

I Left My Heart in San Francisco

You may recognize the title of this article as the name of a song. That is what I used to think as well, but now I think of it as a way to express my feelings about our recent mission trip to Villa de San Francisco in Honduras. What a tremendous blessing it was to be able to travel with fellow Christians for such a great distance and to share in a labor of love serving our Lord. I was very impressed by the open and receptive hearts that we found while visiting with people all throughout the town. I greatly appreciate all those who went and had a part in this effort and I hope there will be more to come.

The town's physical conditions were quite different from anything we routinely experience in Knoxville. The streets were poorly maintained, dirt roads lined with trash and dotted with animal droppings. The houses were lacking in many of the trimmings to which we are accustomed. There is no central heating and air and the bathrooms are outside. But just as there is a stark contrast to the physical conditions we normally encounter, there was also a refreshing difference in the common receptivity to spiritual matters. We could simply ask someone standing in the doorway of their home if they wanted to study the Bible and they would say "sure." The studies would often last for an hour or two and then we were welcomed to return later for more studies, often in the same day.

These people, like us, have some very real issues to contend with in their lives that, for many, are significant obstacles to overcome. Bibien was a lady I was privileged to study with on 4 separate occasions, once with Sherrye present. She is a single mom with a long, extensive family history steeped in Catholicism. Her family provides critical financial and physical support to her and her daughter, also named Bibien. She is greatly concerned about being ostracized if she were to convert. She has a good heart, wants to please God, and do what is right, but she has the reservations I mentioned. She came to our evening meetings and also attended the service on Sunday. Please pray for her to be able to overcome her fears and follow through with her desire to be right with the Lord.

The physical attributes of the town are not that inviting, but the loving and open hearts of the precious souls that are there calls me back. And so I can truly say that I have left my heart in San Francisco.

Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest" (Matthew 9:37-38).

Gregg Woodall