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January/February 2016

Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that thou hast heard from me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also. 2 Timothy 2:2

The task is enormous; the responsibility, daunting and humanly impossible. With God, however, all things are possible. By His grace, the divinely mandated work of going and making disciples and entrusting the Truth to faithful learners who will do the same, can and must be done. And God's purpose for missions, consequently, is fulfilled.

Christian, now a senior in high school, is an excellent example of this kind of work in a person's life. Christian has been raised by a single mother who has worked hard to provide for him. Five years ago, when he was still in junior high, David García, one of his school classmates, invited him to IBBM-Tepic. He was met at church by a caring group of followers of Jesus who reached out and shared God's love with him. Before long, he recognized his condition, separated from God by sin, and his desperate need for a Savior. Young Christian, who has never met his own biological father, was born into God's family. Right away he joined OANSA and has memorized



every single verse from every single handbook. He jumped at the opportunity to be discipled, one-on-one, and then to be set apart as a leader-in-training for OANSA. He is now the leader of his own group of students. He plays classical guitar with excellence and has become a member of the IBBM worship team. He has learned creatively to lead the OANSA teaching time, and has accepted the challenge to teach guitar and a weekly Bible study with a group of young men at a local drug rehab center. He never ever misses.



Christian has been instructed, discipled, and trained; he has quickly followed living examples of servants and leaders from the church, and he has become one. Christian is no less than a miraculous example of God's plan for action in missions and transforming lives! He is the kind of guy Kirt always looked for: F.A.T. (Faithful, Available and Teachable). Kirt would have loved Christian's

searching mind, humble heart, and his authentic spirit! He will be graduating high school in June, and with his outstanding record and GPA, he could easily get a scholarship in the university degree program of his choice. Nevertheless, Christian has concluded that just anybody can have a career; he wants to give his life to serve wherever God places him, and he prefers a needy foreign country. He has jumped through the unnerving hoops, especially challenging for a teenaged young man, of obtaining a passport and US visa, as well as application, interviews, and acceptance to the Rio Grande Bible Institute in Edinburg, TX. He also applied for and has been awarded this coming year's Kirt Mellberg Memorial Scholarship. By no means will the scholarship cover all of his school expenses, but he is determined to work hard, and he's convinced God will provide for His calling. Please pray that this will serve as another tool in the hand of God for *committing His Truth to a faithful follower, who shall be able to teach others also.*



Though it was 40 years ago last December that Kirt and I were commissioned and sent to Mexico, it seems like just yesterday that God began that process in Tepic of *committing His Truth to the faithful young men and women* who one day would teach others also. For Pastor Martín, that “yesterday” began more than 30 years ago, and the biblically assigned task has now gone full-circle as he and his wife, Erén, accompanied me to Phoenix last week to keynote the 2016 annual missions conference at Kirt's and my sending church, North Village Baptist. Martín and Erén did an excellent job of

portraying the process of missions involvement in their lives: God's invitation to participate in His race, their training, preparation, discipline, the cloud of witnesses, and ever keeping their eyes on the goal as they *press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus*. Finally, empowered by God's grace, they have learned by experience to take care to fulfill His directive for the Church to be about the business of training and planning for the hand-off of the still-burning torch to the next generation of impassioned, devoted athletes.



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All because of Jesus and in His love,

Debbie

View assorted digital pictures of Christian in action and the NVBC conference with Martín and Erén here:
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/debbiemellberg/collections/72157665290907896/>