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HOPE *for the* SCATTERED

South Sudanese Refugees
Find Respite in Uganda



SHARING LYRICS
OF THE HEART



SHATTERED
BY LOVE



REACHING STUDENTS,
GROWING LEADERS



FULLY ARMORED

FROM FEAR TO FAITH

FINDING JESUS IN UKRAINE

HOPE for the SCATTERED

South Sudanese Refugees Find Respite in Uganda

THE REV. JAMES BAB WAS ALREADY ON FOREIGN SOIL IN LATE 2013 ON THE DAY HE BECAME A REFUGEE.

In the middle of December, civil war came to his homeland of South Sudan when conflict broke out between the president and a political rival. Bab was visiting Uganda when the shooting started. Unable to return home and aware that his family

was imperiled, he soon received tragic news from friends in the network of six churches he helped plant in South Sudan. As he wrote in January of 2014: “As a church [we have] lost many beloved brothers and sisters, [which] means we have orphans, widows, and widowers.” Since then, three of the congregations have managed to continue meeting despite the conflict, but the others have been scattered. Also dispersed was a group of 60 pastors Bab had been mentoring in the town of Bentiu, several of whom were killed.

The young nation of South Sudan, founded only in 2011, had devolved into ethnic warfare between the Dinka and the Nuer, two of the country’s largest traditional groups. Many thousands have been killed since the fighting began, with many hundreds of thousands displaced.

A clean and clear theology

Though not at home, Bab was among friends in Uganda. One of them was Don McNeill, part of the MTW team in Kampala, the nation’s capital. The team’s primary emphasis has been providing theological training to pastors and church planters

like Bab, which they do in partnership with Westminster Theological College (WTC). (See the sidebar on the right for more on MTW’s theological training efforts in Uganda.) McNeill first met Bab in 2007 and knew him throughout Bab’s Bible college days.



Refugees live in thatched huts.



When Bab first arrived at WTC, he—like many others before and since—had a Bible, but no other books or teaching resources. He had very little historical or doctrinal knowledge to guide his interpretation of the Bible. He also barely spoke English, which meant he was learning language alongside theology. “Don and the team taught us very clean and clear biblical theology,” Bab said. “They generously gave us books and Kindles.”

The training was invaluable to Bab as he returned to South Sudan in 2011 where he planted churches and trained pastors. And his relationship with the MTW team proved fruitful in crisis when the team was able to supply financing and logistical assistance to get his family out of South Sudan in the spring of 2014. The reunited family now lives at the Kiryandongo U.N. refugee settlement in Uganda.

Crisis with kingdom opportunities

According to the office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, nearly 140,000 South Sudanese refugees were in Uganda as of January, a figure that is expected to double by year’s end. Bab and MTW have been diligent in seizing the kingdom opportunity afforded by this crisis. As he had done before, Bab planted a church—this time among the South Sudanese refugees in Uganda. With some financial assistance from MTW and various individuals, the church put up walls and a tin-sheet roof. At the same time, they worked together to bring more people safely to Uganda.

In April of 2014, MTW Compassion funds helped provide travel costs and border fees for 99 refugees from Juba, the South Sudan capital. Most of them were particularly vulnerable: widows and orphans, the sick and disabled. Their arrival on a Sunday via a fleet of large vans they called “taxis” touched off celebratory worship. →

THE IMPORTANCE OF THEOLOGICAL TRAINING

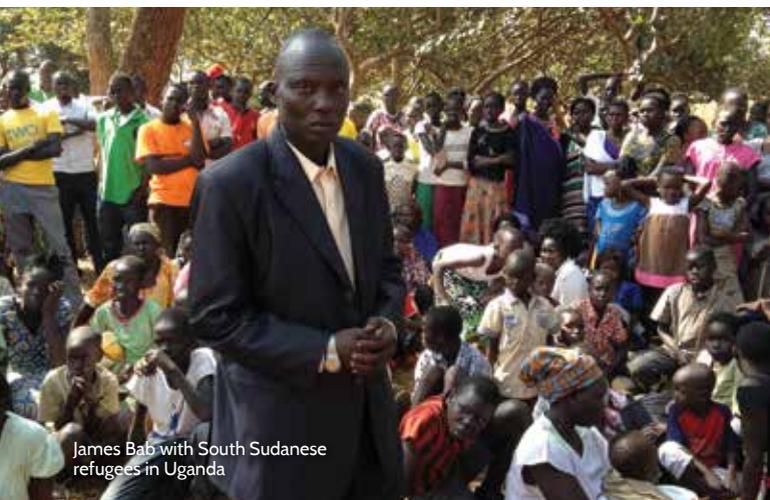
MTW focuses on theological training at Westminster Theological College (WTC) in Uganda and through dozens of independent pastoral training centers initiated and coordinated by African leaders, many of them former graduates of WTC.

