



In His Steps

International Missions

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Making Disciples One Step At A Time

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For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps. 1 Peter 2:21

June 2005

The Mile Marker, News From Steven Rice, Jr.

No.

Well Hello To Everyone,

I don't know where to start, except to say that God is good all the time. Three months have passed since my return to Guatemala and it has been a living testimony of God at work. Sometimes we plan out every little detail of our lives, and in living out those plans, God steps in and puts everything in His order, and in His timing.

The Move

After packing up the house in Zacapa and finishing the major repairs to the truck, I came to Coban, Alta Verapaz on March 30th. I started contacting the family in the mountains where I planned to stay for several months to learn the language and culture. It was obvious after a couple visits and several unreturned phone calls, that God had other plans. So, I began living out Plan B, but there was no Plan B.

Language Learning

Following the Lord's leading, I found an apartment in Coban and started looking for Kekchi materials to study. Since Kekchi is an oral language, there are few printed materials available. One day, I made contact with Francis Eachus, an American missionary who has lived in Coban for fifty years. She was on the Wycliffe Bible translation team that translated the entire Bible to Kekchi many years ago. I bought just about every book that they had written, and asked her if she would teach me. After praying about it, she accepted. Wow, what a blessing! Who better to learn the language and culture from? So God had it planned the whole time, and I'm glad He's leading and guiding me.

Transportation Blessing

God provided a Honda XR-250 Tornado motorcycle from a fund that Pastor Dan Mueller of Fergus Falls, MN felt led to start last year. The bike is a huge blessing because the safest place I have found to keep the truck is on the other side of the city.

One day, while traveling on a remote dirt road, I passed by a young man stranded with a flat. A strong unctio came over me that I was supposed offer him assistance. This is something that I rarely do because it can be very dangerous here. However, convinced that the Holy Spirit was guiding me, I turned around and offered him a helping hand. He spoke fluent Spanish so we could communicate perfectly, although he was afraid to receive help from a stranger. The nearest gas station was forty-five minutes away, so I told him that I was not going to leave him stranded.

We were able to get the tire partially inflated, but he was reluctant to accept any more help. After trying to ride a distance with no success, I convinced him to let me take him to Coban to buy a new tube. It turned out that Marvin Macz is the director of a small school in a village called Chiacam. The school has about ninety students, and classes are taught in the native Kekchi.

Opening Doors

Marvin recognized that it was no coincidence that we met this day. I told him that it was a sign of how special he is to God and that God loves him. Not only did God put me in his path to help him, but also to share the love of Christ with him. He said that only someone living for God would have stopped and gone to that much effort. Marvin would not accept Jesus that day, but good seeds were planted, and I believe that it is only a matter of time. I have since realized that the man from the Honda dealership is Marvin's brother. I believe God wants to do something awesome in that family, starting with these two brothers. As a result of that day, the doors to the school in Chiacam are always open to me. I will be going there to sit in on the classes and practice my language skills with the kids.

July Street Ministry

In July, my good friend Mike Brown from Boise, Idaho will be coming to do street ministry and prayer for the sick. Pastor Willie and my friends at the Central Nazarene Church are excited about the opportunity. The first week of July is being called "The Week of Impact." For four days Pastor Willie, Mike and I will be in local schools to share Jesus and invite students to a big event on July 9th called "The Healing Night." Each afternoon, Mike and members of the Nazarene church will present open air concerts and evangelism at strategic locations around the city.

The Healing Night will be a big event in the central park with a praise and worship concert, evangelistic message, and a call to prayer for healing. A ministry team from the church will be available to pray for the sick and for anyone making a decision for Christ. From June 20th through July 4th, everyone involved in the ministry will be fasting and praying. Every night at 6:30 pm we will gather to pray together.

Prayer and Fasting

I would like to challenge you to get your church involved in these two weeks of prayer and fasting. Please pray specifically that God's will be done, for souls to be saved, and for lives to be changed. Let's keep in touch by e-mail to know how God is moving in your church's fasting and prayer time.

August VBS Team

Cornerstone Christian Church from Richmond, Virginia will be here August 18th to 25th to do Vacation Bible Schools in two villages. This will be their second trip to Guatemala. They will be working in Guadalupe and another location, yet to be identified. Guadalupe, like many villages in Alta Verapaz, is part of a huge coffee plantation.

What has traditionally happened over the years is that the owners of the plantations use the Kekchi families as workers and servants in the fields. The owners allow them to stay on the plantation without owning any rights to their lots or their homes. Some workers are paid a salary of about \$12.50 a month. However, the owner generally demands that they buy supplies from a market, also owned by him, with prices higher than the norm. So the families have literally worked for generations under these conditions and usually never have anything to show for it.

Church Start

There is a Nazarene church being started in Guadalupe. The owner of this particular plantation is selling portions of it, and the members have obtained a parcel of land and have started constructing a church building. There is a small school there with three teachers and the government is in the process of purchasing a parcel. Beyond all the bureaucracy and abuse, are the precious little souls of the children who live there. This school teaches Spanish so we will be able to do VBS, and use a Kekchi translator only for the youngest children. By reaching the children, it will open evangelism opportunities with the adults. Please pray for the upcoming VBS in the village of Guadalupe, and for the spiritual equipping of a pastor for these people.

More Outreach Opportunities

I have found that in Coban the people are very interested in learning English. I am tutoring a young man who is a studying in the university in Guatemala City. Carlos is on the board of directors at the Nazarene church and a leader with the young adults. I plan to teach English to the church members of the Nazarene church and invite non-Christians. Carlos and a few of the young adults will be my helpers. The class will teach English, but the goal is to develop friendships and cultivate the desire for a personal relationship with Jesus so that souls will be saved and lives will be changed.

A Special Thanks

Thanks to all of you who had a part in the restoration of my truck. It was used the other day to help Pastor Willie take some roofing tins to the church project in Guadalupe. Thanks so much for your tremendous financial and prayer support in this new step of faith that God is leading me on. If you have not yet been able to be a part of this ministry, please pray and seek God's face to see if He is leading you to be a part of this or another missions effort. Partnering and holding hands together, we can throw out a much bigger net and be more effective fishers of men.

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