

This month, our church's youth group gathered weekly at our home as usual for fellowship, dinner, and study, but one week was special. Right in our living room, two young women, Sokha and Pheakday, were baptized into Christ!

WOOHOO! PRAISE THE LORD!

Sokha (pictured below) is a recent believer who is also a new member of our group. Pheakday (pictured left), however, has been a Christian for longer, but has been nervous about being baptized because of the difficulties it might present for her family, who are steeped in Khmer Buddhist and spirit practices. (This is a common issue in Cambodia, where Christianity is viewed as a "foreign" religion.) But finally she decided she would not delay longer and asked to come to the waters.

That night we studied Matthew 18, where Jesus' disciples ask him about who is the greatest in the kingdom. Jesus, lifting up a small child, tells his disciples, "Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven." We noted that even as the world tries to teach children how to become adults, Jesus teaches adults to become like children. That which society in Jesus' time did not value, Jesus holds up as an example. But how can one become a child again? Nicodemus asked Jesus a similar question in John 3, and Jesus responded, "unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God."

As Pastor Songim poured water over their heads in the name of the Triune God, Sokha and Pheakday became new-born babies, God's own children and members in His kingdom. And for all those gathered, we took time to remember our own baptism, dipping our fingers in the baptismal font and making the sign of the cross.

Sokha and Pheakday now begin their baptismal lives of discipleship, continuing to depend on Jesus like little children as he uses them as

salt and light to their families, friends, and communities. We challenged those gathered to come alongside of Sokha and Pheakday, loving and supporting them as sisters in Christ as they discover all that God has in store for them. Please take a moment to give thanks for and pray for Sokha and Pheakday. Please pray for the youth group, also, which is taking shape as a community.

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