

MBMSI Year In Review - 2007

If you went to our web site to look at the year in review, I think that you would see an incredible story of God at work around the globe. New missionaries were trained. New teams were formed and went into the field. New church planting projects were started. New people and churches joined the vision of reaching the least reached. And among the least reached people groups, people found faith and new Christians were born. It is a wonderful story of God's faithfulness and of the plentiful harvest still to be reached.

From a personal perspective, I would have to describe 2007 as a year of learning. There were many lessons to learn from God - some were easier to learn than others. As an insight to this year, I share these 5 short lessons from the heart.

Noah

Has God ever given you a name? I had asked Him for one years ago, but it wasn't until joining MBMSI that I finally received a name - Noah. Why Noah? Good question. I asked it too. Other than being the first engineer in the bible, I wasn't sure why He picked this name until I read Genesis 5:29. He named him Noah and said, "He will comfort us in the labour and painful toil of our hands caused by the ground the Lord has cursed." Have you ever wondered why certain facts were even recorded in the bible, and then you learn how God uses all of the scriptures. My role as the Operation Officer is all about helping or comforting people in their labour. This is a big part of why I believe God called me to MBMSI. I definitely feel like we are building (or rebuilding) a huge boat and the rain definitely comes down in Abbotsford. In the end, I have found great peace in this name and knowing that God has prepared me (and my family) for such a task as this.

Transforming Lives in Mission

As I look back over 2007, it will be remembered for two significant events - our Staff Summit and the October Board meetings. The Staff Summit, at the end of August, was the culmination of months of work. In a staff of 37 people, we have made over 20 staff changes in the last 12 months. While it was all blessed, there was a lot of labour and painful toil involved. We are much stronger as a result of all the changes but it was an exhausting time. The Staff Summit was closely followed by our October Board of Directors meetings. From my perspective, this meeting would be one of the most significant in our history as we would be rebuilding the strategic plan for the missions agency. Again, it was an exhausting time but well worthwhile as many valuable things evolved from the meeting. A change of our mission statement from "holistic church planting that transforms communities" to "transforming lives in mission" was one of the significant decisions. (I also took on the interim role of Communications & Media this year as one of the staff changes.) Transforming the lives of people is really what MBMSI is all about. It starts with staff & missionaries and reaches out through our churches until it impacts the least reached people groups. As we are transformed by Jesus, we reach out and transform lives and communities in mission.

Remember me with favour O Lord.

These words come from the end of Nehemiah. God gave me a scripture, Nehemiah 13:14, when I "hit the wall" so to speak. This was not too long after the board meetings finished and just as I was supposed to be preparing to leave on a missions trip to Thailand. (I am grateful, on many accounts, that I was able to postpone the trip.) . Maybe you can call it a "Nehemiah moment". Having reached that point when you question whether any of it makes sense, God reminded me that it is not always about what we see in the world here and now. We can get very frustrated when our efforts seem to be in vain, especially if we look only with our worldly eyes. The eyes of our Father see a very different picture. He remembers us for what we have done for Him. So whether the walls are up or down, God remembers the rebuilding that we did. I find great peace in knowing that there is favour from the Lord for what we do for his house.

Redeemed.

At our 3 day Lead Team Summit in December, it was time for a gut check and heart check. Our team had all been working hard for over two years. We had been through a lot of rebuilding and reorganization. We had been in a "triage mode" for quite some time. The pace from the last two years did not seem sustainable into the future for any length of time. So what next? This was the question we came to ask God & each other. God was sending us clear signals to honour the Sabbath and rest. But how would we get there? Over 3 days, we prayed and we tried to understand how we could begin to manage a plan for the next 3-5 years. The Holy Spirit lead us and the process changed us. As a leadership team, we are being "transformed in mission". God is working in each of us as we bring our unique gifts together to act as one leadership body. In our closing prayer time, I know that I met God. And the word He gave me was REDEEMED. Jesus is my Redeemer. I am not who I was before because I am redeemed in Christ. The hours that I work will not change my standing. He loves me for who I am and not what I do. I will not be bound by works righteousness or by any cultural or world view. My Redeemer lives and he is Christ Jesus.

Remembering Our Faith

I recently lead one of the staff devotion times and shared with them the story of the standing stones from Joshua 4. I described how important this story was to our family as we left Ontario to come to BC (crossing our Jordan) to serve with MBMSI. I reminded people how we need to have markers in our life, just like the 12 stones the Israelites took from the river, to help us remember God's faithfulness. I summarized it this way, "Faith is choosing to remember God's faithfulness when others choose to forget". So that is my closing thought for you. Choose to remember all of God's faithfulness so that you will persevere in whatever circumstances you find yourself in this year and so that the joy of our Lord will be with you in all that you do for Him.

Thank you for continuing to pray for me and the ministry work being done through MBMSI. May God's blessings be upon you.

Your Servant in Christ,
J.P. Hayashida