

David Balam's Testimony

The Lord has done wonderful things in my life.



As the youngest of eight children, I often had to accompany my parents as all of my older siblings were grown up and had left home. Our family was dedicated to the enslaving worship of false images, and my parents were often in charge of the religious ceremonies that were performed in town, an hour and a half walk from our village. Although I was fearful to see the blood covered, crucified

images there, I had to obey my parents and attend these religious festivities, where mostly everyone got drunk. When it was very late, we would begin the dark journey home. I was so afraid because my parents would be drunk, and they would pass out along the way before we got home.

One particular time stands out in my memory. We were halfway home when my parents fell to the ground, drunk. There were no lights on the small pathway. With great fear in my heart, I looked for someone to protect me. I could hear frightening sounds of animals. Snuggling under my drunken father's arms, I waited anxiously for sunrise.

These drunken orgies would often end in fights and I worried about my parents' safety. Sometimes someone would give me a place to spend the night when they found me crying by their side, but my parents would stay passed out on the street.

My fears traumatized me, and the need for something to fill my life became very urgent. I didn't know the Lord, but I often prayed to images my parents worshiped, saying, "I don't want to go to these festivities." The god of those images couldn't hear me, but the real God had compassion on me. One day in 2004 when I was in Grade 5, my parents decided to send me to an Impact Ministries school. This was a relief, a place to rid me of sadness, trauma, and fear. We worshiped the Lord, and the teachers encouraged us and spoke God's Word to us. Those words were for me, and I began to grow. In 2005 I accepted the Lord - the best thing to ever happen in my life!

God took away all my fears and negative thoughts, and because I was getting older I was no longer forced to attend the festivities.

Our Mission...

To train Guatemalans for leadership by teaching Biblical principles in such a way that they become integrated in their lives and effect spiritual change in their society, and to impact North American Christians for world missions.



I was the first in my family to accept Jesus, but two of my sisters have now accepted the Lord as well. My five brothers are still tied up by sin, and I pray that the Lord will rescue them. My parents are drawing closer to the Lord, and I have faith that they will leave the path they are following.

In 2012 after graduating, I became an Impact Ministries teacher. The Lord has blessed my life greatly and Impact Ministries brings me joy. Because of all the Lord has given to me, I dedicate my life to Him, serving young people who may be in challenging circumstances. My desire is to love them and be a blessing by giving them words of encouragement, reminding them that there is a God who is always with them. I am free and content in the Lord, serving in the church and giving my entire life to the Lord. I have a wonderful wife and we are expecting our first baby. Our hope is to be a family that gives glory and honour to the Lord.





Health in Action

Written by Dr. Steve Wat

In February, we launched the Salud en Acción (Health in Action) program at our Chicoy school. For over a year, the leadership has been dreaming about implementing this public health initiative. It is based on a template developed by various partners, including the WHO, in the SE Asian program named Fit for School, and was introduced to us by a medical doctor who serves in Tactic regularly. This program started in one town in the Philippines and then grew to involve the province, country, and even Cambodia, Laos, and Thailand!



It is an approach to change the health culture through teaching school children to brush their teeth and wash their hands. These endeavours are a normal part of our North American health culture. Wash your hands after using the bathroom, playing outside or sneezing, and before eating. Brush your teeth a couple times a day

and minimize sugar intake. Due to a lack of education, many of the poor in the developing world do not have these habits. The invisible world of germs is not something they know about or, if they know, it has not influenced behaviour change.

Using the authority of the school, the habit of hygiene is ingrained through a structured tooth-brushing and hand-washing program. Our hope is that these behaviours will become second nature. We expect that along with knowledge of germs and infectious disease transmission, healthy habits will grow and expand to

influence families. Southeast Asia reports that if done well, we can look forward to dramatic improvements such as a decrease in respiratory infections and time absent from school, by one third, along with a decrease in dental infections and diarrheal illnesses by one half. Incredible!! God let it be so for our kids!!

During our launch at the Chicoy school, in one of our poorest communities, the children were marching, singing, washing and brushing! What a joy to see the efforts of so many, including leadership, nurses, clinic manager, directors, principals and our worship leader (who wrote the march to the sinks jingle), come to fruition, with teachers and students taking ownership and believing in the vision. As many missionaries have experienced, any "North American" idea that is implemented with the local people without their buy in, is doomed to fail (a principle from the book, *When Helping Hurts*). The behaviour may be done enthusiastically while you're there, but often these initiatives fizzle out over time.

We soar with excitement at how the local leaders are FLYING with this vision, giving it their 110%. The teachers put up hand made posters and the students made a COLGATE costume, an enormous cardboard toothbrush and set of teeth. They dubbed the mascot, "Senor Colgate," – pronounced Kolgateh. Over sixty parents came and sang enthusiastically, listened, and started learning. The principal, Elmer, commented that he was excited for this program because he had many cavities and dental pain when he was young, and he hopes these children do not suffer as he did. Please pray for momentum and continued belief in this program by local leadership. Praise the Lord, and may His will be done!



Support a Class

Invitation to Support a Class

We invite you to become a partner in this exciting program by supporting a class at \$50/month. Please pray about how God would have you respond. We encourage you to share with others who may be interested in this opportunity. Thank you to all who are already supporting a class! Together, as we aim to have at least 10 supporters per class, we are making a difference!

