



**Kim reminds us that while not everything translates, the important things are worth explaining.**

*'Why did the chicken cross the road?'*

Back in those early days in Cambodia I was so proud that I had finally learnt enough language to tell a joke to my language nurturer. I asked him the question and he looked at me blankly and said, "Because in Cambodia chickens are free to go wherever they like." **My joke was completely lost on him and I quickly realised it was never going to be funny. Humour does not always cross cultures as easily as we think it should!**

Our lives took an unexpected turn this year when we found ourselves not in hot Cambodia, but suddenly back in cold Tasmania. We began our Home Assignment with just 24 hours of planning and in the midst of a pandemic. One day we decided to venture to Cradle Mountain for the kids to enjoy the snow and we were excited to video call our Khmer friends back in Cambodia. They were amazed to see images of us playing in the snow and asked us many questions. I tried to put myself in their shoes to help me communicate the idea of snow... but it was difficult!

Sometimes sharing the Gospel in another culture can feel a bit like trying to describe snow to someone who has never experienced a temperature below 18 degrees.

Recently we learnt a Khmer parable that was very funny. (Well it was funny to our Khmer friends.) The story goes that a rabbit was running away from some mischief he had caused when he saw a dead buffalo. Wanting to hide, he climbed into the bowels of the buffalo carcass. The rabbit was initially very happy. However, as the carcass heated up in the sun, the space he was in contracted and he cried out. A farmer heard his cry and threw the carcass into the river which rehydrated the carcass and the rabbit was able to escape and live another day.

Needless to say, we didn't get the joke! Why would you tell children such a disgusting story! The meaning of the story was obvious to our teacher and he patiently explained that this parable teaches us that sin is like the buffalo carcass and initially seems like a good place to hide. But sin will always trap us and we need a saviour to rescue us because we cannot escape on our own.

**When Jesus told stories, they were relatable to His listeners because they reflected the culture and environment of the time, while also pointing to the kingdom of God.**

He spoke to them in a language they were familiar with, bringing clarity to concepts that were new to them, even using humour at times! His teaching is timeless and the message of the Gospel never changes, but the stories we tell about the kingdom of God need to make sense to the people listening. Snow will always be snow, but it might need to be explained before it will make sense.

## ADVENTURES WITH THE BARNES

### Episode N°6



*Over the past few years we've loved journeying with Kim and Craig through this segment in Resonate. While this is their final instalment of Adventures with the Barnes, their story in Cambodia is far from over! To keep connected with Kim and Craig, sign up to their newsletter. Contact: [info@globalinteraction.org.au](mailto:info@globalinteraction.org.au)*