

### **Brothers and Sisters in Christ!**

It's been a while. I must apologize. I didn't write a report last month. I wouldn't say my life has been a blur...but maybe more like a plaid. There are millions of different things coming from different directions. It's always a struggle to keep up, but sometimes it's just a matter of picking priorities and doing your best. I will try to sufficiently catch you up with some May and June's highlights.

**Suweena:** Suweena is a young Thai woman that came to the last lecture series at the Upper West Manhattan Church of Christ. The Saturday we met, we scheduled an appointment to start reading Matthew together. She is a very sweet enthusiastic Bible student. We are still having weekly in-depth Bible studies. She came from a non-Christian background and then became involved with a non-denominational Pentecostal church when she moved to New York. After some bad experiences there, she stopped worshipping with that congregation, but she hasn't stopped desiring to grow spiritually. I'm glad that I came in contact with her. After studying in Matthew some, she realized that her baptism wasn't scriptural. She was re-baptized. She has yet to start attending services regularly with us. It will involve her getting a new job, so it will be a struggle, but I have hopes for her. Keep Suweena in your prayers. She is a loving servant of God, but in MUCH need of support and help.

**Carlos and Mercedes:** Carlos is 12 and Mercedes is a sophomore in high school. They came to church when their grandma invited them. Right off the bat Carlos has been overly enthusiastic and involved in Bible study. He's surprisingly wise for such a young guy, but he's also expectedly annoying for someone his age (haha). His sister Mercedes has been a little slower in her dedication to Christ, but made immense improvements and has become very consistent in her attendance and devotion. They are both naturally sweet good people. I have great expectations for both of them. Unfortunately for us they have left for DR (Dominican Republic) for the summer. I'm anxious for them to get home and worship with us again. Pray that their time away doesn't hinder their faith or shake their dedication.

**Michael Monclus:** Michael is a 14-year-old kid from the Bronx. One Thursday his mother (who is friends with another one of my kid's mother) made him and his brother Jose go to church. The following Monday Michael took the bus to church and attended the 6 hour Deuteronomy study! I don't even know who told him about it. I was pretty pumped to see him there. He and his brother continued to attend regularly. They went to the Upper West Manhattan church of Christ lectureship, and they went to several Bible studies in New Jersey with me. After a while, Jose lost interest, but Michael stayed consistent. I really like Michael. He's a good kid, but has a long way to go. He went to New Jersey camp but admitted to me that he was overwhelmed by all the spirituality. He felt that he didn't think he could do it. I'm trying to help him understand that the rest of the kids were just like him, but over time have grown into the strong servants they are today. I pray that Michael will endure. We've recently seen his brother Jose more. I'm studying with them both on Monday nights.

**Chris Santana:** Chris is a cousin to some of my faithful students here. He attended New Jersey camp twice two years ago. He attended church a little, but soon lost interest. Just before camp he responded to Roger and his cousin Carlos reaching out to him. At camp he became very spiritually motivated. He realized that he'd been wasting time and living in a way he shouldn't. Now he wants to change. He's very aware by the examples around him of how demanding the Christian lifestyle is, but

he has many people like Bill, Roger, and I to help. We have recently started studying on Tuesdays together. He has made a (non-monetary) bet with Roger that he'll study the whole Bible in one year. I'm going to start an Old Testament survey with him and try to help him meet that goal. I strongly feel that if Chris can maintain his motivation for several months that he will likely be our newest strong member. I'm praying for that to happen. The first time I studied, we had to study outside his apartment because his father that happened to be visiting that day "hates Christians". Chris will need many prayers as well.

**Melissa Severino:** Melissa is 16. She was introduced to the gospel about 3 years ago. Her mother was converted and began bringing her children. Her son Kelvin was baptized this past fall. She has been involved and interested in Christianity, but hasn't made a strong commitment yet. This past year of camp has helped her get her heart in the right place. She is finally in place where she desires to serve God. I think one reason why she has been receptive is because she's tired of the lifestyle and friendship the world has to offer. She compares that to the Christian lifestyle she's seen around her and realizes that's a better way. I pray that we can support and help her stay strong in Christ.

