

VITAL SIGNS

Fall 2007

LESSONS FROM A J-TEAM TRIP

Give, and it will be given to you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over (Luke 6:38 – NKJV).

Ministry is a marvelous thing. The rewards are so great that we wonder why we are sometimes so slow to serve the Lord. Missionaries – career and short-term – are virtually unanimous in saying, “If I had it to do all over again, I’d do it all over again.” This is true of any kind of giving. “You can’t out give God.”

One team member wrote – “God used the August J-Team to refresh me. I planned to spend large portions of each day talking to the adults who would come to the clinic, but I wondered how I would ever really help those with such heavy burdens - health issues, family strife, poverty, and despair. I was reminded that God has given us His Word and He used my readings in 2 Corinthians that week to teach me and prepare me.”

GOD’S WORD GIVES HOPE

2 CORINTHIANS 7:6

God encourages those who are discouraged. (2 Cor. 7:6 TNLT) We might not be able to bolster a despairing wife or hopeless parent, but God can. Our job – bring that person to Jesus.

Hope is a single mom who has no job, no money, and no respect from her children. In short, Hope had no hope. Ruth talked to her about her name and the fact that God also had that name – The God of Hope. She knew the Lord, but her present circumstances had clouded her heart to that truth. Ruth gave her a tract that had specific promises from Scripture and encouraged her to learn all that God could do, as she brought her needs to Him. When their conversation ended, Ruth could pray with confidence because she knew that this God of Hope was able to encourage - build up, give courage and strength - to the discouraged.



A woman encouraged

When we take your gifts to those who need them, they will break out in thanksgiving to

GOD’S PEOPLE ARE BLESSED WHEN THEY GIVE

2 CORINTHIANS 9:11-14

God . . . they will pray for you with deep affection because of the wonderful grace of God shown through you. (2 Cor. 9:11-14 TNLT)

Twenty-four people crowded into a new 12x12 wooden house on Friday afternoon to dedicate it to the Lord. Outside it was raining hard, dark and dreary, but inside it was a holy place. The work of the TEAMS builders was really a home that the Lord had built. Charmaine was handed the key to her home, hugged her new Bible, and wept. Many others shed tears of joy that day and all went away having seen again that God always gives back more than we give.



Frandido

Frandido, a blind boy, came to the clinic and sat down with the children. His grandmother asked, “Is there anything that my grandson could enjoy while he’s waiting?” Denise brought over her small tape recorder and gave it to him. It wasn’t long before Frandido was laughing as he heard himself talk and sing. Denise asked him to talk about his school and what he wanted to do. We learned about the School for the Blind and his desire to be a preacher. We are confident that God has His hand on him and will use him in a great way. That morning, Frandido’s enthusiasm for life blessed the medical and teaching teams. Even as J-Teamers gave to him, he gave back much more.

Give whatever you can according to what you have. (2 Cor. 8:11 TNLT) But what about



Charmaine & children see their new house nearing completion

GOD STRETCHES RESOURCES TO MEET NEEDS

2 CORINTHIANS 8:11

when we don’t have enough to really meet all the needs?

Monday afternoon, Pharmacist Anne Clay realized that we had run out of iron supplements and our clinic records showed that we could expect another eight to ten patients that week. It seemed impossible, but God, in His mercy, brought no more iron-deficient patients to us the rest of that week. A first! Even in this minute detail, God perfectly met our needs.

This happens nearly every J-Team ministry trip. We always anticipate up to 700 patients and up to 1500 prescriptions, but we never know if what we take with us will be enough. Still, we give what we have. God does honor this.



Anne dispensing meds

Healing the Body ~ Making Disciples ~ Strengthening the Church

I am thankful to God that He has given Titus the same enthusiasm for you that I have. He welcomed our request that he visit you again. In fact, he himself was eager to go and see you. (2 Cor 8:16 TNLT) When we reach our limits who will take over? Here's where we thank God for the TEAMS team – missionaries, J-Teams, everyone.



Coworkers Teri & Harold

Several of you have heard about Pearline, whose granddaughter, Kerrine, needed to be seen by a specialist due to a possible brain tumor. This goes beyond what our team is equipped to do and it meant that somebody was going to have to do a lot of work when we left – doctors contacted, appointments made, transportation arranged, and the like. All of this fell on the Nichols. Harold and Teri are coworkers with the same heart who can be depended on to carry the work forward. When the MRI yielded nothing definitive, it was again left to them to contact the regional health officer for a referral to a neurologist and Children's Hospital. And no doubt there is more to come.

And what about the hurricane? After Dean hit Jamaica, they visited throughout Mango Valley to see where TEAMS could help. They distributed food and supplies and nearly wore out a chain saw clearing debris. Harold found several homes that needed roofs, a home that was flattened by a fallen tree, and a church that needs repair. But again, people with the same heart have given and volunteered to help them repair and restore hope.

So all of this to say, pray for the Nichols as they minister to people's practical needs right now. This is opening up opportunities to share the gospel and encourage them in their walk with the Lord.

WWW.T4MM.ORG – TO LEARN MORE ABOUT TEAMS

On the **About Us** page you can link to our history, what we believe, and learn about TEAMS people at home and on the field. While there, check out the blog link for the Nichols and then go to the **Newsletters** page. There you can link to *Vital Signs*, *Clay Tablets*, and *A Nichols Worth* – the news and prayer letters of Anne Clay and Teri and Harold.

WWW.T4MM.ORG gives dates of upcoming ministry trips along with **FAQ** - a page devoted to frequently asked questions. You can even apply for one of the J-Teams directly from the web site. Just go to the **J-Team Application** page. If you need to get more information or to ask questions, click on **Contact Us**. Some have asked about making missionary or project donations online. You can now do that at the **Donations** page.

We will update the **TEAMS Current** sidebar on the **Home Page** from time to time with new prayer and praise news. In fact, there is a Hurricane Dean update there right now.

Please take a look.

HEARTBEAT

Ray Shive



You will always have the poor among you. – Mark 14:7 TNLT

I am amazed at how quickly we can get used to the unbearable . . . accept the intolerable.

In Jamaica, and in a work such as TEAMS for Medical Missions, extremes of poverty and suffering surround us all the time. Without realizing it, medical work can become nothing more than our job. We might simply perform social work. Urgent economic relief can turn into just something we do.

Hurricane Dean brought me back to reality – and apparently others. Since then, TEAMS has received more than the usual contributions for food and relief supplies, and extra workers have volunteered for repair projects. How encouraging that those with the same heartbeat have responded like this. **But it's sobering that it took a disaster for this to happen.** Still, because it did, many are once again keenly aware of the fine line between basic existence and utter destitution . . . and how quickly it can be crossed.

But how about spiritually lost people – here at home or in Jamaica? Has their constant presence hardened us to their crisis? **Will it take some kind of great human catastrophe** – or maybe just someone's funeral – to re-engage us? Let's not wait until those who are standing on that fine line finally cross over it into a lost eternity.

Ray

The Quarterly Update of TEAMS for Medical Missions

PO Box 215
Macungie, PA 18062-0215
United States of America

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Phone: 610-398-0070
Email: T4mm@juno.com
Web: www.t4mm.org

Fall 2007

