

CROSSCOLLABORATION

mtw
Mission to the World

Monthly Newsletter - December 2012

BONHAM & KINES FAMILIES *Missionaries to Colombia*



Josh & Emily (Howton) Kines
Nate & Nikki (Travis) Bonham

Christmas Devotional

by Nate Bonham

The townhouse we rent is about a mile or so from the base of the Andes mountains. Well, actually, Bogotá is in a plateau of the Andes mountains, but a new ridge starts about a mile from our house. From our living room, we have an amazing view of these majestic peaks towering over the city. Pictures do not serve justice to its beauty. One thing that amazes me about these mountains is that several mornings each week, the mountains are hidden behind a thick fog. If you were to come to Bogotá on one of these mornings, you wouldn't even know these mountains exist. How can something so grand, so monumental, be covered by something as simple as water vapor?



Before coming on the mission field, I had heard that serving in missions is like putting miracle grow on your sin. The stresses and strains of serving the Lord in another culture exponentiates the sin in your own life. We have only been here a few months, but I have found that instead of being "miracle grow" for my sin, the mission field is more like a magnifying glass over the sin that was already present. Being in a place where I don't know anyone (besides MTW people), I can't talk to anyone, and nothing is familiar has revealed sin in my life that I have never seen before. I see my self-idolatry, my pride, my selfishness in my marriage, my negligence in shepherding my children, my apathy towards the pursuit of holiness, my lack of love towards God and others, and my utter complacency with all the above sins. It is as if the Lord has rolled back the dense fog that has covered my sin. He has opened my eyes to what has been there all along. Examining that reality now, I wonder how I could not see it before. How did I not know it was there? It is like those enormous mountains hidden by the morning mist.



This month, we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. In the Old Testament we find this verse: "The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined." (Isa. 9:2). Then in the New Testament, we read that Jesus is the fulfillment of that prophecy. It is Jesus Christ who brings light into our lives, exposing the dark and hidden places. He does not shine light upon our sin in order to shame us into despair. Rather, his light shines so that we may turn to him--so that we might see the path of righteousness. 1

John says, "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin."

I am sure I will soon find the mission field to also be "miracle grow" on my sin, but for now, the Lord is gracious to reveal the sin that is already there. This Christmas season, let us be thankful for a God who shapes and molds us with a firm but gentle hand. The view is more beautiful when the fog fades away.

What are we doing?

In a nutshell: Our two families will be serving as missionaries with [Mission to the World](http://www.MissiontotheWorld.org). We will be serving with the missionary team in Colombia for two years to be trained in language, culture, and cross-cultural ministry. After two years, we will move to a to-be-determined Latin-American country to plant churches where the gospel has not taken root.

Tax-deductible donations may be sent to:

Mission to the World
PO Box 116284
Lawrenceville, GA 30368

Note in the memo line:

10788 Bonham, 14043 Kines

For other ways to give, visit www.CrossCollaboration.org/partner-with-us/

Colombia Christmas Tradition:

Officially, Christmas begins on Dec. 7 when Colombian people celebrate Candle Day, an important festivity in which kids and adults join at night to light candles in the streets and windows. Offices and homes are decorated with lanterns and candles that welcome the holiday season. They are accompanied by fireworks.

Learn Spanish:

Feliz Navidad
Merry Christmas

Feliz Año Nuevo
Happy New Year

Christmas Devotional

by Josh Kines

"Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,
and they shall call his name Immanuel"

Matthew 1:23

For more information, visit www.CrossCollaboration.org

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Monthly Newsletter

BONHAM & KINES FAMILIES
Missionaries to Colombia



Christmas Devotional (continued)

by Josh Kines

The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

John 1:9-13

Immanuel...*God with Us*.... Every year at Christmas time I am struck by these profound words. Nothing evokes in my heart a greater sense of the grandeur and majesty of God than these words. Nothing speaks more practically to the issues of my daily life than these words. The *Word made flesh and dwelling among us* should captivate our hearts and draw us up to the heavens and at the same time ground us more decisively to the life that He has called us to live here on earth.

I find this truth all the more helpful this year as I reflect on the last three months of our time in Bogota. We are living among a people we do not know and can not communicate with at this point. We have left behind those whom we love dearly to live in a place that is very different from what we are used to. We have faced several obstacles as we have tried to get settled here as well as much sickness. So when I ask the question, *What are we doing here?*, in light of this Christmas season I am reminded that it was for the joy set before Him that Jesus endured the incarnation, the cross, and the resurrection. I am reminded that He made Himself nothing *so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father* (Phil 2:5-11).

There have been days (and there are sure to be many more) that we would prefer to be back home amidst the comfortable familiarity of friends and family. However, as I read the Gospels I am struck by Jesus' chief objective as He walked the earth. Again and again He said that he came to do the will of His Father in Heaven. Even in the garden at Gethsemane His wish was that the cup be passed from Him, *but not as I will but as you will*. Our joy this Christmas is that our hope is fixed on the joy set before us and that our lives are focused on *not my will but yours be done*!

Avoiding "Uncle Sam" & Our Mailing Address

For those who would like to make an "end-of-year" tax-deductible contribution, make checks payable to and mail to:
Mission to the World, PO Box 116284, Atlanta, GA 30368. Memo: Bonham (10788) and Kines (14043)

Personal gifts (not tax-deductible) may be mailed to:

For regular mail/envelopes: **Name | COL 13087 | PO Box 025720 | Miami, FL 33102-5720**

For packages: **Name | COL 13087 | 2250 NW 114th Ave Unit 1L | Miami, FL 33172-3652**

***IMPORTANT:** Address items to either **Nathan Bonham and/or Josh Kines**. Only items addressed to these names will be sent to us. If packages contains new packaged items, please attach a receipt to the outside of the package for customs. **We are so thankful for those who have sent letters and care packages! We can't tell you how encouraging that is!**

Prayer Requests

- Please pray for us over the Christmas season. Homesickness is very hard during this time of the year.
- Please continue to pray for our children. The anxieties and struggles of moving to a new culture come out in very different ways and at different times.
- Please pray for this season of language learning. Pray the Lord would give us the gift of the Spanish language and keep us focused and diligent in the process.