Missionary Don McNeill and Bruce Sinclair, MTW Uganda team leader, teach at some of these centers in Kenya, Rwanda, and Uganda. Jeff Borden, MTW missionary and MINTS International Seminary coordinator for Africa, has seen an explosive interest in the MINTS study center paradigm, reaching pastors who don’t have the opportunity to study at residential schools.

According to McNeill, who taught at WTC from 2007–2011, this type of training can be a slow process, particularly because many African pastors do not initially see the need. After all, their congregations are growing rapidly as the Holy Spirit brings new believers. But McNeill has seen great benefit come to these newly trained leaders. Many beginning students approach Christianity legalistically; learning more about the doctrines of grace proves corrective and liberating in their understanding of justification and sanctification.

McNeill also has seen theological training manifest itself in practical attitudinal and behavioral changes. “Many students believed that working in the fields was beneath the dignity of an educated person,” he explained. “We teach them about the dignity of all labor before God, and many come to an understanding that manual labor is as sacred as preaching a sermon.”

McNeill is encouraged to see leaders impacted by truth. “God uses solid biblical teaching to reach His people,” said McNeill. “Very often, as the leadership goes, so goes the church.”



James Bab with South Sudanese refugees in Uganda

More joined them in September, again financed by donations coordinated by MTW and believers in Kampala, who also helped provide clothing. Bab continues to raise money to bring even more taxis full of his countrymen to safety.



A fruitful sojourn
Led in part by the theological perspective he gained at WTC, Bab sees God's sovereignty at work at Kiryandongo, despite the horror of civil war and ethnic strife. In fact he even reminded friends in a series of

text messages that we should not be surprised to see such events, since Jesus Himself warned us they would come in Matthew 24. "When my family was caught in war-torn South Sudan, I felt bad, but my motto is 'God is in control'—and He actually is! My faith was strengthened. When they came out, I praised God for His protection."

Bab also sees God's hand in the mix of people who, though all South Sudanese, come from different places and are different colors. "Galatians 3:28 says that in Christ we are one," Bab said. "I am now connected with many people I did not dream I would

meet." Their joy and unity has not gone unnoticed among the U.N. workers at the camp, who initially marveled at the uplifted countenance of people forced from their homes and carrying precious little with them.

During their sojourn as refugees, Bab has not lost sight of the possibilities for this latest church plant. His vision goes far beyond the refugee camp, and it is borne of the simplest of strategies. "My aim is to let the people I meet know Jesus and be saved—like me!" he said. "Then those who are saved will serve God and teach others everywhere they go."

"James is still training pastors," said his old instructor Don McNeill. "After the war, there will be even more people trained to carry on church-planting work." McNeill and Steven Edging, MTW missionary and coordinator for the South Sudanese relief project, have also taught in the camp.

All three men long to see the gospel multiply in South Sudan. For now, they wait and learn. It is not yet safe to return, though they pray that it will be soon. Then the band of refugees will "scatter" anew, this time not to flee from war, but to sow seeds. Both James Bab and Don McNeill have seen enough to trust in God to make them grow. [📍](#)

You can help South Sudanese refugees by making a donation at donations.mtw.org. Project #95944.

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FROM THE COORDINATOR



Fully Armored

Dr. Lloyd Kim

How do you discern simply having a bad week from being spiritually attacked? Right before some very important meetings, I caught a cold—the kind of cold that has you in bed for a couple of days with fever and chills. It was also during a time when we were wrestling with some escalating situations on different fields. I had also found out from my wife that our youngest child, who is 9, was crying again because she missed her life in Cambodia. Was it all just a coincidence?

During that week we were welcoming about 25 new missionaries to MTW. Several of our CMTW (Committee on Mission to the World) members were there and our chairman gave a charge to these new missionaries. He began his charge by telling them that they now have a target on their backs and will be the subject of spiritual attack. The passage he read was from Ephesians 6:10–20 describing the need to put on the full armor of God. Two things struck me from his message: (1) the reality of the enemy and his desire to distract, discourage, and destroy God's people; and (2) the hope we have in the gospel as the foundation of the armor of God.

