

SOME THINGS NEVER CHANGE

Perhaps you have heard that said of someone or something that continues on, unaltered by time. I have often heard it used in a complaining tone in relation to a person whose lifestyle stubbornly remains unchanged regardless of the consequences to others. We all have those kinds of people in our lives. “If they would just change,” we think, “maybe they would be a better witness.” But regardless of how we think others should

change, we can all agree on one thing: there are things in our own lives and hearts that we wish we could change - bad habits, selfishness, pride, and more. Personal change seldom comes with ease. One writer states, “Change is the essence of life. Be willing to surrender what you are for what you could become!” Lasting personal change often comes at a cost, whether great or small.

In your mind’s eye picture a pair of railroad tracks. By standards set by the United States government many years ago, railroad tracks today are all equally spaced 56.5 inches apart. A person could board the train and travel all the

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COLEEN BARNHART WITH SOME YOUNG GIRLS IN INDIA

way from New York City to Los Angeles and the track width would still be exactly 56.5 inches apart. Railroad tracks are perfectly parallel, meaning the angle of each track in relation to the other will never change. Now take one of the rails and change the angle in relation to the other rail ever so slightly. From the point where you changed one track's angle onward, you have changed the width of the gap between the rails. The gap will no longer be the standard 56.5 inches. The further you follow the re-angled rails, the larger the gap between them will grow. How wide do you suppose the gap between the rails will be two miles from the starting point? Hundreds of feet. How big will that gap grow five hundred miles from the original starting point? Miles! Those two tracks started out in a very close proximity to each other, but a slight change in direction of one made a huge difference in location at the ending point.

Think of those two tracks as being two different lives. Each started out in a very similar place, but ended up miles apart because of a slight change in direction.



IGO STUDENTS AND TEACHERS WITH MIZO FRIENDS

Sometimes we doubt the seemingly small changes that God brings to pass in our lives, thinking that it will never really bring about lasting transformation. But He is the Author of our lives! He knows exactly what we need to bring Him the most honor and glory. God is not daunted by the task of transforming lives for His glory! Saying that He is capable of changing lives is like saying the most powerful John Deere tractor has sufficient strength to pull a toy wagon. That is an understatement. He is more than able, if we will let Him! "Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect" Romans 12:2 (NLT).

IGo seeks to cultivate situations where God can use the surrounding experiences and relationships to more effectively glorify His Name. IGo's Ministry Trips are a large part of the IGo experience. Dedicated, radiant students will bless and encourage native believers in places

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like Vietnam, India, Cambodia, Thailand, Laos, Malaysia, and China. However, more often than not, it is the students themselves who return from trips encouraged and impacted for life! During each ministry trip, the student will be presented with new perspectives on life that will confront them with choices. Choosing change is not always easy. But it is the hope of IGo that with (1) the Spirit of God leading in the surrendered life of the student, (2) the encouragement of faculty and other students, and (3) the experiences afforded through the travel, that the student will learn to make choices that allow God's name to receive greater glory through their lives.

God is calling young people today to minister to the world they live in! What better way to learn about and bless the world with the Gospel than to go out into it? If you are seeking change in your own heart for the glorification of God's Kingdom, consider personally seeking God about joining others like yourself at IGo. You will not regret it. "Change is the essence of life. Be willing to surrender what you are for what you could become!" -Ben Peters

BRONSON YODER WASHES A YOUNG GIRL'S HAIR IN CAMBODIA.



TESTIMONIES

IGo Ministry trips: Did they change my life? More than I can ever say in a brief paragraph! For me, it was getting out of my safe little comfort zone and gaining a new perspective of what life on earth is really about. It was experiencing the joy and passion that was so alive among many of the Asian Christians and so absent in many North-American Anabaptists. It was going into places where the gospel hadn't ever been taught. It was being with people that had absolutely nothing, yet showed unlimited hospitality to us. It was for the first time in my life being disappointed when I didn't get an opportunity to share my faith with someone I met. It was worshipping God with Christian brothers and sisters even though we couldn't speak each other's language. It was seeing and feeling the dead and empty hopelessness of idol worship. But most of all, it was being hit with the realization that God has blessed me so significantly for a reason and that I am responsible to do something with it.

-Gloria Martin

On my ministry trips into various Asian countries, God opened my eyes to certain things in the cultures that really gripped my heart. The native Christian's enthusiasm for God was one aspect that stands out to me. Most of the countries that we entered were against Christianity which made it dangerous for Christians to share their faith in God. It was a real blessing to see the native Christians in those countries verbally (boldly) proclaim their faith in Jesus Christ among other native non-believers.

The thought occurred to me, "Wow! If they can confidently share their faith in a closed-access country, then why do I face fear when going out to witness to people in my own home community (or abroad)?" Why should the thought of "What will they think of me?" even enter my mind? Something I've grown in and am still learning is to have the fear of the Lord hidden in my heart. When I have a healthy fear of God, the fear of man should not even faze me.

-Bronson Yoder



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MINISTRY TRIPS TAUGHT ME THAT I DREAM TOO SMALL

Aizawl, India - a beautiful land of rolling mountains and endless beauty that captured our attention as we gazed at the amazing creation of our God. In a remote little village way back in the mountains, God taught me many things about servanthood. The native people gave of their best to serve me, a truly wealthy person. I was humbled to walk alongside the native missionaries and to experience their passion and fervor for the lost souls of that village. They daily gave of themselves to serve in a Christ-like way. In the West we have biblical teachings that they know absolutely nothing about, and even though I've been blessed so richly with teaching, I was truly humbled and challenged at the dedication they had for the Lord. My life is forever touched by the experiences I had on my ministry trips throughout Asia.

-Deanne Weaver

Ministry trips taught me that I dream too small. To be quite honest with you, living as a missionary in some small village was never my dream. In fact, I was rather terrified that God would call me to some place I really didn't want to go! But somewhere in the course of trips to places like India and Laos all that changed. I met people whose lives seemed vastly different from mine, but at the core there was really no difference. I saw some of the most contented people in poor mountain villages, and I realized again that material wealth does so little to produce true happiness. I felt God's presence the same in India as I did back home in Ohio, and I realized something else: above all, I want to be where He is. If for me that means in a village with no running water, then I can go with joy because He will be there. My dream now is to be wherever He wants me to be, knowing that He will give courage and strength for every calling.

-LaRonda Schrock

