

E – Update November 2008

Back in July while I was in Chicago for medical treatment, my pastor Ralph Cassel called me and invited me to join the Crossroads Missions Outreach to Nicaragua on November 2-10, 2008. My response was, “If I am well, I will go.” Automatically I assumed that I would most likely be translating either for the medical or evangelism team, as this has been my usual task in the last two outreaches I have been in the last two years.

October 2008 came, I received another phone call from him in Cuernavaca saying, “Angie, I don’t know if this is good news or not, but I invited Betty Ritchie and Josie Pflucker to join us for the Nicaragua outreach and both of them cannot come. You will be the conference speaker for the Women’s conferences we will be doing in Managua, Ocotal and Juigalpa. We will have Pastor’s conferences and there will be meetings for women. You need to prepare two messages, one for both Christians and non-Christians and another for pastor’s wives.”

As soon as he hung up, my mind ran 100 miles per hour, “I have not been a conference speaker before in English, what makes him think I can now be a conference speaker in Spanish? I am single, what do I have to say to pastor’s wives? I do not even have half of the experiences of Betty Ritchie or Josie Pflucker; these are godly women of well-known pastors of big churches in the U.S. They do this all the time, why me? When am I supposed to have the time to prepare for these messages? My plate here in Cuernavaca is full. I prepare for four Bible studies every week and each day is programmed for which Bible study is coming up next.” On my calendar, I was supposed to start a new small group for ladies on Saturdays, but one leader here told me, “If these ladies cannot come to any one of our six small groups we offer, then they may have to wait for next year. I do not want you to start another small group on Saturdays; you have enough on your plate.” I realized this leader is right; there were three Saturdays before the Nicaragua trip to prepare for these messages. I immediately emailed all these ladies and explained the situation to them and gave them different options on how to get involved in the other small groups we offer.

The first Saturday came - my mind was blank. I have nothing to say to these ladies. I don’t know who they are, where they are or what they do; what am I supposed to say? I prayed... “Dear God, you have to give me your message. I have nothing to say to these Nicaraguan women.” I heard God clearly, “Angie, what do you have?” I thought about my Bible reading the week before where the prophet asked the woman, “What do you have in your house?” The woman was poor and in danger of losing her two sons to pay for her debt. Her response to the prophet was, “I have nothing except one jar with a little oil.” The prophet told her, “Go home, collect jars and fill them with oil”. The woman collected all the jars and the oil did not stop until she filled all her jars. She ended up not losing her sons as the Lord multiplied the little oil that she had when she obeyed what the prophet told her to do. I thought... what do I have? I have my testimony. The Lord changed my life. That is what I will say. I started writing my testimony in Spanish and felt good that at least I was going somewhere.

The second Saturday before the trip came. I needed to prepare another message for the pastor’s wives. I knelt down on my knees and begged God with tears flowing down my cheeks, “Dear God, I have nothing to say to these pastor’s wives, you have to give me your message. I am single. I do not know what it means to be married. I have no clue what it means to be a pastor’s wife. If you want me to give this message, you have to give me your message as there is no one else in the team that can do what you are asking me to do”. The only thought that came to my mind was when my pastor here made a comment on what he wants his wife to be. He wants his wife to be content. I took that as from the Lord and wrote a message on the importance of giving thanks at all times.

The third Saturday came and I left for Nicaragua the next day November 2. My Spanish messages needed to be edited. One gal edited my first message but the second message had not been edited. I quickly called one gal in one of my Bible studies who is a Spanish teacher and asked her to come over at 5 pm to my house. She finished editing my second message at 7 pm. She had a friend with her and I had one gal helping me iron my clothes. I read the edited copy of my second message to these three women and they all were in awe that they too, needed to repent from their sin of ungratefulness. The Lord was already

using my message here in Cuernavaca. Praise the Lord! I ended this last Saturday before the trip praying with these three Mexican women and asked God to help us be grateful women and for my trip to Nicaragua to go well.

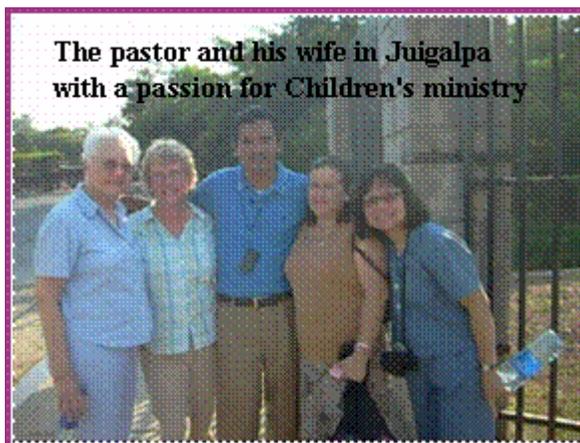


Tuesday, November 4 came. We were in Ocotal. We had our first Women's Coffee. Forty-four women came. We had a team of five women and I was the only one that spoke Spanish. I interpreted for our team member giving her testimony and then gave my testimony. At the closing prayer time, I did not ask anyone to come forward to receive Christ. I asked them to raise their hands if they wanted to receive Jesus as their Lord and Savior. Two young women came forward. They were touched by how the Lord changed my life at 14 years age. They wanted their lives changed too. I asked our team leader to pray for these two young women and I interpreted for her. Praise the Lord!