The reminder was timely, not only for the new missionaries, but for me as well. As the apostle Paul writes, *"For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places"* (Ephesians 6:12, ESV).

Interestingly enough, I had a restless night soon after because of a bad dream. In the dream these strange people were attacking me and my family. We all had guns and were shooting back at these enemies. When I awoke, my heart was still pounding. I couldn't help but make a connection with the dream and being attacked by the evil one, so I prayed for God's protection over our family. When I shared this with my wife in the morning, she laughed and reminded me that I had a Nerf battle with my kids the night before and that maybe I carried that battle into my dreams ... hmmm?

Would you pray for God's protection over these new missionaries and our MTW family as we engage in God's kingdom work? [📍](#)

Lloyd Kim

A Honduran town overrun by a gang.

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Cambodian church provides much-needed student housing while cultivating Christian leaders.

Reaching Students, Growing Leaders

In Cambodia buckets crackle with fire in front of people's homes filled with "spirit money" burnt as an offering to ancestors. The fire holds a family's hope that the dead will be appeased and bring good fortune to their living relatives. But Kosal's mom was not experiencing good fortune—she was sick. And she was convinced that Kosal's evangelistic visit to the village had angered the spirits.

Corey Young, MTW missionary in Phnom Penh, said Kosal takes enthusiasm for his Christian faith to extraordinary heights. Kosal came from his rural village to the city to attend university and moved into dorms hosted by Gospel Commission Fellowship (GCF), one of the first churches MTW missionaries partnered with in Phnom Penh. Shortly thereafter Kosal became a Christian, bursting with eagerness to share his faith.

"On his own initiative, Kosal organized a small group to go to his Buddhist village and share the gospel," said Young. For the trip, Kosal prepared special food and songs and enlisted a national believer to share the gospel.

BY: SUSAN FIKSE

His mom was sick during the visit, and afterward her health worsened.

Kosal's family blamed him. They said he had angered the spirits with his belief in Jesus.

When Kosal's mom came to Phnom Penh for medical treatment, the church and MTW team provided financial assistance for a Christian medical clinic and a room in the church



Jimmy leads a dorm Bible study.



Somphors practices guitar with the help of a YouTube video.



Vanthorn, a student living in the GCF dorm.



A group of GCF dorm residents relax in the lobby.

where she could stay. Her health improved, and before she returned to her village Young was able to pray with her. The support Kosal received from the body of Christ encouraged his growing faith. And the church community was encouraged by Kosal's report a month later: "My family is not angry at me and my mom is praying on her own."

Preparing the next generation

With 50 percent of Cambodia's population under age 25, students—the majority of whom are Buddhist—move to Phnom Penh in vast numbers each year to attend university. Since universities don't provide housing, students arriving from the countryside often face deplorable living conditions. Churches seized this opportunity by opening dorms to welcome students, provide safe places to live, and minister to the next generation of Cambodian leaders.

"You feel like you are at a crossroads with the future," said Young. Because the Khmer Rouge decimated the population of Cambodia in the 1970s, Young explained that calling these students the leaders of the future is not just a cliché, it's a reality. *"We have a great opportunity to be part of what God is doing in pushing back the darkness and bringing more light—in the workplace, in the government sector, and in people's homes."*

A native Cambodian, nicknamed "Jimmy," who moved to Phnom Penh four years ago for university, is one of those future leaders in the Cambodian Church. Right now Jimmy serves in the men's dorm operated by GCF. Located above the church's worship space and housed in a former brothel, the dorm hosts over 60 men. "Most of the students here do not believe in Jesus yet ...," said Jimmy. "I heard the gospel because someone told me. It is my pleasure to have the students here and show them who Jesus is and why we believe in Him."

Jimmy's heart for students arose out of his own story of coming to faith. "I was a person who was very selfish, had hatred inside my heart, jealous ... [I was] so bad. No love," Jimmy confessed. *"When I first came to the church ... I was loved by them even though they were not my relatives or my friends ...," he said. "It changed me day by day. Two years after that I got baptized. I realized God is real and He is true ..."*

Ministering in the dorm, Jimmy said he can relate to the students because he has been right where they are. He shares words of encouragement from the Scriptures during the dorm's weekly Bible study and fellowship gatherings. "I was touched by the words of God and I know that many people will be touched by the words through the Holy Spirit."

