

April 2016 On The Ship Of Life

April 30, 2016 - Report 4
Kevin & Catharine Carson - Cambodia

In April the ship docked in Phnom Penh for the week of Khmer New Year and the crew had a week off. Catharine and I stayed on the ship and had the opportunity to spend more time in the city, including worshipping Sunday mornings with the congregation that meets at the Bible School run by Sokum. Sokim, the former cook on the ship, often rode to church with us. This month, entirely on her own, she made a donation to the Ship of Life, and a donation to help a family from a village that we brought to Phnom Penh for medical help. It's wonderful to see Sokim's giving, compassionate heart.

The ship was in southern Cambodia, a few kilometres from the Vietnam border, when Catharine met Roth and her infant son Vang who came on board for treatment. As you can see in the first picture, Vang had a very severe cleft palate. The opening was so large, it was even deforming the shape of his nose. Still, he was one of the happiest toddlers we have seen, laughing and smiling most of the time he was on the ship. Catharine and Somphos our pharmacist told Roth about the charity hospital in Phnom Penh that does the repair surgery for free and Roth was very interested. She knew about a hospital in Vietnam, but they could not afford to make the trip. Her husband, Song, is a fisherman and he makes, on average, \$5 per day. We were driving to Phnom Penh that afternoon so we offered to take them with us. Roth spoke to her husband,

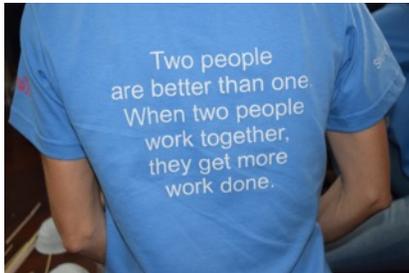


he agreed, and the family joined us. This was quite a trip for Roth as she had never been to the city. Bunthoern arranged for a room in a guest house for them, and also took them to the hospital. He will help them with their followup visit after the surgery, and will share with them about the love of God, if they are interested. Often the people we help have never experienced such generosity from others, and so it is a good opportunity to share with them about God's loving, compassionate character. The next day Vang had his surgery, and you can see in the second picture,

taken just days afterwards, that the change in his appearance is wonderful. Now he will also be able to eat normally and eventually speak normally as well. Thank you to all of you who donate to help support the ship. It is because of you that we have the funds available to help a family like this with food, lodging and transportation costs - which seem minimal to us - but which are an insurmountable obstacle for rural, subsistence farmers and fishermen.

The days on the ship are long and busy, and all crew member work hard. Not only do we work together, but we eat together and socialize together as we all live together in close quarters. Therefore, the Friday before Khmer New Year, I led the crew through a half-day workshop on "Teamwork." We went through some activities that helped us to get to know one another better, and to better understand what is involved in each person's job on the ship. We also learned and practiced listening skills, with the goal of being better listeners who are able to understand one another. Finally, in small groups, we put it all into practice as we had a competition to see which team of three could build the tallest, strongest tower

that could withstand another team surrounding it and trying to blow it over. We used this theme verse from the book of Ecclesiastes in the Bible for the workshop: ***“Two people are better than one. When two people work together, they get more work done.”*** and everyone received a t-shirt with the verse on the back to remember the day. Some of the newer crew members had never read the Bible before, so our two Christian crew members helped them turn to the verses in the Bible on cooperating, listening and working together that I was referring to so that they could read them.



“Two people are better than one. When two people work together they get more done.”
Ecclesiastes 4:9.

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