

# The Bjorgens



In Belize

## Change like the weather

One thing we have observed by living near the sea is that weather is more predictable than living inland like we did in the States. If the breeze is coming from the back we can expect a cool breeze that comes from the mountains. If the breeze blows from the front, we can expect a warm breeze. We can tell when it will rain hard or soft, and usually can tell if the rain will be all day or just a squall blowing through. What we can't tell is when it will change. Seemingly in an instant a hard breeze will blow and it will turn from rainy to sunny, or from violent to still. We cannot predict when the changes will come, but come they will.



This newsletter is long overdue. Change is the culprit. A week before Christmas my Abuelito suddenly passed away. Change. A week after Christmas we moved to the village. Change. A month after moving we became more discipleship centered in our ministry. Change. Now a third child has been added to the family. Change. The Lord is teaching us to weather these changes with grace. It is not very easy to have grace in every situation especially when dealing with three little ones, a different ministry and a house to take care of. God has given us so much grace this past few months, if it were not for Him nothing would be possible.

The Lord has been blessing our new discipleship ministry. We felt that there was a deep need to come alongside the leaders of the church and some new believers and meet with them and talk to them about life in general and about what it is to have Christ in our lives daily. We are praising God for this ministry because we feel it is just what God called us to do.

Our lives sometimes change gradually and at other times suddenly. Most assuredly when you walk with the Lord change will come, but He will give you the grace to stand firm. He allows that change to prune us and refine us, and that is our desire, to be more like Him.

**Welcome Malachi!**  
*Malachi Daniel Bjorgen was born on May 4th via c-section. Just minutes after his birth he was discovered to have congenital Pneumonia.*  
*We never gave a thought to having a complication with one of our babies at birth. Both deliveries and babies before had been so healthy. The Lord chose to put us through this so HIS NAME WOULD BE GLORIFIED!*  
*All of the doctors and nurses proclaimed what a miracle it was that he survived. We were able to give the praise and the glory back to the Lord. We told them that we knew why He spared our sons life, because so many people were praying. It was amazing to go on Facebook daily and see the encouraging posts to us from our friends and friends of friends.*  
*Malachi's name means "Messenger of God" and we believe that he has already sent the message from God that He is alive and active, and hears the prayers of His people. God has revealed himself to us in so many ways this term but I think the most special way was us seeing a miracle in action; His hand ordering every step of our precious son's birth.*



# Tough questions facing missionaries

I wanted to write something about poverty in this newsletter, but in the process of figuring out where to start, another question came to mind that I thought was important to cover first. So my thoughts about poverty will wait until the next newsletter. So onto our question for this newsletter:

## **What is the balance between evangelism and social concern in the mission?**

The great commandment and the great commission – these two passages of scripture speak volumes to how our lives should be lived on a practical level. But where do we find the balance between loving our neighbor and spreading the good news? Surely these things can be out of balance. Christ came to "preach good news to the poor...proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to realize the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." (Luke 4:17-21) I could easily spend all of my time in Gales Point fighting poverty; social injustice; physical, emotional, psychological, verbal and sexual abuse; crime; drugs and disease just to name a few things. Even if I was to have some success in all these areas, but I was not adding souls to the kingdom by evangelism and discipleship, would not my time here be a failure?

On the other hand, focusing on simply spreading the gospel in an attempt to save men's souls, while ignoring their physical and emotional health is equally unbalanced. Many North American church's strategies have been skewed in this direction since the late nineteenth century. "Many missionaries have focused narrowly on evangelism to save people's souls but have neglected to 'make disciples of all nations.' Converts need to be trained in a biblical worldview that understands the implications of Christ's lordship for all of life and that needs to answer the question: If Christ is Lord of all, how do we do farming, business, government, family, art, etc., to the glory of God?" [When Helping Hurts – Corbett & Fikkert p 47]

While we must remember that the primary goal is to seek and to save the lost (Luke 19:10), we must also remember that Christ came to reconcile all creation to him ( Col 1:15-20) and that the Kingdom of the Messiah is both now and in the future. The Kingdom is demonstrated as we live our lives - both proclaiming the gospel (Rom 10:15) and acting justly, loving mercy, and caring for the poor (Micah 6:8, I John 3:16-18).

The conclusion of the matter is that I can shout the gospel from the rooftops with the utmost fervor and the greatest and most noble intentions, but without demonstrated love it is nothing but noise (I Cor 13:1-3). Evangelism without social concern demonstrates a "faith" that truly is dead (James 2:15-17). *Thoughts? Join the discussion at <http://thebjorgens.net/topics/tough-questions> .*

## **Pray with us:**

\*Malachi, that he will continue to be in good health.

\*The eight individuals we are discipling weekly.

\*Ellis and Evangeline as they adjust once school begins.

\*For us to daily see and recognize God's Grace in our lives.