

Thoeun and Sopeak

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My name is Ol BunThoeun. I am married, my wife's name is Sopeak, we have a five year old son Jamie and a new baby David. I just want to share a short testimony on how I came to receive Jesus Christ as my Lord and Saviour.

Because of poverty and in order to relieve some burden from my parents, I decided at the age of eleven to live in a government orphanage. It was there that I met a kind couple called Collin and Jo Grimmond who loved me like a son. They were working for an NGO called "Friends for all Children" in half of the orphanage premises. They used to tell me about Jesus and took me to church. I got told quite a lot about how true the Lord Jesus is but I didn't really believe in Him. I went to church with them sometimes only to make them happy for they loved and cared for me.

For some reason, they had to come back to live in Australia and we didn't have much contact. My life at the orphanage was sort of easy in a way that I had a lot of free time. I was able to do and go wherever I wanted to most of the time. However I often felt lonely, although there were lots of other children and I didn't always have enough food to eat.

Our culture is influenced strongly by the Indian and the Chinese and it's a mixture of the beliefs of animism, superstition, Brahmin and Buddhism. Sometimes when I didn't feel well, I mean when I was upset or sick I prayed or talked to the moon at night asking it to help or something, only to experience worse condition the next morning.

When I turned 18 which was about 9 years ago, for a period of time I felt so sad, upset, poor and bored. I just wanted to get out of the orphanage to work or do something else more interesting. So at night before I went to bed I often prayed this simple short prayer which I was taught. In the prayer I said "If there is a real God please just take me out of here." But I didn't get the answer as magically as I thought and not as I expected or wanted. Instead, in his loving plan God sent Pastor John and Tess Castledine to get me out.

It was only by staying and learning about God through Uncle John and Aunty Tess who love me as a son, that I came to understand how much God loves me too and that He has answered my prayers. I prayed to the moon too, because in Khmer language they call it "Pray-Junn". "Pra" means God in Khmer. So "Pra-Junn" would be literally translated into English as "God-moon". Personally may be owing to this superstitious influence that I used to think that the moon must have something to do with God or it was some kind of divine being. I thought it was one of the many gods or angels that was there to help people.

But now, again through this great couple of God, Pappa John and Mumma Tess, that I have learned that the moon is not a god, although it has something to do with God as God is the one who created it.

Praise to God now I know not to worship the moon, but the Creator of the moon, the real God in the name of his only son Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour. I just want to encourage you all today as you are reading this short note that the real God is there to help us, answer our prayers and to change us for the better if we pray honest prayers from our heart.

May God bless you.