

Thailand: Hard questions and faith tested

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Serving in Thailand has greatly tested my faith in God. Not that I doubted God's existence, but more in the sense that I became unsure of God's power.



Stacie Aguilar I've always believed God is omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent—all-powerful, all-knowing and everywhere. I wanted to believe that here, but sometimes that proved difficult.

As I looked out onto the crowds of people filling the streets of the red-light districts, the women and ladyboys in skimpy outfits with only a number versus a nametag, children sitting on the side of the road begging for money, I wondered if God knew the depravity occurring in humanity. I would stare into the crowds of people only to see emptiness and question: "God, do you know what is happening here? Can you see the pain of your people?" Often I would want to answer that question for him myself: "No, I don't think you do."

But I know God does. Really, he does. The Old Testament prophet cried out to God: "Why do you make me look at injustice? Why do you tolerate wrongdoing? ... The wicked hem in the righteous, so that justice is perverted." And God replied: "Look at the nations and watch— and be utterly amazed. 'For I am going to do something in your day that you would

not believe, even if you were told.’” (Habakkuk 1:2-5)



Stacie Aguilar

surrounded by new summer volunteers (left to right) Rachel, Zaya, Natalie, Aaron and Lee. One of the reasons I love God is because I do not understand him. If he were a God who could fit inside my head, what need would there be to worship him? Yet I am unable to comprehend God’s majesty or his mind. I constantly am reminded of this verse while working in this ministry, “‘For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,’ declares the Lord. ‘As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts’” (Isaiah 55:8-9). It’s a humble reminder that my plans for redemption and healing for this nation are nothing compared to the ones God has in store.

I have come to realize God does see what is happening. God knows and it does sadden him. He is not sitting idly by but has been working since the beginning to redeem us for himself. Scripture always has been written in the context of victory. Through Jesus, we will overcome. Although I may not see it or understand it now, it is coming.



Rainy season in Bangkok

I always think of the image of a stage with its curtains drawn. As I sit there as an audience member waiting for the show to start, I don't realize the work has been going on hours, days, even months in advance. I only get to see a glimpse of it. God is backstage right now, working in his people in ways I do not understand and might never be able to. As I wait for God's show to start, I forget that he has been setting it up all the while.

And until that day comes, we have been given the Holy Spirit to dwell in us. He has chosen to work through us, and so we will be the ones through whom people have interactions with God. If I want people to see the love God has for them, I have to be the one to show them. I only pray that when I do show these individuals love, they will not see me but will see Christ in me.

Being in Bangkok has tested my faith, but it has also strengthened it. I still believe God is all-powerful, all-knowing and everywhere. I believe that God sees his children and wants more for them. He wants more for the young guys, transgendered and females who have been sexually exploited, and he

wants more for the people who have exploited and dishonored them.

In Christ, there is hope of redemption for all. No one is too far from his reach. God desires for all to know his love and his grace. My desire is simply to do my part in his great story of redemption, for this nation and every nation.

Stacie Aguilar, a recent graduate of the University of Texas at El Paso, is serving with an anti-trafficking ministry in Thailand through [Go Now Missions](#).