Wednesday, November 5 came. We were supposed to have our second ladies' meeting but the pastors forgot to announce the ladies coffee during the conference, so we only had three women. I thought... "The Lord cares for these three women. He brought them here." One pastor told me to wrap up the meeting. I had not even started the meeting. I quickly formed a circle with these three women and asked one of our team members to give her testimony. I did not have time to give my testimony and we ended in prayer. One gal made a comment, "Thank you so much for all the love you showed us...." I thought to myself... "What love?" I was rushed; I had to quickly whip up something and finished in 5 minutes because the other team members were waiting and ready to go. "What love did I show?" The whole night I thought about her comment and realized the minute she entered the room, I welcomed her, asked her name, what she does and showed great interest in her and thanked her for coming. The Lord did not allow me to give my prepared message but used my warm welcoming spirit to bless her. That was my message, not in words but in action. Praise the Lord!



Thursday, November 6 we were scheduled to have our third Women's Coffee in Juigalpa. By this time, we had no clue what time we would start, how many women we would have and if the pastors would remember to announce the meeting. On our Nicaragua Team Schedule we were supposed to have the Women's Coffee at 2:30 pm but we have been doing them at 4 pm. By 3:45 pm, three women came. They were told that the meeting was from 2-4 pm but they had to feed their families and do other chores so they came thinking at least they will hear something in the last 15 minutes. I started the meeting as I had no clue what time we were supposed to finish. I just know when the other team members were ready we were supposed to end. Many women came; I did not count (40-50). I was busy interpreting for one gal's testimony and giving my message on the importance of giving thanks. The team bus came at 5 pm and I was told to wrap up the meeting. I was at the height of seeing how encouraged the ladies were, how they were showing great interest in what I was saying. I told myself, "I will not rush. Let the others go but I was not finished." The meeting ended with their women's leader thanking us for coming and praying for us. Some of our team members had already left but I had two other team members with me who stood with me, and the ladies formed a circle and prayed for us. We ended with a wonderful time of mutual encouragement from the Nicaraguan ladies and from the Crossroads' ladies. Praise the Lord!



Friday, November 7 on the Team Schedule we were supposed to have our 4th Women's Coffee in Juigalpa. At breakfast time, I was told we would not have a women's meeting as the team needed to leave for Managua at 4 pm. I actually felt great hearing the news as by this time I was already suffering from pharyngitis from the translating I do for the other team members and giving my own messages. I decided I would rest in the morning and attend the Pastor's Conference in the afternoon. I thanked the Lord thinking... "He gave me a day off." I joined the other team members for lunch and decided I will stay for the pastor's question and answer time. Ralph asked me to join the Children's Team in case they needed a translator. I do not know where we were but as soon as we arrived in the bus, I was told the children (about 500) had been waiting for us since 1 pm. We got there at about 2:30 pm and I had to quickly ask the pastor's wife in charge of the Children's Meeting what our

team needed to do their presentations. I was given the microphone as soon as we got on the stage and was told to say something to the 500 children while the team was preparing for their puppet show and Wordless Book presentation. Talk about flexibility... I quickly whipped up something letting the children know how privileged we all are to be there, thanked them for coming and now... I cannot remember what else I said. The Children's Team did their puppet show and the Wordless Book presentation. Our Women's leader asked me to look for the pastor and his wife to donate the gift bags to the mothers. I found the pastor's wife and told her we have gifts for the mothers. She was so thankful that we came and told me how the Lord had put it in their hearts to minister to the children in Juigalpa. I decided we needed to pray for her. I asked the other ladies with us to come and put our arms on her to pray for her. She started crying and was so blessed by our prayers and the gifts we gave. Later her husband, the pastor came and I had the privilege to thank them for their passion for the children, and encouraged them that these children will be the future leaders of their nation. Praise the Lord!



Interpreting for a team member in Managua

Saturday, November 8 we were in Managua at the meeting center of the Council for the National Pastors of Nicaragua. It was supposed to be our last Women's Coffee. I asked the Lord to help me make it to the last run. I found out where the women's meeting would be, asked the pastor's assistant to provide me a microphone, tape for my maps and a lectern to hold my Bible. She was very helpful and quickly provided everything I needed. I did not know if the pastors would remember to announce the Women's Coffee so I went to the lunch line and invited all the ladies going through, informing them that we would have a ladies meeting at the Jerusalem Assembly Hall.

There were so many things going on at the same time: the traffic on the left side of the assembly hall, the children playing on the right side, the airplanes going over and the pastors wanting their wives to finish their lunch and come home quickly. I decided we better start this meeting before we lose all these wives. I had no clue how many women we had, maybe 60 to 70 ladies. I asked the ladies to all stand at the end of the meeting and ask the Lord for forgiveness for our sin of ungratefulness. So many women raised their hands, I had to ask our other team members to please come and put their hands on these ladies. Amazing! The room was filled with women asking God to forgive them and the meeting ended with hugs and tears from both sides --- the Nicaraguan women and the Crossroads ladies. Praise the Lord!

Friends, so many more things happened. This is just a glimpse of what happened to the Women's Coffee from my perspective. The Lord spoke to me in more ways than one, that if I have to continue teaching, the Biblical Truth that comes out from my mouth had better be true in my own life. Would you pray for me to always have a grateful heart wherever I am and in whatever situation I find myself in, whether in Nicaragua, Cuernavaca, Mexico, Chicago or Vancouver, WA?

As always, thank you for all your love, prayers and support. I always enjoy being on an outreach with my Crossroads family. I miss you all!

Happy Thanksgiving!

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Salmo 84:11 "Porque sol y escudo es Jehová Dios; Gracia y gloria dará Jehová. No quitará el bien a los que andan en integridad."