



Journey Mercies #3 – April 1, 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

DTS Outreach Update

After a whirlwind two months of outreach work, our Discipleship Training School returned to the US on January 28, 2007, leaving us in Bangkok to begin language study.

Have you visited our website?
www.ivenandkashmira.info



Christmas Breakfast @ BJD

During our time with the team we taught English classes, shared the Christmas Story for the first time with (literally) thousands of children, helped build a house in the slums, hung out with college students, and ministered to the men and women of Bangkok's sex industry - all while preaching, praying and worshiping alongside Thai brothers and sisters.

Our primary focus during DTS was partnering with Baan Jai Diaow (House of One Heart) – a Thai-led ministry to college students that emphasizes discipleship. For five weeks we lived and partnered with 30+ Thai students on-site at BJD, located across the street from Ramkhamheang 2 University. Most every day we would have lunch on campus, striking up conversations with students. These students would often come back with us to BJD to hang out with the *farang* (foreigners), practice their English and play UNO. Many of the mature Thai believers

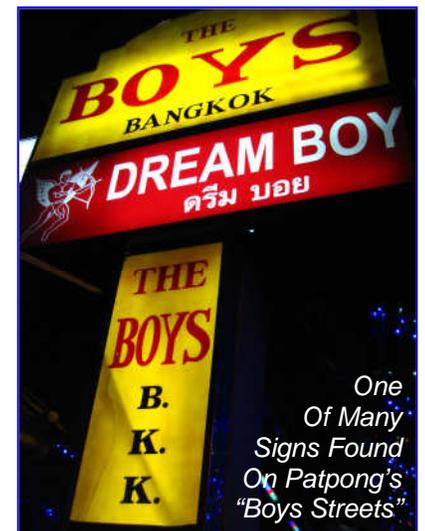
who are now staffing YWAM ministries throughout Thailand were first introduced to Jesus through teams like ours, the ministry of Baan Jai Diaow and the Thai Christians who live there.

“You Must Be Very Special...”

I (Kashmira) have known for four years that God is calling me to Bangkok to minister to men working as prostitutes, but I am amazed at how clearly God continues to confirm this call.

During our DTS outreach the girls on our team spent several evenings praying and talking with people in Patpong, Bangkok's most notorious “red light district”. Although most of the bars and “massage parlors” have women working at them, there are several streets and alleys in this neighborhood with all male staff, catering mostly to foreign male clients.

The last night we went on outreach to Patpong, I walked down one of these “boys streets” with two friends from DTS. As we passed a noisy outdoor bar one of the waiters came out to try and lure us in with happy hour specials. His English was excellent, and he was dressed in the uniform of that particular bar – a green shirt with his nickname written in huge white letters on the front. As we talked outside the bar, I asked him how he came to speak English so well. Bashfully, Luuk* admitted that he used to go to a church with Americans. This piqued our interest, and later in the conversation we asked him where the church was. “Do you know YWAM?” he replied. “Yes, actually we do.”



One
Of Many
Signs Found
On Patpong's
“Boys Streets”

We remembered, then, that one of our Thai friends connected to BJD had told us about her friend, a young man who was interested in God but had recently started working at a bar in this district. One of the girls I was with had prayed for this very same young man in this very same alley a few weeks earlier, not having

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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. :)*

Unexpected Reunion

Seven years ago I, (Kashmira again), was in Vietnam on my first DTS outreach, doing the same things we did this trip - praying and getting to know people in the neighborhood where we were staying. On the first day of my time there in 2000 I met a 15-year old "rice hat girl" who worked every day to feed her ill parents and younger siblings by selling rice hats to tourists. Her English was poor and my Vietnamese was nonexistent - nonetheless she became my shadow for the two weeks we were there. Bing* and I stayed in touch through postcards, pictures and email. How amazed I was to receive her email last spring with the subject line: "I'm in Wisconsin!" Now, my little "rice hat girl" from Vietnam is married to an American, starting a family and living in the Midwest!



Serendipitously, Bing flew into Ha Noi to visit her family just two days after our team arrived. We spent the better part of a day with her, reminiscing about how much has changed, and how special our friendship is to have lasted so long, over an ocean. The great irony is that an ocean still separates us, but now Bing is the one living in America, and my home is here in South East Asia!

Looking Ahead

Our Thai language studies began in early February with a delightful tutor named Pii "O." For the next 12 – 18 months, five days a week he will guide us as we struggle to pronounce words with the correct tone, put together sentences properly, read a foreign alphabet and write Thai legibly!

In addition to our Thai classes, we plan to spend much of our time during this season of language learning at Baan Jai Diaow, continuing to build on friendships from these last few months, while speaking more and more Thai every day!

Thank You!!!
All grace and peace,

Iven & Kashmira

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any idea that this was specifically where he worked. "Do you know Baan Jai Diaow?" we asked him, and his face filled with emotion. He began sharing names of people he knew and missed, and I showed him pictures of the friends he named (which I don't usually have with me but had felt earlier that I needed to bring that night).

My friend Christine spoke up, "Luuk, I think you must be very special that God brought us here tonight to meet you." Holding back tears, he nodded.

Later, while sharing with one of Luuk's friends from Baan Jai Diaow, I learned that for some time he has been the main bread-winner for his mother and three younger brothers, and that he has felt a lot of pressure to make more money than he had been earning at his former job - McDonalds.

It was an extraordinary moment, and a true gift from God to meet Luuk that night. I felt that the Lord was telling me in that interaction that He knows and loves every young man who feels forgotten, working in the sex industry in Bangkok. Please pray for Luuk, and others like him, to know God's passionate love for him, and to be released into a more fulfilling life.



Please Pray :)

- For physical health and energy, as we enter into our first HOT season (April - June).
- That God would lead us in balancing language study, ministry, friendships and rest.
- For our minds, mouths and ears to grow daily in our grasp of the Thai language, culture and worldview.
- Strength and joy in our marriage; grace for each other and ourselves as we learn to live together in a completely different world from our home in Seattle.