



La Esperanza



Spanish Language School

Issue 4

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I have returned from Oaxaca. I did really well in school. I worked hard and studied and grew a great deal in my language abilities. I want you all to know that it is of utmost importance to me to be a good steward of the investment that is being made to help me to be on the field. I hope to return to school in the fall to complete the next level (4). But for now I will have some months to practice and internalize all that I recently gained from studying Level 3.

What was life like in Cacalote, Oaxaca? No one has windows in their house, only screens to help keep the bug population out. The mosquitos that bite in the night bring malaria, but they haven't had a malaria case in 20 years. The mosquitos that bite in the day bring dengue fever. I had to free my room of scorpions 3 different times. Another time, I found a really large one in the bathroom over my head. I went for help to remove that one. I actually had an indoor bathroom. This was a luxury that I had not expected.

The village is about 2 square miles, nestled right on the coast. You could often hear the surf in the early morning. But during this season of the year, the surf broke right on the shore which made entering the warm water very dangerous. The water was also known to have sting-rays and bat-rays. The beaches seemed to be home to numerous sand fleas that liked to bite. Though the beaches were beautiful to gaze upon, I never felt safe enough to enjoy them.

Because the window openings are only covered in screen, during the night one can hear all the jungle sounds, which is really cool. Most people also own roosters and dogs. I always thought roosters only crowed to announce the sunrise, but this is not true. They crow all night and all day. The town's means of communication with each other is through a loud speaker system that sounds throughout the town. This begins very early in the morning and can sound any time through the day or evening. Usually the person is yelling into the microphone. There were 2 huge speakers about 50 feet away from my room. The announcements usually consisted of who was having a birthday in the town and singing the birthday song, often like chipmunks. Other announcements told of who was selling tacos that day, or calling all the men in the village to a community project that they were expected to help with or get fined. Sometimes, it was to announce who in the village was late on paying certain bills (talk about pressure).

The people were friendly and hard working. Most men fished, harvested coconuts or drove taxis. Women often cooked on open fires and washed dishes and clothes by hand outside. Both women and old men were goat shepherds.

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

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El Maguey Medical Brigada



On one of our long weekends, we traveled to a little village called El Maguey. We held a Medical Brigada. We had 3 doctors, 3 nurses, a medical assistant, a massage therapist, translators and a prayer team. We gave free medical consults and medications, and held vacation Bible school with games and songs for the children. On the first day while we were setting up, I saw someone drop off an old woman near the gate entrance. She was holding onto a long walking stick with one hand and onto the gate with the other hand, trying to get her courage and balance to walk into the basketball court where we were holding the Brigada, so I walked over to her and gave her my arm. She leaned very heavily upon me as we slowly walked in together. We found her a seat and I sat down with her and we began to chat. She told me of the great pain in her knees that made it so hard for her to move around. After we visited for a bit, I laid hands on her knees and prayed for her healing. Then I left her to the rest of the process for checking in and being seen by a doctor. Toward the end of the day I heard someone saying “Cristy, Cristy” and I looked and saw this woman practically running toward me shouting, “Look, I have no pain in my knees. I can walk!” I saw her walking stick lying on the ground. At first I didn’t even recognize her because her countenance had changed. We hugged and her friend who came to pick her up carried her stick out for her as they left. Now I don’t know when or how God touched her. It may have been a bit at a time as she moved through each process of the day. It may have been in the prayer tent at the end, I don’t know. But walk out on her own legs free of pain she did.

Later as I was sharing this story with the director of the outreach, it came out that the doctor who had seen her that day remembered her. He said he could see that she had great pain in her knees, but due to a secondary heart condition, he was not able to give her any pain medication. Further credit to God’s healing.

I saw much in this little village. It was mostly filled with elderly people and some young children. Even though it was an indigenous people group, almost no one spoke their native tongue, only Spanish was spoken here. Most of the working generation had left the area looking for work in others states of Mexico. So women who had raised families were often left alone here.

The first day of the Brigada I worked in the prayer booth with Brother Jesús. He was amazing. His commitment to be so present with each person that came in was amazing. We saw many people leave the booth different than when they came in. Some received Jesus. Some were healed of worries, pain, brokenness. We were partnering with the local church plant in the village so people had a place to turn to for growth, community and fellowship.



El Maguey continued...



