

Up The Down Stairs

Easter invites us to rise with Christ and to offer our lives to those who have lost hope in His mercy. We arise in hope and become messengers of hope. Our clarity is founded on the hard fact that every other security has failed us. Resurrection demands that we admit 'all our positions on life's battlefield are lost and we must vacate them' (Karl Barth). We stand in Christ alone. He shines gloriously upon us who are reduced to one thought and one prayer: 'Jesus.'

My joy lies in partnering with persons who, aware of their brokenness, allow Jesus to become their wholeness and who live that truth in love for all who seek Him. One such person is Miguel Ramos from Puerto Rico with whom we partner in Living Waters. I just returned from his island in order to immerse myself in the healing community Miguel has established there through God's mercy. Wow. Let me tell you about Miguel's rising out of surrender to Jesus.

I met Miguel 4 years ago at our first Living Waters Training in Mexico. He was a well-known actor—handsome and confident-- on his island of 4 million yet also reduced to Jesus in his homosexual struggle. He cried most of the training. Unable to fix himself, He entrusted himself to the One who could bring good out of his suffering. He wanted to serve others but knew he had to be reduced from the larger-than-life persona he had cultivated. He needed to get saved from himself, to come down to size in order to manifest Jesus.

God is good at that. Miguel returned annually to the training in Mexico with fresh need for healing and encouragement. He confessed church trouble and woman trouble and how God seemed to honor his efforts only to frustrate them. Miguel persevered. He knocked on new church doors and poured out 'living water' on any who were thirsty. Relational tensions rose and fell away until he landed in a church family that asked of him only that he become small and serve. He began to run our groups there and found deep common ground with the pastors and a vision of integrity: the express goal of that church is to impart wholeness to the inner man in order to reach the world with Jesus' transforming power. Miguel found 'home' where he is helping others to come home.

We visited Miguel last weekend in his church where we taught and healed. His people testified mightily of the hope they have found in Jesus' mercy. And Miguel found there a beautiful woman—Ruth-- with whom he is partnering in love and service. The high point of our time together? In the unexpected absence of a worship leader, Ruth picked up the microphone and began to lead us in a beautiful worship set; she was soon joined by Miguel who joined her in the most sumptuous of harmonies. Together, the two took us to heaven. Hail the fruit of surrender. Jesus opposes the proud but raises the humble (James 3:6). Gloriously.