

Paul and Sarah Brown

Rebirth in the Mountains

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We have all become so reliant upon the 'internet'. Have you ever tried to give up the internet, Facebook, Instagram or any form of social media for a few hours, half a day, a full day or more?

For New Life Center Foundation (NLCF) Biennial Bible Camp we went into the mountains of Doi Chang, Chiang Rai. There was very limited / no internet. It gave us plenty of quality time to connect with God.

There are many times in the New Testament, where Jesus retreated by himself to pray and connect with God. One example is found in Matthew 14:23. He definitely did not complain that there was no internet. Jesus knew the value and importance of taking time away, to withdraw and make time to be present with God.

Being in the mountains of Doi Chang was a special time for us to praise and magnify God through nature, leaving behind man made buildings and the busyness of life; to gaze in awe at vast amazing, beautiful scenery that God Himself made.

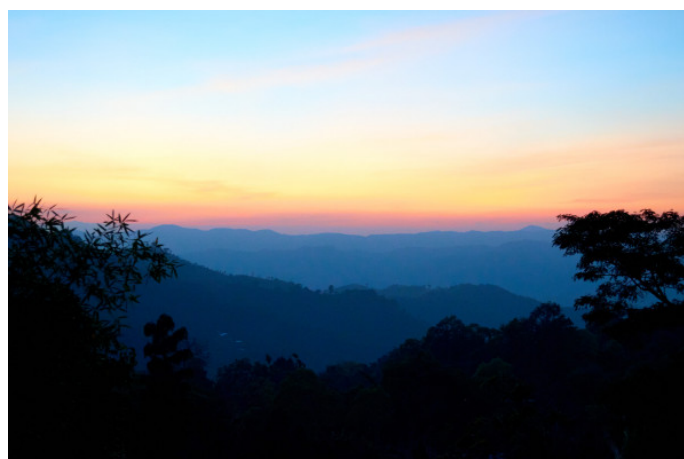
It was great to be with 65 young people, that consisted of residents from the shelter, scholarship students and 39 staff / volunteers from NLCF Chiang Mai and Chiang Rai; to worship, learn from the Word, fellowship and grown in faith together.

The theme was 'Reflection – Hebrew 1:3' Jesus being God's son, reflected God's perfect image / nature and so should we, being created in God's image.

We helped serve the young people, to ensure that they had the most enjoyable time possible. During the day we had fun stations set up, that gave them the opportunity to do – art, tie dye, nail painting, field activities, a giant parachute and beading. Their sounds of laughter and joy echoed around the mountains as they participated in the activities together. The last night we had a barbecue and huddled around a giant bonfire to keep warm.



The temperature in the mountains at the beginning of December 2019 was freezing which totally took us by surprise. One night the temperature dropped to -1 degrees Celsius, with basic wooden accommodation, no indoor heaters, cold water shower, wind howling around us, it felt a lot colder. At one-point Sarah had on 6 tops, hoody, scarf wrapped around her head, 3 pairs of socks, hiking shoes and a hot water bottle! We had no idea that the temperature in the mountains of Thailand could go that low. The cold temperature however did not ruin our time. Using the internet was the furthest thing from our minds. Our accommodation was a good 10 - 20-minute walk (several times per day) up and down steep inclines to the main building. It gave us the time to pray, thank God for His creation and sing and worship albeit slightly out of breath.



We visited Abonzo Coffee; a successful Business as Mission (BAM) company started by Khun Phatra from the Akha hill tribe. He received help from a Christian organisation when he was a young boy, that provided an education and university scholarship. He is now a Christian and through his business able to help the Akha community with training, scholarships and employment. It is an amazing rebirth in the mountains. In the past many hill tribes' main source of survival was to grow and sell opium, that masses also became addicted to. The humble coffee bean is transforming many hill tribes' lives.



Thank God

- For the amazing time that NLCF young people and staff had together at the Bible Camp in Doi Chang.

- For our relationship that is growing with our elderly Thai next door neighbour with hearing difficulties.

Please Pray

- For the 8 young women that were baptised. That each day they will grow stronger in their faith and walk with the Lord.

- For the continued progress of our visas, it is an on-going process.

The 8 that were baptised definitely came down from the mountain transformed. We know that many of us from the Bible Camp came back refilled and refreshed from God, with no internet fix.

It is so important for us all, like Jesus to retreat, connect with God in an intimate way with no distractions. May you all find time to draw away to that special place, where it is just you and God.

Yours in Christ

Paul & Sarah

If you would like to support Paul and Sarah Brown by prayer and committed regular giving, visit bmsworldmission.org/partners or call 01235 517617 for a 24:7 Partners leaflet.



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