The eagerness of new believers to share their faith and get involved with the local church amazed Emily Whitley, another MTW missionary who works at the GCF women's dorm. "College is a time when you may give yourself a 'free pass' to not be involved with the local church. [These students] feel the opposite. They make such an effort," she said. Going to nearby slums, traveling to villages, and working with short-term teams, the students continually impress Whitley with their maturity. "They want to discover their gifts and use them for the church," she said.

Although they may have never imagined it, these future leaders are already being used by God to take the gospel message to their families and people across Cambodia. "I never [thought] that one day I would become a pastor. But I just devote myself to God," Jimmy said. "And what God's will is, I will follow." 



See Jimmy's interview at vimeo.com/119348066

LEARNING TO LIVE IN THE VILLAGE REQUIRES US TO TAKE NOTICE OF WHAT IS HAPPENING WITH OUR NEIGHBORS, THE LIFE OF THEIR COMMUNITY, AND THE RHYTHM OF THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES.

BY: REBE MCREYNOLDS

Our first week in Nosy Be, Madagascar, we met “The Band,” a group of incredibly talented local musicians (and fishermen) whom God had strategically placed in our lives. With an old, worn out guitar, a few handmade percussion instruments, and voices that evoke emotion, they sang out their stories with all their souls. We quickly bonded through a love for music, and our relationship grew as we became increasingly interested in learning more about one another’s stories. But God was up to something much greater than we could have hoped for or imagined.



Bryan and Rebe's son Camden with his Sakalava friends

traditional harmonies that left us eager for more. As we sat

watching them write and compose these songs, the Lord put it in our hearts to ask if they would be willing to create songs from Scripture. I remember my husband Bryan saying, “Imagine giving them newly translated Scripture from Genesis, the full account of Creation, and having them put it to Sakalava rhythms and tones.” Our hearts were stirring within us—this was the Holy Spirit’s work.

During this time, a team of translators had formed and was working through the

All ears were tuned in, eyes were wide, and minds were engaged as the account unfolded in their heart language.

Time to tell the people

One year passed. We were growing in our language abilities, a network of relationships had been established, and our team was ready to begin organized ministry. It was time to tell the Sakalava people God’s beautiful love story in their heart language. What did that mean? How would we do it? We decided to start with “The Gathering,” a plan that would bring our Sakalava neighbors together to hear the stories of the Bible.

In the dirt, under mango trees, we laid out traditional grass mats where everyone gathered, placed a basket of fresh bananas in the center, and began. The Band came prepared to share the “Genesis Scripture Song,” and together we sang the words from the Bible accompanied by a traditional tune created by The Band. The full story of Creation was told that day, including a dramatic reading and concluding with this challenge:



The Sakalava gather to hear the Creation story.

This week, as you are busy with your lives, cooking, cleaning, going to the rice fields, and fishing, think about this world we live in. God created it and said it was very good. In what ways is that still true? In what ways has our world become not good? Why?

Sharing lyrics of the heart

Our quaint fishing village sits on a small island off the northwest coast of Madagascar. The Sakalava people spend their days farming rice, raising livestock, and fishing the waters of the Indian Ocean. We arrived here two years ago, on a team committed to learning the local language and culture, creatively seeking ways to plant seeds of the gospel in a place that has not yet heard.

Scripture songs

The Band members Ladis, Matis, and Edme increasingly began visiting our home. Ladis delighted in sharing with us the lyrics of a new song he had recently written, and after plucking away a few chords and tuning up weathered instruments, The Band would sing

Old Testament, which meant that we could easily obtain Genesis in the Sakalava dialect. We gathered the Sakalava words of the Creation account in Genesis 1–2 and were ready to offer them to our friends. We weren’t sure how The Band would react and had doubts about whether they would agree to the idea, but we were hopeful. Bryan sat down and began to talk with them about creating a song from the Bible, and to our delight they were interested. Bryan then began to share the story of the beginning of the world as it is written in Genesis.

As we journeyed across the humid, jungle terrain to our first gathering place, we saw the familiar faces of friends and neighbors coming to find out what stories we had to tell. Steadily, the group grew from 20 to 50 until more than 100 of our friends were gathered together. Our hearts were bubbling up inside, a feeling of unknown adventure was on the horizon, and our plans were being piloted.