**Annie:** Annie is a woman that has recently started attending the Iglesia de Cristo on Sherman Ave. Roger has been studying with her. Recently she got baptized. She is going to be a very valuable servant for the church there. She also brings her three nieces Alicia, Christine, and Michelle. The youngest two girls have been very enthusiastic about church and I hope they continue to grow and become strong Christian women.

**New Jersey Camp:** Well...technically it was Pennsylvania camp this year because we changed campgrounds, but we're not ready to change the name yet. This was quite an eventful camp. The difference between this year and last year is insane. I can't believe the dramatic change of the spiritual climate of the young people in the area. Slowly and steadily the camp has been increasing in the spiritual focus. Last year's camp helped solidify the faith of many young people starting a chain of spiritual mindedness that's led the Christians to be what they are today. This year we walked in with high spiritual expectations. We entered camp with great spiritual ambition. Caleb Churchill organized a time daily time of prayer. That really added to the spiritual environment. Many of the kids who have grown since last year used camp to reach out and evangelize to the weaker Christians.

Camp serves two purposes. One purpose is to create an environment for faithful Christians to grow together in a safe environment. The other is to intensely evangelize to campers that aren't yet Christians. Surrounding kids with a majority of faithful Christians their age is a very effective way to help them be more receptive to the gospel. Some kids in our area that have now become more concerned about serving God are: Chris Santana, Melissa Severino, Jabbes, Jeffrey, Madalyne, Daleska, Maribel, and Yareli. It's a little scary having all these new people added to the mix. We need wisdom and strength to lead them in Christ. I pray that their excitement lasts longer than the summer. We need to use the next two months to strengthen them while we can. They need to be pretty strong before school starts, otherwise they will lose interest.

This year of camp also gave me some extra time to work with one of my most special kids, Ibys. I met Ibys for the first time when he was assigned to my cabin two years ago. This was the third time I was his counselor. Ibys is now 12 and a handful to say the least. I don't know why I love him so much...well, yeah I do. Even though he drove me crazy and was the most challenging camper I ever

had, I could tell that he really wanted to please me and make me proud. This helped me give him the needed attention. This past year I've been spending a couple hours every Saturday with him. He's growing into a more mature and responsible young man. He has eons to grow, but I can't believe the progress we've made together. I wish I had more time to spend with him. I'm grateful for weeks like camp when I can really make a difference in his life. I hope that I can instill in Him a love for God. Otherwise it will all be pointless. Please pray for us both.

**Donations:** You may or may not already know about this. A brother in Christ living in California, Chris McCracken, watched the documentary that Trevor Wilson made about the work I'm involved in. Chris was moved and wanted to help. He asked if I needed monetary support. I said, "yes", and he responded with a proposition of receiving donations online via paypal. At first I was hesitant, but he reminded me that there are many materially blessed Christians that are always seeking for positive ways to use their blessings. That made sense to me. So here's what we came up with. I am now receiving online donations. The money will not be used for my own expenses though. Instead it will strictly be used for the evangelistic efforts here. Things like Bibles, travel expenses for spiritually purposed trips, certain needy Christians, etc. More details are available online. Already I've received funds and have used them to purchase twelve Bibles for some of our newer Bible students, and Bible study resource books for three of my more spiritually mature students (we are training them to teach). Please go to my site for more info: [www.HermanoTim.com](http://www.HermanoTim.com)

**Life for New Christians:** I'm beginning to understand and appreciate how hard it is for a new convert to stay faithful to Christ. They have to make such dramatic changes. It's just so hard. This hasn't been a discouragement, but it has been humbling and frightening at times. Lost sheep are the worst thing about our service to God. It's so hard to know about people that are falling back to sin, or people that could be Christians if circumstances were just a little different. Just imagine how sorrowful God is. Life is tough, but that just calls us to work harder. Please join your brothers and sisters in continued service and evangelism for our great and mighty God. He truly is loving and compassionate. I yearn every day to see Him. I yearn to no longer grieve Him. Keep fighting Christian family.

Tu Hermano,  
Tim Bunting