

Ministry Masquerades as Eatery

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some 22 years ago, the Rothmans discovered Calvary Chapel in Fort Lauderdale, a mega church of 20,000+ members, under the pastorate of Bob Coy. From the first meeting in a living room with four in attendance, the church is now the eighth largest in the country. “Pastor Bob has a unique teaching gift, making the Word of God come alive with practical applications for your life. His leadership was a turning point in our spiritual walk,” he said.

Upon moving to Western North Carolina, the Rothmans began attending Calvary Chapel of Asheville. “The pastor there, Billy Osigian, was ordained by Pastor Coy at the Fort Lauderdale church and sent to Asheville to start a new work,” Rothman noted. “We were thrilled to reunite with Calvary Chapel and astonished at how God planted us there.” In this setting, and with support from his church, Sam began a homeless ministry, first in Asheville then in Mitchell County. He worked with local non-profits to feed needy people in our area. “I loved working with the homeless and feeding the poor,” Sam said. “To this day I can walk the streets of Asheville and find friends I served in those early years. And I loved working with churches in Spruce Pine to help our neighbors needing assistance.”

From the Blue Ridge to the Guatemalan Mountains

Through their involvement with Calvary Chapel in Asheville, the Rothmans were led on a missions trip to Guatemala. It is a country of 14 million, more than half of whom are descendants of indigenous Mayan people. Agriculture remains a dominant force in the country and average annual income is less than \$5,000. Teary eyed, Sam began, “God ripped me wide open during my first mission to Guatemala.”

“I went as an architect, thinking I’d help redesign or improve critical facilities for the people. But I wasn’t prepared for the indescribable conditions I encountered at the hospitals and orphanages. Sadly I learned that these were not exceptions but the norm. I couldn’t believe how dilapidated and inadequate the appliances were at the orphanage; they needed a stove for heaven’s sake!” Rothman returned a changed man, his vision clear; his calling certain...God had a work for him and Claudia among the Mayan people in Guatemala.

Vine International Ministry

Working with other missions volunteers Rothman met Dennis and Cindy McCutcheon, a Black Mountain couple, who now serve at Vine International Ministries (www.vineinternational.com). The McCutcheons are fulltime missionaries to Guatemala who, like the Rothmans, call Calvary Chapel Asheville their church home.

Vine International ships medical equipment and needed medicines to less developed nations worldwide from the USA, all in hopes of helping others. Sam and Claudia were amazed and deeply touched by this outreach ministry. “I can’t tell you how blessed we were to come alongside a mission like Vine,” Sam said. The stories of physical illness and deformed people are legend in Guatemala. “For example, Dick Rutgers, another Vine missionary, is a legend among Guatemalans. He’s known to go into the rainforest searching out paraplegic kids who otherwise would be killed by the local Shaman,” he explained. Rutgers went to Guatemala eleven years ago on a week and a half wheelchair distribution trip. Today he’s never left and builds customized wheelchairs for the children giving them limited mobility. Asked how he stays positive in the face of such depravity Rutgers replied, “You let it break your heart, you shed a few tears, then you get back to work, and you do something about it.” Rothman says, “This man is a real-time saint, one to whom God has given a special anointing.”

Dennis McCutcheon, a former physician’s assistant, first entered the mission field on a mercy trip to Paraguay. Shortly afterward he surrendered his life to Christ. Now he, and wife Cindy, function as master choreographers for 120 evangelical, Christian medical facilities in Guatemala. Dennis explained, “We are the logistics people, the ones who communicate our needs back to the States, prepare the mountains of paperwork required to receive supplies, track distribution, and receive and warehouse the incoming materials. There are many opportunities for medical materials to be diverted to the wrong people, for wrong purposes. Our role is to make certain everything ends up in the hands of the right people, efficiently and quickly.”



Volunteers construct a make-shift surgical room at Christian hospital



McCutcheons and her missionaries celebrate Christmas with orphans



Vine International provides wheelchairs for Guatemala's kids

Economy Nearly Terminates Ministry

The worldwide economic downturn has taken a serious toll on non-profit/charitable organizations everywhere; charitable giving has plummeted every year since 2008. Accordingly, the McCutcheon’s found their ministry in peril due to lack of funds. But God raised up Sam and Claudia Rothman for a time such as this. ...”and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?” Esther 4:14b. Matthew Henry, respected British Bible scholar and commentator, said it best about this Scripture passage, “We should, every one, consider for what end God has put us in the place where we are, and study to answer that end: and take care that we do not let it slip.” The Rothmans seized their moment and took action to do God’s bidding.

“The Lord touched our hearts for the Mayan people, and we’ve seen the impact of poor nutrition and inadequate medical care. We know that if it weren’t for believers like Dennis and Cindy McCutcheon there would be little hope,” Rothman said.

So the couple devised a scheme to purchase local products, such items as handbags, scarves, belts, jewelry, etc. and resell them in the USA. Under the auspices of Dancing Leaf Mountain Imports the Rothmans donate profits to Vine International to support the McCutcheons’ ministry. Sam explained, “I could fill pages with stories of how God brought us to this point – from the miraculous way we came to acquire this property to the way He provided a six burner stove and double sink for the orphanage. I’m telling you, God cares about the little things too! This has been an incredible display of His love for all people and we are blessed to be His instruments in whatever ways He directs us. I know this, NOTHING happens by accident when God makes a plan... He will succeed every time. And it’s ALL His...nothing belongs to me, to my wife; to my daughter...it’s His. The question is whether we’ll be willing to follow Him and be a part of a wonderful work!”



Mayan women and child at Guatemala market



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