


Spring 2005

CALLED REPORT

A Heart of Obedience



I remember that afternoon like it was yesterday. The streets were dirty and the poor children sat sniffing glue in the park that surrounded the huge Catholic Church. Our ministry team had been sent to this location in Santa Cruz, Bolivia with one purpose, to simply listen to the Holy Spirit. As two other girls and I began circling the park, crying out for people's salvation and listening for some gentle nudging as to which people God wanted us to talk to, we found ourselves on the front steps of the Cathedral. All around us poor Indian women sold rosaries and pictures of various saints. It was there that God poured out His love and spirit on me and I knew He wanted me to talk to one of those women. The Spirit was so strong I had no choice but to

obey. The moment I walked in obedience God really ministered to those women. God even went so far as to give me the ability in that moment to speak a language that I didn't even know.

It is very obvious from the Scriptures that God sends people out with a purpose. When Jesus called each of His disciples, it is evident that they were not only following Him for themselves, but were also being called to minister to people. It struck me this week that the moment I asked Jesus to be my Lord and Savior, I was sent. The whole point of salvation is not to keep it for ourselves but to give. So, how are we able to share this salvation that God so freely gives? Even the thought of approaching someone on the street scares some people. The fact is that there are many different ways to share the love of Jesus with others. I believe that Jesus sees the potential in all of us and has gifted each of us differently. He has given each of us a special way to share with others. Some have the gift of boldness, while others can share the love of Jesus through hospitality and friendship.

Currently at the SEND House we are trying to reach out to our neighbors. In our neighborhood there are two different kinds of people, the middle-class white male and the lower-class African American community. It is impossible to reach the middle-class white male population in the same way as the African American community. Knocking on the door of a white male and explaining the gospel to them would be a complete turnoff; instead another approach is necessary. We have started inviting them over to dinner, visiting with them and building a relationship in hopes of one day soon presenting the gospel to them. On the other hand, our African American neighbors love it when we knock on their doors and share with them, and there is evidence that it really has touched their hearts.

It is important when sharing with people to be sensitive to their background. Evaluate how they will respond. God has given us the Holy Spirit to speak to us and give us the sensitivity that is necessary. The key to evangelism is obedience to the Spirit. 1 Peter 3:15 says, "Always be prepared to give an answer to anyone who asks you to give a reason for the hope that you have." If we are prepared, it will be less nerve-racking to give an answer when the time comes.

While the initial step of sharing with people is very important there is another step that is equally important—if not more so. It is the step of discipleship. Discipleship simply means walking beside. When each of us entered into a relationship with Jesus we began walking and there were probably people that directly influenced those early years of our walk with the Lord. Relationships aren't meant to stay in one place. In the same way the people you lead to Christ need to flourish in their relationship with Him. It is important that new believers recognize that they are also being sent, and they need to be surrounded by people that can encourage and challenge them. In Central Asia many churches are growing this way. The missionaries there realize that in order for the church to expand there needs to be a dependency on God and not them. As the missionaries begin to disciple and send national believers they become the best missionaries to their own people.

There are people all around us everyday that need Jesus. One thing that I've had to learn personally is that the Holy Spirit doesn't work less here in the United States. He speaks just as much; I just need to have a heart that is quiet and ready to listen. Many times I find myself too hurried and busy to listen, but when I do there are so many opportunities. Overall the most important thing is having a heart of obedience.

God aches for His creation to turn back to Him, yet there are so many people that feel empty; they don't know why they were created. In this truth we've found the key—now it's time to share. If I'm scared to share the God that created the universe, then I surely don't know what He has done for me. Let's not be a people that shrink back and are destroyed by simply doing nothing, but instead let's have hearts of obedience that beat in the ways God's does.

Sarah Troyer was a member of the 2001 Ecuador REACH team and then led the 2003 REACH team to Central Asia. Currently she is serving as Community Outreach Coordinator for the SEND Training Center in Columbus, Ohio.



2005 OPPORTUNITIES



Applications are now being accepted for the 2005 SWIM and REACH programs.

Visit www.send-me.org

for more information about these opportunities and to download an application packet.

ALUMNI HAPPENINGS

1995

Shawn and **Susan (Beiler)** (R '95) **Miller** announce the birth of their son, Elijah Gray LaMar Miller. He was born on Oct. 20, 2004, and was welcomed by big sister Ava.

1996

Bill and **Sarah (Graber)** (R '96) **Steffen** announce the birth of their daughter, Jasmine Maria, on Oct. 23, 2004.

1997

David & **Christy (Zook)** (R '97) **Schelenberg** announce the birth of their daughter, Aria Lee Schelenberg on Sept. 22, 2004.

* To keep us up to date on alumni happenings, please visit our website www.send-me.org

Julie (Weaver) Stauffer (R '97) will be graduating from Millersville University with a Bachelors Degree in Social Work (BSW) in May of 2005.

1998

Tim & Carrie (Beery) Miller (R'98) announce the birth of their son, Gabriel Timothy on Sept. 8, 2004.

1999

Brooke Burdette (R '99) & Brian Miller were married on Dec. 11, 2004.

2002

Rhonda Hershberger (R '02, '03) & **Jeff Yoder** (S '02, R '02) were married on Dec. 19, 2004.

INTERCESSOR'S CORNER



Praise God:

- For the safe arrival of the five REACH teams to their outreach locations
- For the contacts that the teams have been making
- For the applications that have been coming in for SWIM and REACH 2005

Pray for:

- Health for the REACH teams
- The teams to continue to learn the local languages and communicate effectively
- More REACH and SWIM applications for next year

BETWEEN YOU AND ME



Davy Slabaugh
*Director of the SEND
Ministries Department*

I have been spending a great deal of time lately reflecting on God's call on my life. At one time, I had a clear sense of call and made definite choices to order my life around that call. Several years and many unforeseen circumstances later I find myself asking tough questions. Am I still doing the things He has called me to do or have I begun working His call into my own priorities for my life?

Many of us have sensed a clear call of God on our lives at one time or another. Perhaps a call to full-time ministry, or to a certain people group, or to serve in a supportive capacity to others called to go. Whatever it was, we believed that it was a clear call of God. As the years go by and our lives become cluttered with the stuff of life, that clear vision begins to fade and we give up pursuit of that dream with which God inspired us.

As we journey through the life given us, it is essential for us to return again and again to our source of life to receive fresh vision and direction. Sometimes that initial vision was not as complete as we thought. Sometimes it needs to be fine-tuned and sharpened. And, sometimes, God's call is not what we expected it to be.

Whatever the case, we can choose to allow His call on our lives to fade into the past and live our lives as we think best. Or, we can continue to pursue the One who called us in the first place and allow Him to use the circumstances and pitfalls along the way to shape us into the person that He wants us to be and to ultimately advance His kingdom on earth.

New SEND Training Center Director Named

After directing the SEND Training Center for nearly four years, Shawn and Nadia Eicher, along with their son, Caleb, will be ending their term of service with the SEND Department in April. The Eichers are moving to Marysville, Ohio to participate in a church plant that is being sponsored by Agape Community Fellowship of Hilliard. Taking their place at the SEND House will be Carmal Miller. Carmal has been living at the Disciples House and will graduate in June with a degree in English from The Ohio State University. She is a REACH alumna (1996) and also served on the SEND House staff from 1997-1998.