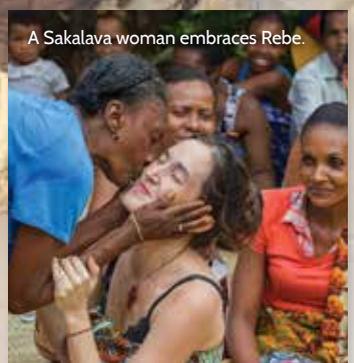
Taking it to the streets

Last night The Band came over and we all sat under the stars as they practiced their songs in preparation for a concert on the other side of the island. They’ve now created 11 songs from Scripture, and are becoming popular across the island. Their songs are now being played on a local radio station. The band members increasingly want to know more about the God we love and serve and have said, “Since we began creating songs from Scripture, we have noticed changes in our lives. We want to do what is good and right.”

The Gatherings continue, and together with our team and The Band, we are experiencing the joy of scattering gospel seeds and the beginnings of what we pray will grow into a thriving, Sakalava church plant. [📺](#)



The Band plays on the McReynolds' porch.



A Sakalava woman embraces Rebe.



Watch a video of The Band playing their Genesis song at vimeo.com/123923394



Finding Jesus in Ukraine My Journey from Atheist to Missionary

BY: OLYA POWELL

I was born in Odessa, Ukraine, in 1976, which at the time was part of the Soviet Union. I grew up in a typical Soviet atheist family. My parents didn't baptize me as a child, which was the regular tradition even for unbelievers—a "just in case" thing.

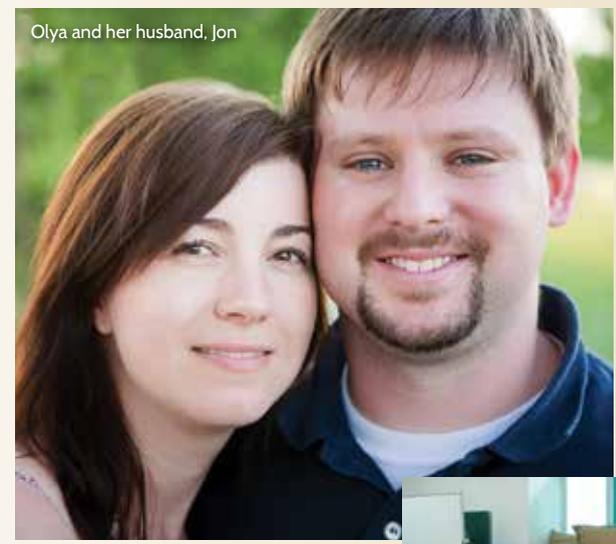
I grew up not thinking about God and faith. My parents taught me to behave well and I was a "good girl;" cigarettes, alcohol, drugs, and the dance clubs didn't interest me. I looked "right" from the outside.

After the Soviet Union collapsed, Christianity became "in fashion" in our country. I would visit an Orthodox church sometimes, but not for a service—just to feel the atmosphere. I was even baptized in the Orthodox Church when I was 18, but it didn't have meaning to me. I just wanted to be like other people and feel like "now God knows about me."

In the summer of 1996, my friends invited me to go to the beach with Americans. It was my first time meeting real Christians. That day I met Doug Shepherd (MTW missionary), a few American students, and other Ukrainian believers. We had a fun time and I decided I wanted to be around them more often because their attitude toward life and love of one another was so

different from anything I had ever seen. I started attending Bible studies regularly. In February 1997 I accepted my Savior and in May of 1997 I became a member of Odessa Presbyterian Church.

Since I accepted Jesus, my relationship with God has really grown. Initially, it wasn't easy for me to see my real sins and how much I needed Him, but as I got to know God more deeply, I could see my need for Christ more clearly and started to see growth.



Olya and her husband, Jon

I began working with MTW missionaries in Odessa in 2000 as the southern Ukraine team's financial administrator. In 2008 I decided to move to Lviv to help the Lviv team plant a new Presbyterian church. I have been here now for seven years and I love living and working here.

One of the most wonderful parts of the last seven years was getting to meet, know, and marry my husband, Jon, an MTW missionary. I moved to Lviv single, trusting God with this, knowing that if He had someone for me, then He would lead me right to him. And He definitely did! We were married in August 2011.



Olya teaches Sunday school.

