



South America Mission

Redeemed Lives, Beautiful Churches, Transformed Communities...

...I was moved to tears by this brief summarization of SAM's vision. How I long to see this vision dominate and characterize my life and ministry! Only people who are redeemed and know it can reach out in humility to abide with others in bodies of faith that beautifully portray and offer to a watching community the hope of transformation that reflects God's merciful call to reconciliation.

I see the seed of this dream in Luke 1:67-79 when Zechariah exclaims, "Blessed be ...God...for He has visited and redeemed His People...to show mercy...that we... might serve Him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him all our days. ..because of the tender mercy of our God whereby the sunrise shall visit us from on high to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace."

As you may imagine, after our team's "summer horribilis" our hearts are hungry for words like these. When a stone is tossed into a pond, it sinks with a relatively quiet splash, but the ripples affect a much broader area. After losing Dr. Miguel in the river, we suffered a post traumatic team crisis – we became more jumpy, irritable and sensitive. Conflicts appeared where they never had before. Other, unrelated issues came to light and further stressed our team. Only through

prayer and deliberate effort are we coming back together and picking up the pieces. We have spent the past few months regrouping, healing and planning for the future because we do believe in redeemed lives, beautiful churches and transformed communities. In light of that we continue to pursue our legal identity as a national foundation. We will keep you posted.

Meanwhile, we carry on with our regular ministry where, by God's grace, good things continue to happen. We have helped save some lives through surgery and medicine. A young man's eyesight was restored and a three-year-old boy can now walk because of orthopedic surgery. The Ayoré churches have held a number of well attended conferences promoting better understanding of the concept of a church association for fellowship and accountability. A three-day retreat for boys was a success. Bible studies continue to be taught. We partnered with others to



sponsor 10 couples and a single young man to attend a three-month Bible school module. You can see and read more about these things at the ministry website.

Please pray for two people who need expensive surgery that goes beyond the realm of our capabilities. Please pray, also, for the money needed to purchase a vehicle for the Surubi's ministry in the Ayoré villages and for a small boat to help with ministry on smaller rivers. There is a boat that would work for this and we are praying for God's guidance and provision in this issue. If you would like details about

these needs, please contact us through email or through the SAM home office.

I'm grateful for Luke, but I'm so glad the story doesn't end there. I'm glad the birth of Jesus is not an isolated event, but part of a grander plan that continues in Revelation 11:15 where "the kingdom of this world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever." All the crooked will be made straight, the broken restored and justice – tempered by mercy – will prevail.

Love, Toni for our team

***So Elated sings Zechariah and the Least Expected Places.
It's our Christmas song for this year. I recommend it.***

Jerusalem and the holy temple filled with smoke; Zechariah shuns the news from the angel of hope, stuck behind an incense cloud of religion and disappointment

Prophets and kings and poets can contribute their work just like eggs in a nest are alive with the promise of birth but the Lord of Creation will not be subjected to expectations

Elizabeth, barren, her knees black and dirty like coal; her consistent prayers float to the sky and revive her soul



God, we will wait though we don't understand **Your redemptive story**

**God keeps slipping out of underneath rocks
in alleys off the beaten path
Open both our eyes**