

AUGUST 2010

"I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth." - III John 1:4

LIFE IN THE PHILIPPINES...

It goes without saying life can be different here in the Philippines. Whether it's the food, weather, or the culture it takes a little bit of adjusting...

Almost everything you eat here is either bought fresh from the market and cooked - or it is preserved (*usually with an generous helping of salt*). Rice is eaten at EVERY meal or it is not a meal (*for an east coast boy who grew up on meat & potatoes - whose only experience with rice as a kid was Rice-A-Roni from a box - seeing rice grown and harvested from your 'back yard' is quite the experience!*) The food here would be familiar to most, but there are a couple of classic Filipino dished that are a bit unusual: Balut - a cooked egg where the chicken has already formed inside, pig's blood soup (*un-kosher for certain*) that tastes a lot like gravy, and dried/fried fish that even though it has a strong odor - is quite tasty.

The weather is HOT. Let me repeat that - VERY HOT. We live about as close as you can get to the equator without sitting right on top of it. The days never vary - 12 hours of day and 12 hours of night - every day. The 'summer' here is from April-May when there is absolutely no rain. The rainy season starts up in June and lasts till February/March. You learn to love the rain because it drops the temperature about 20 degrees, but once the rain stops it does feels a bit like you stepped into a sauna. Needless to say you just get used to sweating as part of your daily life. Along with the heat and rain comes some of the most beautiful scenery you have ever imagined in your life. Every time we head up the road to the church I am awe struck by the sheer beauty of the green fields almost surreal in their depth of color, hemmed in by swaying palm trees, back dropped by forested mountains with peaks reaching up beyond the morning mist, with the volcano Mt. Kanlaon looming in the distance. Words like stunning, beautiful, and magnificent hardly do justice to this jewel of God's creation!

The Filipino people are amazing. There is a general consensus this is a poor nation - but that is a shortsighted statement. Wealth can be measured in different ways. If you measure wealth by possessions and money - then this is a poorer nation (*many people in the mountain have no running water, indoor plumbing, or electricity*). Yet if you measure wealth by relationships - then I would be hard pressed to think of a nation that is richer than the Philippines. Family is everything here - and most people have very large families (*it is nothing for a family to have 10+ children*).

The dominant religion of Philippines is Roman Catholic - about 80%. Most of the people we reach out to come from a Catholic background. It is not usually about faith in Jesus - more about religion and the traditions people grew up with often heavily mixed with superstitions.

But the most important things are exactly the same. People who need Jesus! Nothing makes me happier than to see people growing in the Lord - **I John 3:4**. It has been an interesting journey here the first

couple of years. The people here have little to no background in God's Word. Most could not tell you much about the Bible - even the simplest of stories or doctrinal truths. For the better part of the time we have had here we have been going through the 'milk' of the Word building a foundational understanding of Jesus. More recently some of the people in the church have really started to blossom and grow in the Lord. They are getting hungry for the 'meat' of the Word. Seeing men and women step out, catch on fire, for God... nothing is more exciting, nothing is more of a blessing, than being a part of that!



CHRISTIAN RADIO UPDATE...

WE are now airing teachings 6 hours a day on the radio (*the rest of the time is praise & worship music*)! Pastor Chuck Smith, Pastor Clark Van Wick, and the local teaching from the church are all being broadcast 4 times a day. We continue to get some great feedback from the community! Also Christian Radio Himamaylan has officially gotten a new name - Philippines Network of Gospel Broadcasters. It's a mouth full for certain but it lets us have a more generic incorporation so we can start up other low power FM stations in other parts of the Philippines. We have turned in all our paperwork to our congressman and are now awaiting his reply. Lord willing we will get an answer soon as to whether he will be able to sponsor a bill before congress to get us the necessary franchise to move forward with the licensing process. Please keep this one in your prayers.

MUD OLYMPICS

So what do you do on a Saturday morning in the Bukid (*mountain*) when it's 95° with about 100% humidity? You soak down a field with an ocean of water, stir it up really good, and hold the 1st annual Mud Olympics! We converted the goat field behind the church into a 100' long 20' wide patch oozing, goopy, blissfull, soupy brown playground for all the kids to come and enjoy. We spent the whole morning playing relay races, tug-of-war, and balancing beam in our own little version of 'Wipeout' Simbahan sa Bukid. No matter how old you are - it's still fun to play around in the mud (*see more pictures on the 3rd page of the newsletter*).



UPCOMING EVENTS

This coming Sunday we will have our 2nd annual church baptism and picnic. We will load up the sugar cane truck with the saints and roll on down to the local beach for a good old fashioned dunking! Pray for good weather.

We also have a number of guests coming to visit over the next month. Our good friend Ronnie Plotner from Calvary Chapel Bible Fellowship will be here for a few days towards the end of the month. Pastor Roger and Jan Scalice, dear friends from Nevada, will be here the 2nd week of September. Their church planted here in the Philippines from 1982-1995. It will be a blessing to fellowship with them for a few days. Another good friend Dave Matthews, also a missionary here in the Philippines, is also hoping to stop on by in September (*he is also working on getting a radio station up and going in the Bicol region*). Then finally in October our good friend Pastor Matt Enterline, one of the children's ministry pastors at Calvary Chapel Bible Fellowship, will be coming to 'hang out' with us for a couple of weeks! We are excited to have so many friends coming to see us on the far side of the world.



PRAYER REQUESTS

- The Bible Studies (*10 of them*) - for the Word to change lives
- The hearts of the people in the Bukid (*mountain*) - open to Jesus!
- Mama Mele - she had a stroke last Sunday and is in the Hospital
- The radio station - favor with the "franchise" - and the NTC
- Our marriage - constantly grow closer to Jesus & each other
- Still praying for God to give us a 'Baby Hinchey'...
- Flexibility and humility - we would both be full of Jesus!

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