Xingu Mission (Xtreme Mercy)

December 2010

Cont. Training Leaders that Train Leaders

The students did workshops on Preaching/ Teaching, Worship, Children's Ministry, and Discipleship. It was wonderful to see these students blossom with someone putting some confidence in them and opening up space for them to work. They had opportunities to use their gifts and to pass on the things that they had learned. It was wonderful to see and to be a part of the experience. I listened and watched, marveling at the beauty of how God works.





The kitchen where all of the food was prepared for more than sixty people at each meal

It was good to see that the impact worked both ways. Those from the communities learned new things and were excited by their experience. The students stepped up and realized that God had pleasure in working in them and through them. It is a joy to see what God does when we allow space for Him to work! -- Bud Simon

Some of the group that was in one of the workshops

Merry CHRISTmas and have a happy New Year

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Missions involves huge amounts of time, energy and money. It requires many people to work, pray and give sacrificially. Many who invest will never see the people they are helping this side of heaven. Missions requires difficult family separation for long periods of time. Missions work is often hard, lonely, thankless and expensive.

With this in mind, let's remind ourselves of why we engage in this consuming activity:

- 1. Jesus commanded us to "Go into all the world and preach the gospel". Jesus said this gospel would be preached in all the world, and then the end will come.
- 2. God chose to use people, not angels, to be the primary messengers of His good news.
- 3. Missions gives us opportunities to invest the talents God has given us.
- 4. We often get to ask God to do the impossible, and then we get to wait and see what happens.
- 5. There is a great pleasure and satisfaction in doing what we were created to do.
- 6. We get to make an impact on the world.
- 7. God gets a good reputation because of our work. His Kingdom expands.



Xtreme Mercy Planting Churches and Training Leaders

Why Missions?

- 8. We get to solve interesting problems.
- 9. We get to be part of a group connected by a cause that is worth living for.
- 10. We are often appreciated. We give hope to those who have none.
- 11. We have a few years to invest as well as we can here on earth, and then eternity to live with the results of what happened here.
- 12. This is our small favor back to God, for His great favors and gifts to us.

I hope these reasons feel as real to you as they do to us.

Please ask God if there is any way you could get even more involved. Your donations, prayers and partnership enable us to plant churches and introduce hope in new regions. -- Rick Bergen





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A Boat Story

Forty-five people were traveling up the Xingu to a conference in Souzel when all of a sudden the boat begins to tremble fiercely while emitting unnerving kachunk, womp, kachunk noises. A short swim later suspicions are confirmed, the propeller lost a blade and the drive shaft is bent. Years ago this would mean a several hour wait



Marantha III docked for repairs

to flag down a boat and get towed to safety. Now, however, several anxious hands offer cell phones and a short while later the second mission boat glides into place to power the Maranata III through to Souzel. Several days later the MIII is tugged onto the beach by two log loaders. As I assess the work that needs done to make the vessel once again sea worthy I began to reflect on her nine year history and the changes our region has gone through. Brazil has always been a country of contrasts but the gap is widening. As the cities improve and technology and its high prices flood in, little changes in the life of the people who dwell along

the banks of the Amazon's thousands of tributaries. The changes seem ironic, a horse drawn cart with the driver talking on a cell phone, a boy lying in a hammock on a line boat with his leg extended to a handle which rotates the satellite dish adjusting the t.v. signal with each maneuver of the boat. Our purpose has remained the same but the chasm of ministry in town and on the river is as wide as the river itself. It is important that churches plant churches by training the local church and its leaders in a way that they are able to minister effectively in both environments. Porto de Moz is one of several towns in the Amazon basin that bridge the divide. It is a mix of opportunists that see potential in a growing community and river folks seeking to secure a better future for their children. The boat, which seems like a leviathan out of the water, has several people working eagerly to see the boat returned to it's former glory. There is Aderiu, quiet but always the servant ready to



Ney sharing the Word of God

pilot the boat wherever and whenever it is needed. Aneif, who builds and install water filters in remote communities, works tirelessly, anxious to get back to the communities where he holds services. Dinei, one of the local pastors on break from his job at the post office, shows up with a borrowed pressure washer. Finally Ney stops by to take a picture on his cell phone. Ney is occupied with the Praiao church that he now pastors with his wife Cheila but I know he can't wait to get out on the river, back to his roots. The thought crosses my mind--I guess God does know what He's doing, bringing all these people that love him and are passionate to see his church built. Maybe we are doing something right after all? Nah, it's just God's grace in action again. -- Richie Bouthillier



Aderiu piloting the Marantha III

Training Leaders That Train Leaders

This last weekend was an epiphany of sorts. Every month I lead a weekend long intensive and practicum for youth leaders from the churches in our region. The goal and vision is that a new generation will learn to love church planting in remote areas, will learn to reach effectively, will learn to evangelize, and will learn to lead.

This last weekend helped to realize that



The road less traveled

vision a little bit more. The students that have been attending the intensives this year were responsible for putting on a weekend training workshop in the interior region. People from the Assurini region came together from five different communities to learn to lead in their locality. There were about 30 people plus the 20 from our leadership training course. The student leaders all learned the meaning of being flexible and adaptable.



Church service in the evening. Lights are courteousy of a genset and headlights.