the doctrine of God that is relevant in every culture. The church in the western culture should not be the same as the church in Cambodia but Jesus should be.

The Cambodia people are absolutely lovely!! They are gentle and fun and deeply spiritual. There is a passion for God and His Presence like none I have ever seen before. I wanted to bottle what they had and bring it back to Australia!

My daughter Kirrily summed it up

On the Saturday morning I went out to a province while Mum was taking a women's conference in Phnom Penh. Both times of ministry were very inspirational. Here are churches that have so little but the joy of the Lord is overflowing. I saw little lean-to shacks that I was told nine people live in.

The provincial churches are teaching the things of God as well as teaching life skills to people such as raising chickens, weaving, and English. In one province I was told that the Pastor had planted eight or nine churches and had seen two or three people raised from the dead last year alone!

The youth and young adults meeting on Saturday evening went great. The worship was absolutely awesome but I soon discovered this was normal; they experienced this every time they worshipped! The level of musicianship was excellent but it was so much more than that. It truly was abandoned worship. You stuck out if you didn't passionately give your all to God! There were people on their faces and on their knees and others jumping for all their worth but the



Two young boys from the orphanage

common denominator was a real passion for God that blessed God's heart. I would have to say it was probably the most intimate worship I have ever experienced – we have a lot to learn from them!

From this first meeting the prophetic flowed incredibly clearly. There were prophetic words for people and the response from the congregation was loud and very supportive of those being ministered to.

I spoke about how valuable we are to God and I gave a clear call for Salvation also. One of the testimonies was from a lady who worked at an orphanage for prostitutes and street kids. She was overjoyed because one of the girls who she brought along got saved!! That week the girl was going to run away on the Wednesday but was talked out of it. Since then she had given the staff no end of trouble and they were at a loss to what to do. They brought her to church and she met with God!!!

The Sunday meetings were electric and that afternoon I had lunch with the Pastors while Mum had lunch with the Pastor's wives at the same restaurant. There was an excellent discussion and it ended up with a discussion with both husbands and wives about the need to reassess their priorities and time commitments. We know that healthy discussions have since taken place and that the fruitfulness of this church leadership is only going to increase.

During the week we had so much great fellowship with so many wonderful people. I was amazed at the amount of westerners that give up everything to invest their lives into Cambodia. New Life Fellowship and all its associated ministries attract many highly skilled people and this input is greatly needed. Together Cambodian and Western leaders are partnering with God to extend His Kingdom in the kingdom of Cambodia.

On the Monday morning we visited the genocide museum. Words can't describe the horror that we saw. I wasn't ready for it and I'm not sure you can ever be. There was room after room of pictures of victims, blood stained floors, torture equipment and information on what went on. There were photos of soldiers who were about 13 years old. Tiny rooms for prisoners who had to have permission to turn over. If they didn't ask and the guard heard the chain rattle, they would be taken to the killing fields and executed. We were faced with many other scenes too graphic to write here. How can someone be so evil especially to their own people? This nation has been brought down to the depths of brokenness and now it's time for Cambodia to be rebuilt in every sense of the word.

We had special prophetic ministry nights from Monday to Friday where I ministered every night. It was such a pleasure to preach with Pastor Jesse interpreting. We are like twins that had been separated at birth!

We then went to an orphanage which is run by an American couple with five natural children, five adopted Cambodian children and about 16 Cambodian orphans! The father used to deliver papers in the US for a living and asked himself the question, "What would happen if I didn't deliver the papers tomorrow?" The answer he came up with was "nothing". With this thought and having the perspective of a cancer survivor he decided to do something more with his life. An orphanage in Cambodia was the answer! This is yet another example of people who deny themselves, take up their cross and follow Jesus. They inspire me!

Following are some of my other thoughts and feelings from this time.

Deliverance, healings and all types of miracles are commonplace in Cambodia. They simply believe. They have not been educated to the point of unbelief. We have so much to learn from them!

Every worship time was amazing. There was so much passion and fervency.

There is never "let's just sing a song before we start". They pray with passion, they worship with passion and they live New Testament Christianity.

They have Encounter Retreats once a month for people in the Church. They are told they will encounter God and that's exactly what happens! Some are shown their mansions and they walk around in heaven – whether it's literal or in the Spirit they don't know; but they do know they encounter God. Some testify they are terrified about going because they know they are sinners and they will meet with God. Some even think about running away the day before out of fear. They simply believe an encounter meeting means we will encounter God.

One of the Pastors at the Phnom Penh Church named Mara told me his childhood goal was to make bombs to blow up Westerners. He even studied chemistry so he knew how to make bombs! Now he's a pastor! This same man regularly has accurate dreams of things that are happening around the world. He now prays into the dreams and God intervenes and disasters are averted!

A lady came up and said it was like she had learnt everything for the first time. She said she felt like she has taken a test and has failed but now she knows how to live for God and pass the test.

At the end of the Pastor's Conference, all the Pastors laid hands on me and imparted what they have. These were Pastors that regularly cast out demons, heal the sick and some have even raised the dead!

I loved my time with Pastor Jesse and his wife Soar. They are an inspirational couple who are giving their lives to what God has called them to. They are making a difference and I know that God smiles on them.

God has impacted my life. He has called me to a higher level of intimacy and character. I am looking forward to the future and all that God has on His agenda to do in me and through me for His glory!!!



The view from our hotel room

Thanks to all our partners who sowed financially into this trip, and to those who prayed faithfully! Your gifts and prayers have sowed greatly into that needy nation, and into our lives! May the Lord bless you richly!