

April, 2010

Covenants, Curses, and the Cross

Recently the Red Shirts made headline news, cursing their government through a ritual involving the shedding of blood. It was an extreme act that gained global attention, but for Thailand the use of witchcraft in politics and in daily life is a common event. In fact, a majority of women working in Bangkok's sex industry come from the northeast of Thailand, an area famous for deep involvement in witchcraft and black magic.

The various rituals are performed daily in order to avoid harm (defense), to cause harm (offense), or to bribe for good fortune. These covenants are legalistically binding with often severe consequences for those who fail to keep the letter of the law. The consequential curses have effected the daily lives of many generations through poverty, sickness, accidents, and even unusual deaths. Seeking relief from these curses, people perform more rituals leading to even deeper bondage. It is a desperate cycle for which subsequent rituals provide no escape.



Witchcraft, sorcery, and black magic are a way of life in Win's family going back several generations. Win says they have done it all. Win even confessed to us that she once put a curse on someone who owed her money and the woman died three days later. Win knows too well the painful consequences of life on the dark side.

When Win came to NL she had strings from various rituals tied around her wrists and amulets hanging from her neck. Attending worship daily, Win began to experience God's love and lost motivation to worship her idols. Soon after, an angry demonic presence appeared to threaten her. Win was frightened but then she saw a man in white standing to her right. Even though she had not yet accepted Jesus, she knew he had come to help her. Win commanded the demon, "In the name of Jesus LEAVE, I will not serve you anymore," and to her relief it left.



Win made the decision to give her life to Christ and was baptized in March along with 11 other women at NL's annual retreat. Soon after, Win asked for deliverance to get rid of ALL ties to the dark forces of her past. Her spiritual inventory listed over 230 types of involvement in occult and demonic rituals. During the deliverance process each one was renounced and the demons involved were expelled. "I have been to hell and I am not going back!," Win said. Following deliverance, we joined Win in communion celebrating the canceling of old covenants and the beginning of a new covenant through the blood of Jesus Christ. *"For this reason Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance - now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant." Heb 9:13*

As we approach Good Friday, the message that Jesus *"became a curse for us" (Gal 3:13)* through his death on the cross becomes graphically relevant in light Thailand's political situation, Win's story, and of course, my own. Without an adequate understanding of what we have been saved from... we are not likely to appreciate what we have been saved to. Without a Good Friday death, there would be no Easter resurrection. *"For he rescued us from the kingdom of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins." Col 1:13-14*

This is the message of Good Friday, this is the celebration of Easter

Sincerely,

Annie Dieselberg
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