

# Missions Focus

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## El Mosco & Ixtiyutla Medical Mission

February 15 –17, 2015



The following is really two stories mixed into one. You will understand when you read it, but their timing got so inter-mixed that I did not know how to tell the stories separately.

As I finally sit to write about our time there, it feels like it was so long ago. First, let me tell you that the minute my feet touched Cacalote sand as we returned from this mission trip, I was informed that my family had been trying to reach me and I needed to contact home immediately. I called my Mom and found that she was at the hospital with my brother Bill. The doctors were only giving him a few more days to live. Some of you know that he had been battling prostate cancer for the past 2 years; however, it was not the cancer that would take his life, but a heart condition. I spoke to my brother on the phone that night, but I could not say goodbye to him over the phone. I really needed to see him face to face. I was able to get a plane home to say goodbye and be with him and our family as he went home with Jesus. I loved this brother deeply and I miss him. The world just seems a different place without him here. But I am so grateful to God that I could be with him for his last day.

After some time with family, I returned to language school in Oaxaca and it has taken me until now to even begin to write about our mission trip to Ixtiyutla.

We had originally planned to set up the clinic in two villages over 4 days. One of our 5 vehicles needed to return a day earlier than the rest of us. On the morning of their planned departure there was a robbery along the road back to the base. The robbers were blocking the road and then robbing people in those cars. So it was decided, that since there is safety in numbers, instead of one car leaving alone we would all leave a day early. We pretended that we were staying the last night and then just left all together before night fall.



**Serving in  
Mexico**

### Special points of interest:

- *Loss of my brother Bill*
- *Medical Missions*
- *Mixtecto Indians*
- *Hope for 2 New Churches*
- *Mexican Women*
- *Loss Leads to Dependence*



We, of course, made it safely back to Cacalote. I was disappointed that we were leaving early, but had we not left early, I would have missed saying goodbye face to face with my brother.

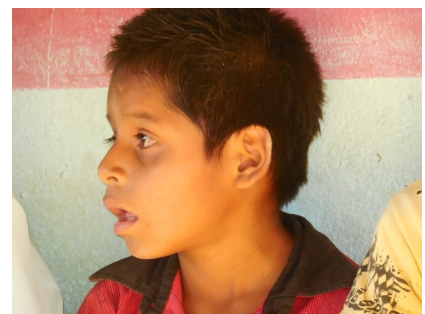
We held a medical clinic and Children's bible school ministries in two different locations over 3 days. The people in both villages, El Mosco and Ixtyutla, spoke only Mixteco. Mixtecos were contemporaries with the Mayan and Aztecs. When the Spanish came to conquer Mexico, the Mixtecos ran to the high places in the mountains to escape the Spanish and to preserve their way of life. These villages were hidden way off the beaten path up windy mountain roads about 6 1/2 hours from the base in Cacalote.

Because the villagers spoke only Mixteco (the official language of their village), all of our communication had to be translated from English to Spanish to Mixteco and then back again during each of the consults and during the children's bible school. We had help from the local church in this area with translators. I was able to sit in on some consults and do some of the English to Spanish and Spanish to English portion of the translation, while getting an opportunity to observe the 'doctor consult' part of the ministry.

I went on a house call with one of the nurses. It was amazing what a home visit can uncover that would never be seen in the doctor's office.....**(I am going to insert an excerpt from my journal)** *"The 2<sup>nd</sup> day of the mission trip to El Mosco, I went on a home visit to the pastor's Mom's house. She lay in a hammock outside on the porch completely incapacitated. She is my age but she seemed frail and aged. The medical team has been seeing her for several years. Three of her daughters were also present. The usual family dysfunctions came out in the interview – possible infidelity, suspicion, hurt hearts, abandonment, brutality... I sensed the Mom is deeply depressed. I was amazed at Nurse Laura's ability to speak honestly and straight forward about the real issues at hand. As we prayed for reconciliation, both mother and a daughter began weeping. We were watching You heal hearts Lord and I was also seeing how imprisoned a person becomes by holding on to unforgiveness. Mixteco husbands beat their wives. It is acceptable behavior in their culture. The first convert in the village is the husband of the woman who we visited. While he is celebrated, she is still hurting from his past behavior. Their son is now the pastor of the church there.*

*Several people from this family served as our translators from Mixteco to Spanish. Most everyone else that we encountered in both villages spoke only Mixteco, the official language of these villages."*

It was surreal to be in an indigenous village where nobody (not even children) spoke any Spanish. However, I did learn a Mixteco greeting 'Na cu mi chu'. This brought smiles and friendliness from otherwise stoic faces.



## The older generation of Mixteco still wear traditional dress.



The women wear handwoven long skirts and are bare-breasted. Though they did cover up in thin white cotton shawls when they came to the clinic.

The men wear a white hand woven linen. The tassels are worn only by land owners.



## Cacahuatepec March 27 - 29, 2015

We went to support a church in a village called Cacahuatepec, which is where we slept both nights while we were on our mission. We got the opportunity to stay in the homes of some of the church members there. This was a great cultural experience.

There were 30 people in total on the team that went. We were made up of several high school youth that came to Oaxaca from New York with some of their teachers, our Spanish school students and teachers and the medical staff from the clinic on the base.

We held a medical clinic in two small villages near Cacahuatepec. The names of these villages are La Culebra and Chicapilla. Neither of these villages has a Christian church. Our hope in taking the pastor from Cacahuatepec with us is that he will be able to follow up with the new believers in each of these villages and eventually plant churches there.

I had been thinking that the longer I am in Mexico the easier the hard life would become. But I am afraid this was just wishful thinking. It just seems to get harder. People here grow old much faster than in the US. And I am amazed by the women in Mexico who have the hardest life of all, yet they keep on... keep on fighting for their families...keep on doing what needs to be done... I am humbled by their strength and fortitude to love and serve those around them. And what a rich blessing it is when I get to minister to them, love on them, pray for them, hold them, serve them, speak the life and hope of Jesus into their weary hearts. I am honored and humbled by their selfless generosity.

Please don't misunderstand, I am not saying it is too hard, I am not saying that I am giving up, I am not saying that I have changed my mind about working with the indigenous peoples from this region of the world. In fact my heart is set even fuller on this ministry. I am just not yet sure where.



A blind and nearly deaf man rejoices as he finds his sister in the crowd of patients.



Kids at the VBS Program dancing with the songs and watching a skit.



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*Bringing hope and healing to Mexico.*

*Ps 46:10 Be still and know that I am God.*

*"I have missed deeply  
the comfort of daily  
friendship with those  
I left behind..."*



*..but this has brought  
me to a place of deeper  
dependence on our  
Lord Jesus.."*

## **A Look Back and a Look Forward....**

Almost 2 years ago now, I left California with the support of my home church, Inland Vineyard, and in partnership with Mexican Medical Ministries to live in Mexico to practice majoring in love - both the giving and receiving of this wonderful love of Christ. I have missed deeply the comfort and daily friendship of those I left behind, but this has brought me to a place of deeper dependence on our Lord and Creator.

I am in my last weeks of language school in Oaxaca. I fly to Tijuana later this month where I plan to cross the border to visit for a few weeks with some friends, family and churches before I return to La Esperanza in Baja California to serve for the summer.

This is as far ahead on the road that I can see at this time. I still feel called to work with the indigenous Indians from this region of the world - Southern Mexico/ Northern Guatemala.

Thank you so much for your support, love and prayers. How rich I am to serve here on the field of Mexico with you. I hope I have given you a clear glimpse and kept you sufficiently informed.