To donate, go to www.impactministries.ca, and click on the donate tab, or fill out the enclosed remittance form and mail it to our office at the address provided. Thank you!

Through a generous donor, we are able to add an additional one-time amount of \$400 to our Support a Class program for 43 more people who sign up to be a monthly donor!

Nick and Jan Janzen, Winnipeg, Manitoba

My wife Jan and I were very excited to hear about the new Support A Class program with Impact Ministries. We immediately jumped at the opportunity and became the proud sponsors of an elementary class at the Vida Mocohan school. We learned that this community experiences much poverty, and that many children come from difficult family situations.

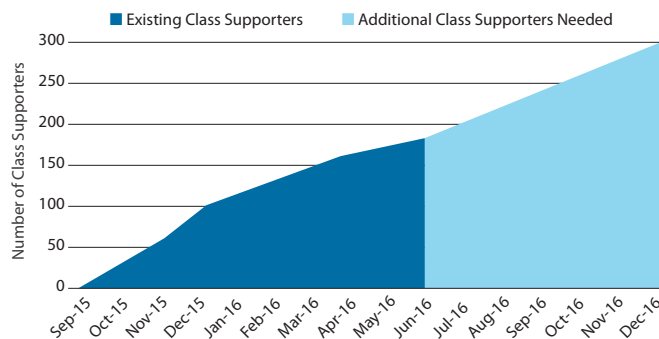


We were able to visit the Vida Mocohan school and meet our class during a recent trip to Guatemala. What an amazing experience! We witnessed first hand the beautiful work God is doing in the school. Students are learning to seek God, and there is a feeling of love and peace. They are also so thankful. We pray for them regularly, but this group of students has also committed to praying for us. What a feeling knowing that 25 children in Guatemala are remembering us in prayer!

It has been such a blessing to us to be a part of training these future leaders. We could not think of any better investment. We hope to be there when they graduate in 2028!

On our return to Canada, we made an easy decision to partner with a second class – the Class of 2029 in Chijacorral. It is so great to be able to invest in the lives of these young people and be a part of this Kingdom building ministry.

Growth in Class Supporters Since Sept 2015 & Goal for Dec 31, 2016



Paul and Jeanette Heyens, Airdrie, AB

For many years now we have been connected with Impact Ministries and have given our support. I have been to Guatemala twice and my first visit, five years ago with my daughter's grade 11 class, was eye opening and gratifying. Experiencing the passion of the Impact Ministries staff and the growth of the children, it was clear that this was foundational in transforming lives and growing future generations of Christians in Guatemala.

We have supported Christian education for two decades and have watched the fruit of that experience in the lives of our children and their families. This has given us a heart for those who have chosen to commit themselves to the vocation of teaching with the Bible as the foundation for learning.

In the 1500's Martin Luther said it best, "young people are the seed and the source of the church...for the sake of the church we must have and maintain Christian schools". When the opportunity surfaced for the "Support a Class program" within Impact Ministries it was a no-brainer for us to participate.

Early in 2016 I was able to visit my class in Chijacorral, along with my fellow team members. We were excited for the welcome and the hugs we received from the primary students and teachers but also were impressed on how familiar the classroom was – full of young eager minds, smiling, engaged students and staff in a calm learning environment.

Many of these students face personal and home life challenges that most of us in North America can't imagine. However, as a committed follower of Christ it was clear to me that these students were right where they were supposed to be and are indeed the "seed and source of the church" for future generations.

We have since signed up to sponsor two additional classes. My wife and I view this not as a donation but rather as an investment in an eternal portfolio. In the same way, we encourage you to invest in this portfolio by sponsoring a class (or 2 or 3 😊) with Impact Ministries and sow seeds for the future of these children.

Sincerely,

Paul & Jeanette Heyens



▲ Container Shipment

The container has arrived! Smiles abounded as it was unloaded on the Chisac property!

◀ Staff Housing

Future staff housing site on the Chisac property.

◀ Fountain of Life Children's Home

The principals of our schools gathered to pray in front of the baby home that is under construction.

2017 Team Openings

Is your church or school interested in sending a team to Tactic? We invite you to consider one of these timeslots for 2017.

- May 30 - June 9
- August 28 - Sept 7
- Sept 17 - Sept 27
- Sept 27 - Oct 7

We are pleased to announce our upcoming 2017 Family Trip and our Seniors Trip. We invite you to join!

- July 9 - July 19 (Family Trip)
- Sept 7 - Sept 17 (Seniors Trip)

We welcome medical and dental teams to come and serve in our clinic. In addition, a team of mechanics to service our vehicles is always a huge blessing. If you can help in these areas we would love to hear from you!

For more info please contact Shelly Goosen at teams@impactministries.ca

Container Shipment

In the fall of 2015 we started preparing for a container shipment from Vancouver to Guatemala. Many people gave generously, donating specific items that are hard to acquire in Guatemala. We are happy to say, the container has arrived in Tactic! Thank you to everyone who worked hard and donated to make this happen. A special thank you to the Houweling's!

Friends of Impact Events

October/November 2016

- Les Peters will be in Western Canada for our 2016 Friends of Impact Events!

- Please visit our website to find an event near you!! We hope to see you there!
<http://www.impactministries.ca/events/>

If you would like to schedule a time to meet with Les, please contact Mel Jackson, at friends@impactministries.ca

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