

## SPRINGS OF HOPE

# 2011 Mexico Mission Trip

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*“Jesus you are, Jesus you were, Jesus you will always be a perfect servant to us, a perfect servant to death, even death on a cross...” (lyrics from Hearts of Servants)*

On July 21<sup>st</sup> four of us from Springs of Hope, Inc. (representing 4 churches, three denominations, and two states) arrived in Tapachula, Mexico. For some, it was their first time, but for others, it was like a big family reunion. Seeing the boys grow and mature into the young leaders that God has called them to be is a testament to the work and ministry that is taking place in Tapachula. Our team’s focus for the trip was showing compassion. Compassion is something that has been given freely to us, and it’s something we must struggle to show each and every single day, even to our own family.

As a relief team, we were responsible for the daily tasks of taking care of 15 boys. This included cooking. The food is made fresh, from scratch and requires several hours of sweat and labor to feed 20 something mouths, three times a day. The time we spent laughing and cooking were some of the most meaningful. But it’s more than just a meal to feed the physical needs of these growing boys. There is something about sharing a meal together that brings family together. No matter what’s going on, this family of boys will gather around a very long table and break bread together. (Josh)



We also gathered each night for music and a daily devotional during which the spiritual maturity of these growing young men was clearly evident. Their insight and perspective continued to amaze us on a daily basis ... but it shouldn’t because God has clearly been at work here a long time. It is incredible how something as beautiful as music can bring two completely different cultures together as one, for a brief moment in time. There was nothing more heart-warming than a group of kids singing their hearts out, and it had to be even more beautiful to God’s ears. (Donna & Justin)

A highlight of the week was being able to attend the closing of Vacation Bible School. What a proud moment to see all the boys and girls recite their songs and verses along with the older ones being recognized for volunteering for VBS. Also, there was a night of serious conversations steered towards the teens and making right decisions in their life when it comes to God’s plan for them and relationships. (Caryn)



One of the days we were blessed with a 1.5hour walk to witness to the neighbors in the community, and the children did just that. With a boldness and surety that comes from good biblical teaching and experience, each of the older children walked up to complete strangers and shared the gospel. The honest sincerity of these young men was compelling, and we were deeply moved by their witness. There was no stumbling over words or fumbling of concepts. These witnesses know the gospel and share it eagerly with others unhesitatingly. (Donna)

What an incredible group of boys with ambitions to succeed in life. From dreams of dentistry school to being English teachers in their community, hard work and great Christian values have been instilled into their hearts and minds. God is not only doing a great work in Tapachula, but doing a great work inside each of us as well.

Every time we got together as a team, at breakfast, lunch, or super, we grew closer in our personal relationships with each other, each of us believing that with a pure heart, humble mind, and a little compassion we can change the world! (Justin)

*“Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourself. Each of you should not look to your own interest, but also to the interest of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Jesus Christ.” (Philippians 2:3-5)*



*Finally, how do you say goodbye to 40 children and staff that you have grown so close to?*

Mission trips are not about accomplishing tasks or projects but about building relationships with the people you serve, and this week was about playing with, caring for, and loving on the children. Some of us Americans might feel as if we aren't accomplishing many tasks especially when the children, staff, or other team members have covered the chores, but what does God want us to do? To love one another, and love is what all of us gave and received.

Compassion is more than an emotion towards someone, it is being moved so deeply by someone's pain and suffering that you reach out and extend that hand of mercy. “And moved with compassion, Jesus stretched out his hand...” (Mark 1:41) When you have that compassion towards others you feel their pain, see it in their eyes or understand through their actions. Don't get me wrong all the kids are smiling from ear to ear, laughing, and playing; however, you understand when some of the boys are holding onto you, hugging you, laying in your arms, not wanting to let go, that there is still a void there within them.

Each of us saw with our own eyes the love that surrounds these children and how it is a reflection of the staff's love of God. What a blessing it was to have just a moment in the lives of these boys! This ministry is hard to explain in words and even pictures cannot relay the compassion we feel for these children. However, we hope you have enjoyed catching a glimpse into our week in Tapachula and the lives of the children. (Caryn)

*“...Put within us tenderness, release from us all selfishness, we'll consider them better, we are yours, give us hearts of servants...”*

*(Hearts of Servants, by Shane & Shane)*

Caryn, Donna, Justin, and Josh (Springs of Hope 2011 Mission Team)

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