

Coats' Newsletter  
November 28, 2017

### Nyaw

I regret to say that the good news about Mr. Nyaw did not last long, only about two weeks. Even as I was writing the last newsletter, his condition was worsening. I learned of this as soon as we returned to the village 10 days ago. He is very weak and thin. For the first time he was unable to go downstairs where he liked to lie in a hammock under the house in the breeze. Most Cambodian village homes are very hot during the day. I talked to him briefly and he whispered over and over again that he felt so tired. His eyes are almost swollen shut. He finds it difficult to eat food, except for a little fruit, so he continues to lose weight. We are praying that God will minimize his suffering.

### Baptism:

Below is a picture of the somewhat mass baptism of 84 kids last month:

Some of the kids look very young. The pastors baptized younger kids than many of our American churches would, though Cambodian youth tend to be much smaller and look younger than American youth the same age. The pastors baptized a few folks in their churches at the same time.

Please pray for the work here. It is very important that we disciple these kids well.

God's grace, John Coats

Friday, December 1, 2017

Dear Folks,

I was just in the village after a brief visit. The first night I got there I got a call from one of our Cambodian staff at 1:30 am and he said he was at Nyaw's house and that Nyaw was dying. I quickly woke up a couple nearby church leaders, then Debbie and I rode over to his house on an old motorcycle without a headlight. We had to go slow in the dark because of large potholes in the road made by trucks carrying heavy loads of rice. Nyaw had breathed his last minutes before we got there.

The funeral was this morning. Although Nyaw's family are not believers they followed his wishes and asked the church leaders to conduct a Christian funeral. Pastors from many churches, near and far, came to help. They and some of our own staff who are also church leaders did a wonderful job with the funeral. They honored Nyaw before his wife and children and surviving siblings and spoke of all the poor and sick people he helped and cared for and prayed for. Debbie also spoke saying she estimated hundreds of people are alive today because of his professional and caring way he dealt with tuberculosis patients. And a number of these people also came to Jesus. The pastors gave the family and others a chance to speak about Nyaw, which does not generally happen in non-Christian funerals. Several Christian neighbors who are not relatives broke down and cried while trying to give testimonies about Nyaw's life. I rarely see such emotion from non-relatives.

The pastors did an excellent job of speaking very clearly, boldly, yet gently the gospel and Jesus giving his life for Nyaw and everyone in attendance, urging folks to make the same decision to follow Jesus that Nyaw did and to live the same way he had. They assured everyone that Nyaw was now in the very presence of God, no longer skinny, sick, and suffering, but healthy and full of joy. They repeatedly urged folks to turn away from sin and a life without Jesus and turn to the living God who gives eternal life. They took the opportunity to explain faith in God to non-Christians and what really happens when we die, and to demonstrate our great hope even in Nyaw's death.

May God be honored and praised by the testimony of Nyaw's life and his funeral. John