



Testimonies from Around the World

South America

Madison Gabe, 2016

Dixie Sandlin, 2016

The Power of Prayer

Hi, this is Madison Mabe, and I was called to go on the 2016 South America student mission trip. I was asked to write a personal testimony about how God used me through prayer for our team, so here goes nothing. When we arrived to our destination, we all couldn't wait to get started. You truly get to experience walking by faith when on a mission trip because each day you never really have an exact plan for the day. You pray and ask God to do what he wants for the day and take every open and closed door that day as an opportunity.

We planned to go into the schools Monday through Thursday, but when we got to our destination, we were informed we could only visit the schools through Tuesday. We took this as an opportunity to plan for a community activity on Thursday.

On Monday we visited a school in the mountains and were blessed with about 20 different classrooms. We all went into the classrooms in pairs and taught and played games. Some of the kids poked fun at my partner Kyra and me, probably just trying to gain attention. However it still left Kyra and I feeling a bit dejected. Nevertheless we were excited to try again the next day. Tuesday we went to the school in town and our plan was to go during the morning and then go eat lunch and come back that afternoon.

We arrived that morning ready to go and we could over hear the missionary and one of our translators Amaya talking about a miscommunication. I immediately felt God calling me to lead a prayer for our team. I talked to Mr. Mike and we gathered the group underneath a tree by the school. I started the prayer asking God to give us just one classroom, that's all we needed to go in and impact people. We finished praying and Amaya walked over to us and told us there had been some miscommunication but that there was one classroom we could go into. I'm sure you could imagine the look on my face when I turned to Mrs. Tammy and said, "Did you hear that God heard me!" and she just smiled and hugged me as we walked into the school.

We had an amazing day that day we were able to love on that one classroom of children and then come back that afternoon and do our skits and love on more classrooms. The next day we were blessed to get to clean the church and visit our translator Amaya's house. We had fun cleaning the church and keeping Amaya's younger daughters company. After visiting Amaya's we drove around the community praying for everything that we saw and then we drove up on top of the mountain. We parked at a designated area and then walked up the rest of the way. It was amazing to see the whole valley. I will never forget the image God gave me of his hands wrapped around the whole valley holding them up.

Later that night we visited the church and invited all of them to come hangout with us the next afternoon. We planned to go to the open field down by the market and play a bunch of different games and even have an Easter egg hunt. We were able to do all of this and we were also able to do our skits for them, give them popcorn, and draw with chalk.



My personal favorite was chalk because Mrs. Tammy had told us how she led a young man to the Lord in another South American country with sidewalk chalk right before we left for the day. This inspired me to want to draw with chalk with the kids. While drawing God told me to draw a cross, so I did. Then he told me to talk to the little boy helping me color it in and tell him that Jesus is love. I wrestled with God for a moment because the enemy got in my head telling me that I couldn't say that in front of his parents and that I didn't even know the Spanish for it. I prayed asking God to give me the courage to be bold and the words to speak life. He gave me exactly what I needed using me to plant a seed in that little boy.

All in all the trip was amazing and life changing, and not just for the people in this South American country, I know I speak for my fellow team members when I say all of us were changed in some way. God is truly amazing. God is good all the time and all the time God is good.

Madison Mabe

The Calling

When I first received the calling to go on a short term mission's trip, it was a bit of a nerve racking experience. I had two very small girls, was in college classes full time, and did not have extra money or a passport lying around.

I knew I was called to go, but had three burning questions. This is the testimony of how the answers to those questions have built my faith and brought to a new place in my walk with Christ.

1. Where am I going to get the money from?

At the time of my first mission's trip, my husband, my mom, and I all knew we were supposed to go. We always met our expenses, but extra was, and still is, rare. Each trip was a cost of about \$1500. Then there were three passports to buy as well. We all three trusted that if the Lord called He would provide. This didn't mean that money just dropped in our laps. This particular trip we had a garden. We took all we could spare and sold produce anywhere and everywhere. When the garden season finished we moved on to cleaning houses and babysitting children. We had three yard sales. Then we came up with the idea of selling baked goods for donations. The Sunday before we left, we had \$800 left between the three of us. We also had four pie deliveries. After delivering the pies we had the \$800 and some extra cash for incidentals! God was faithful. We learned with each step of raising the money how each person's gift is important. We also began to understand how God uses His body. The blessing we would receive from going was transferred to those that gave and prayed.

2. What about my children?

My youngest daughter was 9 months old when I left on this trip. I had much conflict about leaving both my children, but in particular about leaving my infant. Still, I knew that I was meant to go. So, I made arrangements with my in laws to keep my girls a few days before our trip until we returned. I knew our family would take very good care of our girls. I knew that they were excited about having the grandkids to themselves for about 10 days. Even so, I had to pray much to be willing to let go. During prayer over this matter, the Lord chose to ask me a question: "Do others not leave their children for time together or vacations alone? Why should you not leave your children to serve me?" He began speaking to me about the importance of obeying Him without delay or excuses so that my children would understand that the Lord comes first, before all else. It was difficult to leave them, and I missed them terribly. Even so, I was not hindered on my trip. I knew that the girls were being spoiled rotten! Each time I return from a trip, my mother in law thanks me for the time of her life. Again, the blessing isn't meant for me alone. It was to be transferred to others willing to do their part.

3. Why me?

I didn't understand when God told me to go why He was calling me. My gifts and talents didn't seem to make sense for the trip, and the issues I mentioned before weighed heavily on my mind. I kept thinking, "Surely someone else is more qualified, useful, better prepared, lacking parental responsibilities", but the Lord was insistent. So, I put aside my doubts and went to South America. After six trips to South America and two to serve at a conference, I have found that the qualifications God is looking for are not the ones that I was thinking about. When I specifically asked Him, "why me?" His answer surprised me: "You said yes". The main requirement is willingness to answer yes! After more mission trips I have found that a spirit of submission, a servant's heart, and a love for people are the other main requirements for a short term missionary. God can use those who will say yes and do anything for Him. However, if I was fluent in Spanish, had skills in medicine and constructions, and could preach to bring the house down, but would not say yes, submit to His will, and be willing to serve and love those different from me I would not be effective. God can use anyone, don't get me wrong. He desires those most willing rather than those with the most earthly qualifications. Of course having those qualifications is helpful for sure, but they are not God's requirements to go.



The other thing I have learned, which I mentioned in the other two answers, is that Christ wants as many people as possible to be a part of the mission. People who simply cannot physically go could give and pray. Christ wants His body to work together to expand His kingdom. The more you lack as a candidate, the more opportunity for others to say yes to God, to serve Him how they can, to experience the blessing God has for them. I have learned how my shortcomings as person actually leave more room for God. Again, I had to be called. I would not go unless God is with me.

This is my testimony. There is so much more. I wanted to share this part because so many feel they are not the right person for the job. Let me assure you, if you are called you are the right person no matter circumstances. The blessings that await you are eternal and so much more than you can ever imagine. Remember, all it takes is a true and pure yes.

Dixie Sandlin