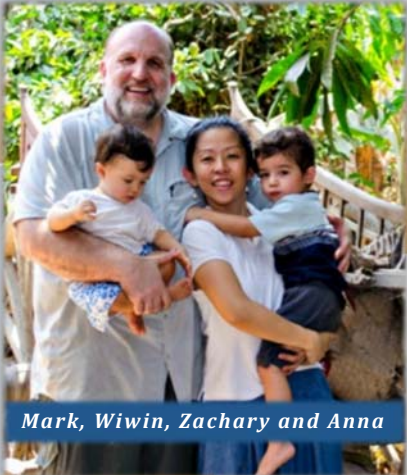


# Cambodia Prayer Letter: The Baldwins

Quarterly Prayer Letter: June, 2016



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Mixed marriages (between a believer and an unbeliever) are common in Cambodia. Often it comes about when someone is converted but their spouse is not. Sometimes it comes about because the believer had no idea it was wrong. Occasionally it's because the believer sees the benefits of such a marriage as outweighing the religious prohibition against it (usually a big dowry and a wealthy husband). It always leads to sorrow and often a falling away of the believer. It is heartbreaking for the pastors who must deal with it.

Gongia (pronounced /gone-gia/) has been a believer for years but has attended our church for only a year or so. She comes when she can by moto from about half an hour away over a very painfully bad dirt road. She was a widow and remarried a rich unbeliever about five years ago. Everything was fine in her eyes until a few months ago when her husband made some new friends. He's an atheist and didn't care that she went to church, but his new friends are devout Buddhists.

*“God is sovereign, and He has made many great promises to us;  
He will not fail us!”*

*We need simply seek to glorify Him no matter the situation.”*

They bring him to all their ceremonies and parties afterward. She politely refuses to go. Sadly her husband's friends are offended by this and pressure him to force her to come to the temple and offer sacrifices to their gods. As a result he has become verbally abusive continually and publically curses her.

She became very depressed and even thought of driving her moto into oncoming traffic out on the highway to escape her problems. (She knows it would be the sin of murder, so she won't do it.) She confessed all of this when she came to church one Sunday and told us she wanted to get a job and leave him. A very sad situation, but one which God's all sufficient Word has much to say about, so we all opened our Bibles to read and discuss a number



Counseling Gongia (in red) from the Scriptures





**Bible study in Kpbaom  
with Gongia attending (plaid shirt)**

of passages.

First we read 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 7:39b and helped her see the problems she was having were because she sinfully married an unbeliever. The first step to restoring hope is to repent to God and submit yourself to God's revealed will, His word. We often are tempted into sin because it offers us whatever we desire (the happiness that money would bring in this case), but sin's promises are only lies.

Then we showed her that separating from her husband was also not right before God (1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 7:10-11), as divorce is only allowed for sexual immorality or abandonment by an unbelieving spouse. (Matthew 5:32; 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 7:12-16) We then spoke at length about verse 16 and 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 3:1-2 (though verses 1-6 give a clearer view) and encouraged her to think of the situation as an opportunity to glorify God, especially before her unbelieving husband and his pagan friends.

We then further encouraged her with the reminder that God was sovereign even in this situation. In our sermon that day from John 21:18-25, we had already considered God's absolute sovereignty over the persecution and death which Jesus told Peter he would face some 35 years later. God is sovereign over the wicked actions of unbelievers and the persecutions and trials believers must face. God will work it all out according to His purpose. (Ephesians 1:11)

As a Christian she, and all of us, should never despair no matter how difficult the situation is. God is sovereign, and He has made many great promises to us; He will not fail us! We need simply seek to glorify Him no matter the situation.

Gongia left church feeling encouraged and determined to glorify her God even though it would be difficult. Please join us in praying for her.

—Rev. Mark and Wiwin Baldwin

## ROMANS 8:28

*And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.*

*“Declare His glory among the nations,, His wonders among all people.” Psa. 96:3*

For more information from the Baldwins visit [www.presbyterianmissions.org](http://www.presbyterianmissions.org)  
or Facebook (Mark E. Baldwin and Wiwin.Baldwin)