



Journey Mercies #4 – August, 2007

...And work for the peace and prosperity of Bangkok. Pray to the LORD for that city where you are held captive, for if Bangkok has peace, so will you... – Jeremiah 29:7

“Where Does Your Goat Live?”

Greetings from Bangkok! With 44 consonants, 32 vowels, five tones, a new alphabet and completely different grammar rules a few mistakes are to be expected along our journey to speaking Thai.

Our favorite (and most embarrassing) “learning Thai mistake” thus far happened a little over a month ago when we accompanied our Thai teacher to his church for the first time.

Following the afternoon service we joined Pii O, his wife, two sons, mother, father, sister, brother-in-law, nephew and several family friends for a traditional Thai-style dinner of spicy papaya salad and minced pork served at the customary red metal tables on a busy sidewalk.

Over dinner Iven attempted to ask a question about Pi O’s mother and father, “Pi O, khun Meh gop Pheh, yu tinay?” Our tutor’s sister (also a language teacher) politely asked Iven to repeat his question. That was all it took to realize that Iven had called Pi O’s father a goat!

Yes, he had asked, “Mr. O, where do your mother and goat live right now?” You see, in Thai the word for father sounds like, “Paw”, and in English “Ma” and “Pa” rhyme... but in Thai “Ma” (Meh) and “Pa” (Paw) don’t rhyme.... But “Ma” and “goat” do!

Later that night Kashmira remembered a rather dramatic scene from the movie *The Terminal* where the words for fathers and goats are transposed in a foreign language to meet much more important ends than simple embarrassment. We suppose that if Tom Hanks can make such an obvious “mistake” it is ok for Iven to do so as well...



Pii O, his wife, and two sons. Everyone is still smiling even after Iven’s mistake!

Conversations We Can Have...

- Introductions
- The Weather
- Transportation
- Our Family
- Buying Things
- Daily Activities
- Simple Feelings
- Food :)

Conversations We Can’t Have Yet...

- Politics
- How God Has Changed Us
- Hopes and Dreams
- Complex Feelings
- Anything Funny Other Than Jokes At Our expense ;)

We are getting really good at answering the questions: “Where are you from?”, “How long have you been in Thailand?”, and, “Do you have any children yet?” By the way, the answer is still no :) !!!



Lining Up

On Sunday nights we have been prayer walking several neighborhoods in Bangkok where young men are “working.” Pat Pong is overflowing with flashy bars and message parlors advertising in neon. Rattanakosin, or the “old city”, is dark and fairly deserted.

One Sunday evening we spent some time in both areas. While visiting with one of our new friends who helps manage a male message parlor in Pat Pong, Kashmira and Angela (one of our YWAM co-workers)

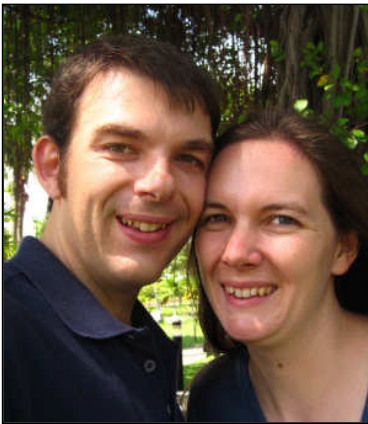
Lining Up (cont.)

saw the men line up for a foreign customer. Eight guys standing at attention, waiting for the customer to select which one he wanted. "Special prices for special services."

Later that night, in the "old city", we saw other men lining the sides of a quiet road, nonchalantly waiting to be "picked up" by one of the cars cruising by. The signs that these men are working are not nearly as obvious – they advertise their availability by standing on the side of an otherwise empty road and making eye contact with drivers of cars that slow down as they pass.

On a whim, we decided to sit down and see what would happen. After a few minutes one young man came up, sat down next to us, and started talking to Iven. Soon there were 12 guys gathered around us – all in their teens and twenties – making conversation (we understood about 50%), listening to our broken Thai, and occasionally trying to flag down customers.

When the men asked what we were doing in their neighborhood, we struggled to explain that we were Christians, and were walking and praying in their neighborhood, asking God to bless the people who lived and worked there. One of the guys sat down next to Kashmira and excitedly said, "I'm a Christian too – I know Jesus." He sang Kashmira three Thai worship songs and proceeded to tell her that, "ทุกคน รู้จัก ยอห์น 3:16" or "Every one knows John 3:16." Kashmira prayed for Mot there on the street, with his friends looking on, and gratitude evident on his face.



Meeting this young Thai Christian, at midnight, on a street with dozens of men working as prostitutes, serves to remind us that even in the darkest of places, God has gone before us and is already working to make Himself known. But despite Mot's assertion, the truth is that relatively few people here in Bangkok, and even fewer of the young men lining up in massage parlors or on deserted streets are aware of the amazingly bountiful love Jesus is offering them for free.

Prayer Calendar

We are inviting our friends (that's you) to consider picking one day a month to pray for us, our ministry, and the city of Bangkok. We will be praying for you on that day as well. We hope to eventually have people praying with us on each and every day of the month. Right now there are still 26 open days for you to choose from! :)

Financial Update

We continue to be amazed at God's provision and the generosity of our supporters (that's you too!) Every single day we are grateful for the privilege that we have been given to live here in Bangkok, free to devote our full time and energy to ministry and language learning. Because you are the ones God is using to make this possible we want to keep you in the loop regarding our finances.

In the past six months we have received an average of \$2267 per month – just over 90% of our budgeted monthly expenses (\$2500). We also wanted to let you know that since arriving in December exchange rates have changed for the worse by 10%.

What this means is that we are grateful, hopeful, and not stressed out, but not quite fully funded either, with a rising cost of living. If you feel like God might be prompting you to join our financial support team please contact us and we will let you know how to begin.

Please Ask God With Us :)

- For help learning Thai! Everyday we recognize a little bit more how far we still have to go!! :).
- To reveal his love and care for the young men selling their bodies in Bangkok and to be preparing a way for many of them to exit that life.
- To lead our steps, prayers and encounters as we spend time where men are working; for safety, wisdom and clarity in hearing God's voice.
- For courage to become better friends with Thai neighbors and strangers.
- For continued joy, rich partnership and protection from annoyance in our marriage :).

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Please make checks out to "YWAM", including a separate note that your gift is for "Iven & Kashmira" or write "6400" on the memo. Please don't put our names directly on the check. :)

Thank You!!!

All grace and peace,

Iven & Kashmira