

Clemente Newsletter

February 2012

David's Discussions

Peter, in chapters ten and eleven of the Book of Acts, had a second conversion experience. He had to be converted from a Jewish centric concept of God's salvation to a more inclusive understanding of the gospel. Through prayer, trance, personal visits of gentle strangers, and actual encounter of the Spirit of God moving amongst the non-Jews, Peter was convinced that the message of salvation is for all peoples and that Christian mission involves a cross cultural teaching and practice. His conversion experience is convincing and overwhelming. Those who saw it knew it was from God. (Acts 11:18)

Last month, I was in Cambodia with a group of Taiwanese graduate students from the Holy Light Theological Seminary. We were there for a week-long mission trip. The students had their share of second conversion experiences. One student said, "I have now second thoughts about my plan to go to Korea for missionary work." Another had hesitation about going to the Mainland. Still another is strongly considering going into long-term cross cultural ministry. In a short period of eight days, God moved amongst us and changed our hearts. I am not sure if we can call this movement a second conversion experience. Whatever name we give to these changes, they certainly are transforming our perception of the Christian ministry. The gospel is for all peoples and every nation.

The night before we left Cambodia, I ran into three different Cambodian youth members. They expressed to me their desire to help out in the child sponsorship program of the local church. One youth leader is accepting the challenge to lead Bible studies and prayer sessions for their church worship team. Another young lady shares her resolve to study English more diligently than ever so that she can help out visiting mission teams as a translator and interpreter. These decisions from our Cambodian friends seem to have the nature of a second conversion experience. Regardless of what these are, they are moving local people to Christian service. They are seeing that the Christian gospel is not limited to their ethnicity and the borders of their society. God's salvation includes all the peoples of the world. ** **

When they heard these things they fell silent. And they glorified God, saying, "Then to the Gentiles also God has granted repentance that leads to life."

Acts 11:18 (ESV)

Carmen's Corner

Dear Family & Friends,

On Monday, January 23, 2012, it was Chinese New Year! On Chinese New Year Eve, at night, we watched Kung Fu Panda 2. It was funny, sweet, funny, funny, scary, funny, very sweet that I cried, and finally...funny. Oh, and at the end, a little serious. At the middle of the night, there were fire crackers, fireworks and a bunch of noise. The Chinese New Year legend says a monster called ' ' (nián; that means 'year') comes out every Chinese New Year's Eve to destroy and eat people. So they cover their doors with red paper and light up firecrackers and fireworks to scare them off. On Chinese New Year Day, people say, "Congratulations!" (in Chinese) because a lot of the people weren't eaten by . (Luke 15:23-24)

I made a club for my class (only 4th grade girls, but also honored guests). It's called A Club of Country Lovers, or A.C.O.C.L. Once a year, we help a country to not be so poor. Once a month, we sell stuff as a group. This month, we sold origami. We made 795 NT (\$26 USD)! So far, all together, we made 1,195 NT (\$40 USD). Also, we're sending donations. (Clothes, toys, books, etc.) So far, we have 97 donations. Our goal is 10,000 NT (\$333 USD) and 100 donations. There's a contest of whoever gives the most money gets ice cream and whoever gives the most donations gets a necklace. I'm hoping we'll do good this year. ** **



Sarah's Sentiments

I can hardly believe an entire month has passed since our Christmas vacation to the Philippines! We were so thankful to God for good weather, good health, and good fellowship with David's family. The Clementes gathered together for a Christmas Day celebration as well as a three-day New Year's retreat. It had been four years since Carmen and Jacob had seen these aunts, uncles, and cousins, so there were a lot of names to learn and relationships to remember. We think they managed quite well! And I know they left the Philippines with good memories and warm feelings of love and belonging.

We have a regular time of family devotions and prayer in the evenings as we put the kids to bed. In the past, Jacob easily prayed for Grandma, Grandpa, and Auntie Susan (my family), but when we suggested he include Auntie Nene (David's eldest sister), he didn't want to. He would say, "I don't know who that is." After staying at Auntie Nene's place over Christmas vacation, we noticed a definite change. On his birthday, just a few days after we returned to Taiwan, a number of people wished him a Happy Birthday on my Facebook page. When we showed him the list of greetings, he recognized many of the names and profile pictures. He was pleased, but he kept looking through the list, searching for something, until finally he asked, "Where's Auntie Nene?" (Her greeting appeared shortly after that.) And that's just one of many stories we could tell about how we feel so connected to family after just one short visit. We are so very, very thankful.

It does make me think about our upcoming trip to the United States this year. We will visit many supporting churches and talk with many people whom we only see for a short time every few years. It requires quite a bit of preparation for everyone, but I know as I know that it is so worth it in the end. We are looking forward to creating lasting memories and strengthening our connections with many of you soon!
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<http://fmcusa.org/fmwm/missionaries/clemente/>



Jacob's Journey

I'm growing up! It was my birthday, and now I'm seven years old! I told Mama that I can't wait to grow up to be a daddy. I am going to have a wife and two babies named Souther and Shecky. We will move somewhere far away, because that's what people do after they get married. I think I will move to Africa. Maybe the country of Ethiopia. I will work on my computer in a school, just like Papa does. But I told Mama I'm not sure how to get to the airport in Ethiopia, so maybe she and Papa could take us there, and then they could go back to Taiwan. Mama promised that when it's time for me to get married and have Souther and Shecky, she is sure I will know how to get to the airport in Ethiopia. But she said she will come with me anyway, if I want her to. ** **

Prayer Petitions

***** Second semester at Holy Light Theological Seminary begins on Monday, February 20. Pray for God's presence and guidance for faculty, staff, and students. Pray for David as he teaches three classes this semester -- Worldview and Transformations, History of Missions, and Missions Strategy.

***** We will be returning to the United States for Partnership Building from late June through early December of this year. Please pray for us as we begin to make the necessary preparations. One item we are specifically praying for is a vehicle that we can use during our six month stay. ** **

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