

DENTAL TRAINING FOR MISSIONS

February 2011

Living Hope Orphanage

This fall Chris Johnson (of To Every Tribe Mission) and I held a dental clinic at the "Living Hope Orphanage" in Matamoros. Chris needed to brush up on his skills and was happy to join me. It was our joy and privilege to consult and treat around thirty orphans and mission staff. Tony Crumbley (director) was very appreciative and welcomed us to return.

Jicaral, Oaxaca, Mexico (with T.E.T.M.)

This outreach to southern Mexico was challenging and rewarding. I supervised the largest group of students ever at one time - six! It taught me a lot. Our dental / medical teams saw and treated over 550 people. Many came from far. We have received a wonderful report since we left. The focus of this trip was to build relationship with this village. This previously unwelcoming village now warmly invites us to return. What a turn of events! T.E.T.M. is now preparing to send a full time church planting team to settle there as soon as possible. Chris Johnson and his wife will be part of this team.



From L to R: Medical/Dental team, dental team, dental clinic, people waiting, children, team housing and clinic, showers and outhouse, road to village and location.

T.E.T.M. Students Testify

Since our ministry is primarily training, I thought it might be nice to let you hear directly from my recent students:

Gerry's course provides an invaluable service to people that is practical and can be implemented anywhere. Gerry is hands - on, detail oriented, covering every possible detail and scenario...I will recommend this course to anyone considering cross-cultural missions as a practical and viable skill. Trace

This course is doable in any environment. Gerry is very practical, gentle, and not afraid to correct when needed; but I never felt put down when I could not do what was asked. Lots of practice - hands on unique simulations. Karen

It helps establish relationships making it possible to proclaim the gospel. Gerry did a very good job. He combined a lot of very practical methods for teaching .Very hands on. I would definitely recommend this course and would even consider trying to pass this teaching on in the field. Gabe

Gerry's course is a very valuable, practical way to help people and earn the right to be heard. It is extremely hands on which, is a wonderful way to learn and gain confidence. Gerry is very excited about the work and really seems to enjoy it. That is contagious! Christa

This course meets needs in a simple way and helps build relationships. There was lots of hands-on practice and a variety of practice exercises. There is a lot to absorb and it can be overwhelming. I recommend this course. Lori

It has immense practical use in the places I've been in Papua New Guinea. It's a great way to open the door for the gospel. I enjoyed the "crash -course" feel. I felt Gerry was very good at teaching a lot of skills very quickly. I think the techniques used will be very easily transferable to tribal situations in which I will be. Kelly

Gerry's course gave me a very useful skill and potentially a powerful tool to reach communities that are unreached with the gospel. Having this training gives me a level of confidence and competency to be useful wherever I go. I am grateful for the dental training and I like telling people about it! Will

Susan Russell

Susan, my most recent student, is a full-time dental hygienist from California. She does mission trips to Togo, West Africa and is thrilled to now provide dental fillings. My experience teaching her is helpful to me in preparing the content of my video course targeting dental professionals. Please pray God's wisdom and direction in this new project.

Violence in Mexico

You probably have been hearing news of the violence in Mexico. The situation across the border has been escalating for some time now. Many are questioning the wisdom and safety of crossing over unless absolutely necessary. As you can probably imagine, fewer tourist are coming, and that means less dollars coming into the economy of the border towns. Brownsville and Matamoros are being hit hard this winter with fewer "Winter Texans" coming for the season. Mission teams are hesitant to come. Many have canceled trips.

Did you know that in 2010 more American citizens have been killed in Mexico than U.S. Forces in Iraq that year? (see <http://www.blackfive.net/main/2010/11/more-us-citizens-murdered-in-mexico-than-deaths-in-iraq-in-2010.html>) As I write this (Jan 27), we received news that Nancy Davis, a local American missionary, was murdered across the border yesterday. This, as you can imagine, has sent shock waves through the missionary community here. No one is immune.

(see http://www.krgv.com/news/local/story/American-Missionary-Dead-After-Shooting-in-Mexico/R-gtnXSnxUW1bFMh_5guzg.csp)

Businessmen flying into Mexico have armed guards, armed cars and security professionals who get them in and out of the country safely. One security professional says if you don't have that kind of security, you could get hurt or killed. "The Gulf cartel are fighting Zetas and it's been reported the municipal police are allied with the Zetas," he says. "It's a war zone. It's not any different going to Afghanistan and Iraq." He says the only way to stay alive is to stay out of the war zone.

(see <http://www.krgv.com/news/local/story/Security-Professional-Warning-Civilians-to-Stay/qt7CoiEQ6E2M9sT4AIU2UQ.csp>)

I've personally encountered a couple dangerous situations. The most recent was on the Oaxaca trip. One night we heard faint but distinct sounds around our camp site. We realized that bullets were hitting near us when we heard the delayed blast sounds. We quickly turned out the lights. We were being shot at from a neighboring mountain. Apparently there is an ongoing land dispute between the two villages. Also, last year, while I was shopping at a store in Matamoros, shots were fired outside. The store was locked down, shoppers inside; police and military were shooting it out with the drug cartels. Three people were killed.

Please pray for an end to this violence.

As you can imagine, this effects our ministry directly as I have limited my travels across the border.

Please pray that God gives us wisdom and clear direction regarding our ministry in Mexico.

Praise: Funds were received for the travel trailer roof project. A church team coming from Lake Jackson, TX, will be building it next month. We'll include pictures in the next newsletter.

Thank you! *We are so grateful to each one who has given to make this ministry possible. We know that God is our Provider, but He uses you to extend that blessing. We pray that this blessing be multiplied back to you and that God continues to provide for all your needs.*

Gerry & Denise

Financial support and correspondence may be sent to:

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~~~~~ Family News ~~~~~



30th Anniversary Cruise

In October we enjoyed a wonderful week of sunshine and relaxation aboard the Norwegian Sun. The cruise left from Cape Canaveral and sailed to Nassau Bahamas, St. Thomas and St. Martin. As you may recall, this was to be a celebration of John & Celeste Fortin's 30th anniversary and ours. John went to be with the Lord in July. With much coaxing from family and friends, Celeste decided to still join us. She invited her dear friend, Joanne Trombley, to come along. We remembered John's birthday and celebrated Celeste's during the week. It was a week of remembering precious times together, tears and laughter, and making new memories.

Christmas 2010

Christmas came early for us this year. Anna and David came down to be with all of us in early December. We had a wonderful time together celebrating Thanksgiving, Christmas, and birthdays. The days just flew by!



Unexpected trip to NH

I (Gerry) am saddened to say that my dear grand-nephew, Albert (23 yrs), died on New Year's Day. This was my niece Pauline's only child. She and Jim (his dad) asked if I would officiate at the service. Albert and I had become very close these last few years. I carefully re-read 47 pages of his letters he had written me to find appropriate things to share. So Albert, through his letters, was able to speak at his own funeral! He shared how wonderful Christ is and how precious Jesus was to him. I've never witnessed such a moving presentation of the Gospel. Please keep Pauline and Jim in your prayers, along with all my family.

Good-byes and Missionary Travels



It was with mixed emotions, we said good-bye to Azarja, Renee and our precious grand-daughters, Elliora & Esther, on January 23rd. They are finally embarking on their missionary adventure in South Africa. They will be serving as missionary candidates with Mercy Air for three months. Presently they are in Holland visiting with Azarja's family. They will be traveling to England to visit and share with the church they attended for two years. This church is excited to support them in their mission. They head to White River, South Africa in early March. Decisions to serve with Mercy Air on a long term basis will be made after this three month candidate phase. We look forward to seeing them again in July.