The last three and a half years has been a very joyful time for me, as Jon and I have gotten to know one another more deeply and serve God together in Lviv. I am very thankful for God's work in my life and am eager to see how God will use me in the future. [▶](#)



Shattered by Love at Casa Hogar

BY: JESSE MILLER

A child plops onto my lap. He gazes up at me, his irises glimmer, and he pokes a finger at my Coke. My nod signifies permission and thirst forces the drink to his lips. The last sip drips onto his tongue. He glances up at me

and passes me the bottle. Innocence greets me in his eyes. He nestles his face into my neck and his heart pounds against my chest. Love binds me to him. Language severs us and miles attempt to disconnect us, but love compels us to forget barriers. We sacrifice pride for vulnerability in this moment. Nobody sees, nobody judges, and nobody feels the force of love that binds our differences.

Reluctant beginnings

I was 16 when my parents first mentioned going to Acapulco with my church. I was living a charade, a bitter contradiction. Inside, I felt hopeless, hardened, stubborn, cold. Outside, I pretended that I was happy, that I knew who God was, all for the sake of fitting in at my Christian school and not embarrassing my family.

I figured that I might as well

go to sunny Mexico, where part of my family was from. That would make me a good person right?

A few months later when I arrived in Acapulco, I found myself startled by the state of the city. As our massive bus wound through mountains and down the bustling coast, we passed poverty-stricken slums then four-star hotels, destitution and then luxury. Upon reaching Casa Hogar, I started to question what I had signed up for. I don't know what I was expecting, but it wasn't the bland concrete buildings and antiquated wrought iron fences. I wasn't expecting life-sucking heat that drains the life from your bones. Most of all, I wasn't expecting a swarm of children to rush up to the gate, their inquisitive faces examining our group, waiting for us to walk into this run-down place that they called home. The second I walked through that gate, I was captured by the arms of several overjoyed children. I recall asking myself, "What have I done to deserve this?" I didn't quite know the feeling; I couldn't quite find the words.

And then I felt it. *Love.*

That was the moment my life changed. The restrictive pain of a Jesus-deprived life was shattered and a new brokenness entered, the brokenness of one who has seen the conditions of this world, who has walked among the least of these, who must never be the same again, who understands that only love can heal it.

No longer alone

We are reassured by the Word of God that we are never alone, never abandoned when He promises, "I will not leave you as orphans, I will come to you" (John 14:18). I was alone before I came to Casa Hogar; at least that is what the darkness desperately wanted me to believe. And that is what these children were, that was their physical reality. They were abandoned by those who were supposed to love them most. Some were beaten. Some were starved. Some were neglected. →



Jesse Miller with a young Casa Hogar friend

I will never be able to understand the pain that the children of Casa Hogar have experienced. They have understood destitution, hurt, and loss, yet they give so freely and generously. They love so vividly. They move with energy. They welcome with open arms. Two years ago, I couldn't bring myself to do any of those things. I look back at my life and it seems like another existence. There is only life before Casa Hogar and life after. Life before Jesus, and life after. I have now seen brokenness and I have been broken. However, I am not chained nor deflated by it. I am freed by it. Therefore I live with a passion. Jesus came to me. He did not leave me an orphan. He made me His own. He has instilled an ever-growing conviction in me to love others in their brokenness as he loved me.

I am ready to no longer be safe. I am ready to give up comfort. I am ready to answer the call to live in pursuit of ever-flowing, circumstance-ignoring, unadulterated love.

I am ready to no longer be safe. I am ready to give up comfort. I am ready to answer the call to live in pursuit of ever-flowing, circumstance-ignoring, unadulterated love. I found that in Acapulco. I no longer see the kids at Casa Hogar as orphans, as I once believed I would. I see them as mine, as He sees me as His.

I no longer see beauty as merely beauty, nor brokenness as merely brokenness, for I have seen the beauty that springs from despair. Without Jesus we are broken and with Him we become beautiful in that very brokenness, for nothing of ourselves is good divorced from Him. And yet with Him, the work of our hands, the seemingly insignificant deeds our hearts provide through Him, can create community, can forge a love that echoes through eternity and into the home our hearts were made for. [n](#)

Jesse Miller has traveled to Acapulco with Orangewood Presbyterian Church regularly since her first trip in 2012. She is currently a freshman at Seminole State College.



