



CHRISTIAN REFORMED

WORLD
MISSIONS



Global Update

Winter 2011

CRWM Quarterly Highlights

In the past quarter, through the work of Christian Reformed World Missions and our partners:

- Over 5,000 people attended a classic car show evangelistic event in Tijuana, Mexico. Praise God that 150 people came to know Jesus Christ.
- The first module for a new teachers' training program for Christian teachers was created and is now ready for use.
- Sonoda Church of the Reformed Church in Japan participated in training on using Coffee Break as an outreach tool.
- 150 delegates from almost 50 denominations attended the Theological Education in Africa conference in Kenya.



Honest Questions

**names removed for security reasons*

Recently, I was sitting with "S" and his two friends drinking tea under a shade structure on a muddy street. "S" turned to me and asked: "Do you pray?"

I replied, "Yes I do, but since I follow the way of Jesus, I don't pray like you Muslims do."

He asked, "What's the difference between Mohammad's way and Jesus' way?"

"Followers of Mohammad grasp the idea of fearing and obeying God. That's absolutely correct, but it seems out of balance with what Jesus taught: that we are loved by God despite our natural tendency toward sin. We sin, but God still loves us, and we can love Him back."

My three new friends were paying close attention now, and didn't appear shocked at what I had just said. We'd just been talking about the reputation that Americans have for adultery and unfaithfulness in marriage. We had concluded that this wasn't just an American problem, but that people everywhere seemed to fail miserably in their struggle against sin.

"This is why God came to earth (our world) in the human form of Jesus to show us the right way to live and the right way to obey and love Him." Seeing that they hadn't shut me out yet, I used a word picture: ants.

"Imagine that we humans wanted to explain something to ants. There would be no better way to do it than to become like an ant."

"S" and his two friends seemed willing to think about this illustration. "S" told me he was a little troubled to have recently heard that some people think that Jesus was God's Son. "God is neither born nor does He give birth," is the standard Muslim comment to any reference to Jesus as the Son of God. He, not I, had brought the subject up, so I felt at ease responding to this potentially incendiary topic.

I said that I had an even more troubling idea

about Jesus: “Jesus referred to Himself, not only as God’s son, but as God. Since Jesus Himself claimed to be God, who am I to say it isn’t so - no matter how hard an idea it may be to accept.”

It has been my experience that if I get this far in a conversation about Jesus, the discussion soon ends awkwardly. I’ve proven myself a “pagan,” a non-Muslim, and there’s nothing more to say. But this time it didn’t end. “S” and his friends seemed to be asking questions sincerely – not just for the sake of argument. I marveled that our discussion had gone this far.

Once again “S” gave me the lead-in for a most important part of the Jesus story: “Some people say that Jesus was killed. How could God allow a prophet of Jesus’ stature to be killed by His enemies?”

I countered, “Doesn’t it make sense that this was part of the reason God came to our world? How else could our sins be paid for, unless He Himself took our punishment and rose again from the dead?”

I could tell that they had enough to think about this morning, but I could also tell that they weren’t rejecting the ideas as I would have expected them to. We pray that the Holy Spirit is working in them to prepare them to understand and believe.

Pray to the Lord of the Harvest

This January, join Christian Reformed Home Missions and Christian Reformed World Missions in their joint prayer initiative “Pray to the Lord of the Harvest.” Designed to encourage churches to pray for workers for the harvest, the campaign features a brochure with 28 days of prayer requests alternating between the two agencies. Visit www.crcna.org/LordofHarvest for a downloadable version of the brochure.

Prayer Ministry Trip to Nicaragua

In October a team of Americans and Canadians traveled to Nicaragua to minister with and among national church leaders through prayer. This trip is part of Prayer Missions International and Christian Reformed World Missions’ partnership to host North American prayer teams at CRCNA ministry locations. The Nicaragua prayer team spent a week meeting missionary families and learning about Nicaragua and the CRCNA’s work there. The group visited local pastors and their families, praying for them, their families, and their churches. They prayed over a young child suffering from lung problems, for a girl with badly burned feet, and for a pastor’s wife experiencing significant problems with one of her legs. They walked through the Nehemiah Center, praying for the people and agencies involved in it. Afterwards, a missionary reflecting back on the experience said, “They were incredible encouragers and left us feeling strengthened and protected . . . this sentiment was echoed by everyone that they interacted with.”

Service Opportunities

- **Long-term Career position:**
Recording studio director for overseeing the development of appropriate media programs for West Africa.
- **Teachers and Administrators:**
From grade school to grad school, share your gift of teaching overseas.
- **Volunteers:**
College lecturers, interns working with at-risk youth, English teachers, special education workers, and more are needed.

To learn more, get involved or apply, visit www.crwmm.org/serve

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