

# Grace Fellowship – Columbia Mission Trip Testimonials

**Emily King**

## **What was the most memorable evangelism moment?**

The most memorable evangelism moment on this trip for me was talking to a woman named Laura. This was the first person with whom I shared the Gospel on the trip and the whole time I never knew what to say, but simply repeated what others suggested and eventually turned the conversation over for someone else to continue. By the time the conversation was over, she took the local church's information and seemed very interested in calling them despite my obvious insecurities and lack of practice in sharing the Gospel. This was a great reminder of what sharing the Gospel - and the Christian life in general - is like: God trains us to speak His words to other people and to live by His example, but He is the one doing the work. We are simply the means that He chooses to complete His work.

## **What did you learn about missions?**

I was reminded on this trip that missions is never in our own hands, but in God's. This is something I too often forgot and instead of relying on God working through me, and being ready and willing to share the Gospel, I was reluctant to share the Gospel because I knew that my own ability to do so was weak. Thankfully, other members of the team continually reminded me that sharing the Gospel is not about my own ability but God's work through those of us who are willing to let Him work in and through us.

During this trip, I also realized the importance of partnering with local churches. When done this way, missions is about building a relationship with the local people and helping them reach out to their community.

## **What did you learn about yourself?**

During the trip, I was reminded that I too readily rely on the physical and my own abilities rather than trust God to accomplish His will. This trip was a great way to help me get back in the right mindset of daily practicing reliance on God.

Thank you for your generous donation which helped make these mission trips possible.

**Jen McCall**

### **What was the most memorable evangelism moment?**

A memorable evangelism moment for me was the first time we went to a large park and did our skits. There was a guy who was watching our skits and listening to our explanations very intently. I was eager to have a conversation with him, hoping he would have an open heart to the Gospel. However, when we approached him, he informed us that he was just trying to be a good person but there was nothing that we could say or do to convince him that God existed. He declared "I can't touch him, I can't feel him, I can't see him." We gave him several examples of how God can be seen in life; creation, sending His Son, etc. The prompt was then asked of him "You don't have to see something to really believe or understand that it's there. For example, you have never seen your brain, but you know that it is there because of your studies. It is the same with us and God. He gave us the Bible to study and learn about Him and through that we can trust He is real." But even after the conversation that we had with him I could tell that it was not in our power to save him. It only by God's grace we are saved and it was a humbling reminder that we are not in control of saving others. Because we are a sinful and corrupt people and there is no good in us apart from the Lord. Even though this conversation that was had with this man was disheartening, because of his lack of belief, it was a clear reminder that God and God alone is in control of salvation. We can share the truth and point someone to their need of a Savior, but only God can open their heart.

### **What did you learn about missions?**

I was reminded that missions spreads across international waters. It builds relationships between brothers and sisters in Christ even through different languages. It is a beautiful image to see the people of God coming together, from different countries. How lovely it is to meet men and women who are intently devoted to sharing the love of God with their fellow people. For few things compare to standing in a room with hymns being sung in a different language to the same God who created the Heavens and the Earth. It is so beautiful and fills me with awe every time I am blessed to experience it.

### **What did you learn about yourself?**

I learned that I am too comfortable with living in my "world" and my own material blessings. I need to do a better job of being grateful and humble when I look at my life and understand that things I struggle with are the things that God uses to sanctify me. There are others which are far less fortunate than I, and yet, they are often even happier than I am. I must to continue to grow in humility and realize that this life is not my own. My sole purpose is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever, no matter the cost.

## Rachel Norris

"Each year He amazes me with His work here in Colombia. This trip I saw the glory of God on the face of a man who wanted freedom from his addiction to drugs. He watched our skit that included drugs as a sin, and it caught his attention. He called us over because he wanted to talk. He told us he has tried to be free and get help, but it has never worked. I felt like I needed to share with him how I found freedom from my sin in Jesus Christ's salvation. We all cried together as you saw him ponder the love of Christ. And we prayed for his soul together. The local church is going to work with him to help him with his addiction. I walked away feeling the glory of God coursing through my veins. So in summary, there is liberation when you rest in the salvation of Christ!"

## Robin Meeks

This year was my very first mission trip, and it was amazing. I spent time with friends, strengthened my faith, and saw God work through our efforts to share the Gospel. I will never forget this trip and what I learned from it.

I think that one of the things that set our church's mission trips apart from other mission trips is how much training and preparation we do.

Months before the trips, we were already meeting weekly for training. Every Wednesday night we would meet to go through a passage in scripture, write evangelistic stories, discuss different religions we might encounter, learn about how to share the Gospel effectively, how to respond to common questions, or rehearse our skits. I learned so much from attending these meetings, and I am very grateful for the leaders' dedication to training us.

One thing that blew me away at the meetings was the team's commitment to understanding and sharing the Gospel to the best of our abilities. I've never heard of a missions team that puts so much effort into training their team in that way. Doing the skits, writing stories that mirror the Gospel, discussing scripture and more helped me better understand the Gospel. The training helped solidify my beliefs and equip me with the confidence I needed to share it.

Another thing I loved was looking at the book of Acts and other scriptures to see how the early Christians viewed missions. We looked at how Paul shared the Gospel in different ways with people of different worldviews. We looked at how they made sacrifices because sharing the Gospel was more important to them than anything else. Going through these scriptures helped me "connect" with the early Christians in a way. We have the same glorious calling as the early believers: take the Gospel to the ends of the earth.

The training meetings were very encouraging and helpful to me. I don't know if I would've gone on the trip if it weren't for the confidence I was given in these meetings. I feel more equipped, more courageous, and more passionate for missions because of them.

## **Anna Hicks**

### **What was the most memorable evangelism moment?**

I would have to say the first day of evangelism when it rained, and we took cover under the pavilion. Not only was falling flat on my back in inches of water memorable, but the way the Lord used even the yucky weather to draw one of the biggest crowds of the trip was amazing to me.

### **What did you learn about missions?**

God has a plan, and nothing's going to get in the way of that plan. Not weather, not questionable airport security behavior, not anything. I LOVED the missions experience and am super excited to come back next year. In fact, I'd love to visit both Cali and Bogota next year. we'll see what happens. Also, living in a house with the people on this mission team is a great way to create memories and loads of inside jokes.

### **What did you learn about yourself?**

I have an amazing life story that I need to use to my advantage to share the gospel. I wrote my story thinking of it as just an exercise, but after seeing the effects of me sharing it (even when I did a pretty terrible job) and seeing it used in a gospel conversation, I'm really excited to use it more and more in my evangelism. I didn't realize how well it related to some of the conversations we had.

## **Ethan Dirrim**

The best part of the trip for me was when I was able to talk to a man about his thoughts on the church and was able to talk to him about Jose's church. I learned that even though you don't get immediate results most of the time you still make a lasting impact on the kids and people you talk to.