The second day, I was able to sit in as an observer to a couple of medical consults. This was very valuable to me to see in more depth how the Lord was using each of us to touch people's lives more completely. In one of those interviews, a calculated attack on a young boy's life became evident. I will call him John Paul (not his real name). A group of 3 boys had assaulted him. The doctor was able to counsel the guardian on how to love this boy through the wounding of his spirit and I was invited to lay hands on and pray for this boy. The Lord touched him in such an apparent way. This boy had been so withdrawn and downcast during the whole consult time, yet when I laid my hand on his heart and began to pray, he looked up, relaxed, smiled a huge smile, and was ready to run and play with other kids after this. I know God had healed, in that moment, what the enemy meant for harm. I continue to intercede for his young life.

The second day I was very aware that some of the people who came were involved in witchcraft. I wasn't sure if they were there to just see what we were doing or if they really wanted a touch from God. This group of people seemed physically to be the healthiest of those who had come. But there were not any spiritual confrontations in this arena that I was aware of. They seemed to be generally dormant that day, like they were just investigating.

Also over the weekend, I saw two different men at two different times who were painted up as women, just walking around in public. This is very rare to see this in the culture here. As I encountered each man, I could see their love deprivation. It was just so apparent to me, so I took time to look each of them in the eyes to greet them with love, to say "I see you, you are seen, you are loved." I share this with you because, I believe, it was through the circle of men living like this, that came the calculated attack on young John Paul's life.

We slept on the cement floor of an empty house with our sleeping bags wall-to-wall in each room. Yes, there were mosquitos in the air, bugs crawling on the ground, dogs barking, and roosters crowing. I took my first bucket bath, which was actually refreshing as the air was so hot and sticky there.

On the journey back to Cacalote, we studied our vocabulary lists to get ready for school the following day. I had such a paradigm shift in my thinking because all of a sudden I felt like I was heading back to a 4 star hotel, my room in Cacalote. It is amazing how a bit of new perspective can change the way you think about things.



Women of El Maguey, many of whom live alone because their children have left to find work. These families have lived here for many generations.



This woman was born with a club foot and never treated, she now has to use crutches for mobility.

Fellow students, teachers and clinic volunteers are part of the team. Here a boy who was so sad and couldn't seem to stop crying is receiving a massage, which has calmed him.





Carmela in Ixtayutla



In my last letter I told a story of meeting the directors of the mission base in Oaxaca and their excitement for me to meet with a single missionary woman serving in the mountains with the Mixteco people group. She had come to the base for a pastor's conference and I was able to meet with her and we both committed to praying about a time for me to come spend some time with her. I told her that I would catch the bus up, but she said "no," she would drive down and get me. I was to learn later from the directors that an outsider cannot just walk into this area without grave danger on one's life. A team from the base clinic planned what was to be a 4 day trip up to provide a Medical Brigada. As much as I wanted to, I was not able to join this team because they would not return until 2 days after my plane departure.

A team of 15 people went to this place called Ixtayutla. It was described as a dark and oppressive place. Even the handful of believers who live there seemed downtrodden. Along the road to this village there had been occasional robberies. But during the team's time there, each day there were robberies. The robbers had dropped a tree trunk in the road and as vehicles slowed to pass, they would come out and take people's money. If they did not turn it all over they would be beaten. Several people on the team felt the Lord was speaking to them about leaving early. Making it look like they were going to leave on the planned Saturday, they instead packed quickly Friday evening before sunset so they could make it to a place of safety before nightfall.

Chased out of the clinic, this toad (warts and all) waits on the lawn as the team prepares to leave. This toad is larger than a man's hand.



I am getting ready to pray for the team as they prepare to go to Ixtayutla. There are 3 doctors, 3 nurses, other medical staff, Mixteco translators and 2 children. Pictured are Laura Nelson (RN and clinic director), and Sebastian (one of the Doctor's children). Brother Jesús is seen in the rear.



Future Plans

I will be going to Chiapas in early May. This is another state in southern Mexico. Chiapas is east of Oaxaca and on the northern border of Guatemala. We will be hosting a week long outreach there in the town of Palenque.

I hope to stay on in San Quintin, Baja to serve the summer there and help with the mission teams coming.

I hope to return to Spanish Language School in Oaxaca this fall. Perhaps I will make it to Ixtayutla then, God-willing of course.

While I was in Oaxaca, I believe I heard 3 very distinct words. These are words I have heard for a long time now, but I haven't exactly prayed them because I want them so much. I just hoped they would be a by-product of wherever I served. However, I am now praying into these 3 words. I believe the Lord told me that they are in me because He put them there and He wants me to ask for these things:

- Northern Guatemala
- Descendants of the ancient Maya civilization
- Holding babies

The supernatural love He poured into my heart to give away is for this people group. I believe there are babies that are not being held that need to be held. I don't know where they are yet, but I want to hold them and transfer this love that they need so they won't grow up with love deprivations.