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Overcoming cultural challenges in Spain

FROM FEAR TO FAITH

ZOILO, AN 87-YEAR-OLD SPANIARD, COULDN'T IMAGINE THAT GOD LOVED HIM. THOUGH HE GREW UP BELIEVING IN GOD, Zoilo's faith echoed the experience of many of his generation who were required to attend church—it was based in fear.

Imagine living in a village so isolated that there is no electricity, no running water, and limited medical care. The only institution is the local church, yet despite the stability it offers, the anxiety it produces is even greater. This was life for millions of Spaniards a mere 40 years ago. And this worldview is a reality that the MTW Spain church-planting team takes into account as they build relationships with men and women who are skeptical of church.

"I recall my youth in church was one of constant fear," said Zoilo. "I feared I would fail to obey God or the commands of the Church. I recall a feeling of pollution in everything I did and touched."

Maria, a stylish 70-year-old woman who has gotten to know the MTW team, echoed a similar thought. "I have lived two lives," she explained. "The first half knew only isolation, fear, and the Church. It was like the Middle Ages. Then, boom, the modern world arrived."

A unique challenge

The lasting effects of a legalistic church background combined with the atheism that younger generations embrace poses a

unique challenge for the MTW team. Many younger people in Spain have abandoned religion and instead focus on their careers or simply having a good life.

"People over 40 resent the Church for the bitter treatment they received growing up, and those under 40 reject those religious traditions because they see no connection to real life," said Robert Tanzie, an MTW missionary who has served in Spain since 2008. Tanzie recalled his friend Javier admitting, "I wish I could believe. I just can't."



Zoilo with missionary kid, William Barnes

But there is good news. For many, the political and religious freedom of the last few decades has opened their hearts to the freeing grace of God. Despite the hardened, stony ground of this post-Christian nation, the MTW Spain team has launched or re-launched seven churches. They've also expanded MTW's

work, offering training and resources to over 20 churches throughout the country. And most importantly, they have helped people like Zoilo move from fear to faith in a loving God.

A few years ago Zoilo discovered God's relentless love for him through Redeemer Cathedral, one of the Anglican churches that the MTW team has formed a relationship with. Zoilo is now a regular at Tanzie's weekly Bible study and an active church member.

"I learned how much God loves me!" said Zoilo. "Who could imagine that God loves me? I now know that this is true, and only want to give Him thanks for his gift of Jesus." [n](#)



news briefs >>

The Crisis in Ukraine

It's been a prolonged season of both turmoil and prayer in Ukraine. The precarious political and social situation has impacted the lives of MTW personnel on the field and could have implications for future ministry. In the midst of this, MTW has striven to care for field personnel according to the specific needs and locations of the various teams. Some left their ministry sites for a time while others have remained, ever watchful of the situation, and yet fully focused on working hand-in-hand with their Ukrainian partners to advance the gospel and minister to the needs of those around them.

A majority of the team in Odessa, one of three MTW ministry sites in Ukraine, continues working with little interruption in their ministry. Although they are the closest in proximity to the "occupied" portions of the

country, they are finding open doors and opportunities to minister the love of Christ in the midst of chaos and uncertainty. Refugees fleeing their homes in war-torn



areas are finding rest in Odessa, and the MTW team there is helping to care for the displaced, both physically and spiritually.

Two MTW families remain on-site in Kiev and continue to monitor the situation closely. Although the violence has shifted east, being in the capital city carries inherent risks. The team in L'viv is geographically removed from much of the unrest. However, the church is experiencing significant stress from sending their men off to fight in the war. Many church members and MTW personnel have relatives who live in the war-torn areas of the country, adding a level of stress and concern for extended family. As a result, opportunities to minister to those who are hurting abound.



Welcome New Missionaries

Join us in welcoming the following missionaries who recently came through Launch!

- Short Term (Two-Year):
- Melanie Johnson (Japan)
 - Bill & Mae Lee Letchworth (Cree Nation, Canada)
 - Ginny (Enterprise, N. America)
- Long Term:
- Bradley & Sara Cordell (Alumni, Ukraine)
 - Peter (Alumni) & Lauren Dishman (Colombia)
 - David & Danielle Grotton (Alumni, Chile)
 - Ian & Heather (Alumni, Enterprise)
 - Brent Meyers (Spain)
 - Mike & Caroline Miller (Greece)
 - Kevin & Jan Rutledge (Czech Republic)
 - Jeff & Katie Saunders (Japan)
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