

# Guatemala

My first trip to Guatemala happened in September of 2013. Katherine, the boys, and I had just moved to Ohio after living in Mexico for about 4 years. We were living right outside of Cleveland and working with some friends at their church. We were serving as missions leaders and getting the members involved in all kinds of local mission activities.

One day I decided to buy a plane ticket to Guatemala. I had never been before and I had no plan. I was just going to show up in a new country and see what would happen. I told my friend, who was the pastor of the church. He said he wanted to go with me so he bought a ticket. Then, three other men from the church bought a ticket. Lastly, my brother bought a ticket to go with us.

We landed in Guatemala City and were given a place to stay by a family whose sister had actually gone to church with us in Calhoun. We stayed with them for a few days and had all kinds of adventures. The first night we were there, they needed to borrow beds for us. So we rode around town in the bed of a tiny pick-up truck borrowing mattresses from other people. We were flying around curves, up and down hills, holding on to the mattresses and trying not to fly out of the truck.

While we were there we met Dr. Lucy. She lives there in that same neighborhood, but she takes a bus to a small town in the mountains one hour away every day. There, she runs a clinic for families with malnourished children. We got to visit the clinic and hear and see her heart for those people. At that time she was trying to build a kitchen so that they could prepare the food in a separate location from the dirty clothes. The mayor of the town told us that they could provide the man-power to build it, but could not provide the money for the materials. He then treated to the best Chinese food I have ever eaten at a local restaurant.

Our group then got a ride to Antigua. We stayed there for a couple of days and enjoyed the open markets and all the history and culture. From there we went up to Lake Atitlan. We found a place that let us put up our hammocks and camp out. The lake is surrounded by three volcanoes and has no outlet. The towns around the lake are named after the apostles and each have a certain color they wear that represents the town. We traveled by boat around to the different towns and saw some of the beauty and destruction. The water continues to rise and take over homes, buildings, and roads.

On our last day, we rented bikes and kayaks before heading back to the town with our friends. We got to hang out and play games with the boys in the neighborhood. It is crazy to think that they are almost seven years older than when we first met them. I think about that first trip all the time. I have been back a few times with my dad, Katherine, and my boys. We were able to help Dr. Lucy build her kitchen, but we have not been to the clinic in a long time. We stay in touch with Naty and her family who we

stay with when we go. We have also made new friends who run a clinic and school in the mountains above Antigua.

We had planned on taking you to these places before all this craziness. As you watch the video, write down a few things that stick out to you. What would you like to see and do? What catches your attention the most?

Do some research about Lake Atitlan. What do you find interesting? Would you like to go?

Did you see the chicken buses in the video?? What about the tuk-tuks?? Would you want to ride in these?

One interesting thing about Guatemala is that many of them have another indigenous language that they speak at home with their families. What can you find out about these Mayan dialects?

Keywords and research possibilities:

Chicken bus	San Marco	Maya	Volcan de Fuego
Antigua	El Quetzal	Exchange rates	Pacaya
Volcan Atitlan	Mercado	Important Spanish phrases	Attractions?
Volcan San Pedro	Casillas	Lake Atitlan	Semana Santa
Volcan Toliman	Getting rides in Guatemala	Volcan de Agua	Alformbras

Wilderness Collective Questions: Theme: Companionship

41. What is the difference between a companion and a friend?
42. What compliment have you always wanted to hear?
43. Has traveling with someone ever changed your impression of them?
44. If the world could only keep one, which would you choose? Dogs or airplanes?
45. Are you lonely?

This week is Holy Week, or Semana Santa. All over the world people are remembering what happened between Jesus's entry into Jerusalem and his death and resurrection. Antigua, Guatemala has one of the biggest celebrations in the world. About a million people come from all over the world to observe and participate. People make huge alfombras and carry large floats around the city. This week read Luke, chapters 19-21. Jesus does a lot of teaching during this time. His favorite teaching method is using parables. Which parable did you connect with the most? What does it mean to you and how can it be applied today in your life?