

Livestock. The gift that keeps on giving.

Not many of you know that I am the proud owner of not one, but *two* cows. Several years ago while I was visiting in one of my favorite villages, the man of the house told me that he was going to give me a recently born calf that had lost its mother. I thought he was joking and I laughed it off, but from that day forward they began calling the cow “Michelita” (little Michelle). Well, Michelita has now grown up and just gave birth to a little female calf. They called me from the village and told me that I was a grandmother: my cow had had a baby. They wanted to know what I wanted to do with it.

Umm, what do you mean?

Well, it's your cow. Do you want us to raise it, sell it, slaughter it?

I insisted that it wasn't really my cow. And they insisted even harder that it really *was* my cow. They had given it to me as a gift.

So I now have 2 cows. They say if I sell them I can make about \$500USD each. So this is quite a valuable gift I have received from this rural Honduran family.

I once was given a chicken...well, almost. I was in another rural village and a girl that I had helped get medicine for her epilepsy wanted to give me a chicken to take back to my family in the United States. As the girl was handing me the live bird, her sister came up and said to her, “they don't have chickens in the United States.” She looked at me and I decided to agree with the sister: “she's right. I can't take a chicken back with me.” She looked so deflated that I wish I would have just taken the chicken and let it go free somewhere.

Hondurans are very generous people. Though they are poor, you can almost never go visiting in the villages and leave empty handed. I always go away with something: carrots, oranges, onions, bananas, or any number of fresh vegetables, fruit...or livestock. They always want to bless you with something. I learned long ago that it is necessary to accept the gifts. I always leave feeling humbled and unworthy of such generosity.

Generosity is something of the heart, not the wallet (though it often touches that as well). May God make me a person of such generosity.

Well, the coming of June usually marks the beginning of a very busy summer season for me, though this year the craziness doesn't start until July. I will be hosting 2 short term teams in July to work on the Baptist camp facilities and potentially another one in August. We are praying that we can get the cement floor laid in the huge multi-purpose building and for the resources to be able to prep and put up the roof on the 2nd dorm.

Our 8th Annual National Youth Conference will be held in July as well, though I won't be able to attend this year due to a short term team conflict. This should be interesting as it forces my other youth leaders to step up. I have no doubt of their capability. We are going to be training the youth in **personal evangelism** this year and then sending them out on outreaches into the mountains of La Esperanza in 3 different teams. I'm super excited about this as it's different from anything we've ever done in the past. We are really trying to take the kids to the next level in terms of their own discipleship. I have a meeting tomorrow with youth leaders from different parts of the country to make sure everyone is on the same page and are fulfilling their respective

duties. Some of them will hear for the first time tomorrow that I won't be going so I am praying they will rally together to take leadership of this big event. We are really praying that God will do mighty things in this youth conference.

I've done a couple of training sessions on evangelism over the last couple months so it seems to be a theme, not just for the youth conference, but in general these days.

I've also been learning more about spiritual warfare recently. A friend of mine was called to the home of a 15 year old girl who was being obviously oppressed by demons. She would scream, and say that they were biting her, burning her skin, choking her, etc. I was asked to step into the situation, but thankfully most of the hard work of prayer and fasting had been done before I got there. I spent about 3 hours talking to the girl and she was fine while I talked with her. We were able to pray together and when I left she was at peace. But I have been pretty perplexed about this ever since then, feeling like there were a number of pieces missing. Her mom called me yesterday because the girl wanted to talk to me again. They ended up coming to my house for a couple hours and I finally felt like God opened a few things up to me as I just kept begging Him for wisdom (James 1:5). It really is amazing how God does things, the wisdom He gives, the way He speaks, and just the way He uses different people and their life experiences to be able to speak into the lives of others. Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God!

A number of years ago, I felt like the Lord wanted to train me in these things and, though it isn't a ministry many desire to have, there is a real need for it. Because at the end of the day, isn't our desire to see people free in Christ?!

Over the next couple months will you please be praying for the following things with me:

- 1) for the freedom and salvation of Honduras
- 2) that my eyes would be fixed on Christ
- 3) that I would daily walk in the Spirit
- 4) that I would have deeper knowledge, stronger love & quicker obedience
- 5) for the upcoming Short-Term Teams (July 9-18, July 27-Aug. 6, and maybe Aug. 9-13)
- 6) for the construction on the Baptist camp facility
- 7) for the National Youth Conference (July 9-11)
- 8) for Campamento Prepace (the camp for kids with Cerebral Palsy, July 16-17)

Thank you all for your prayers and generosity towards me. I am forever thankful.

Michelle