

On December 29, our family along with Brian's sister's family (9 of us) caught a 5:45 a.m. flight for San Pedro Sula, Honduras. We spent an unforgettable week meeting the people and seeing the impact of HOPE Coffee!

"I'll never take another cup of coffee for granted," Brian's sister, Marcia, expressed to us as she picked handfuls of the red coffee "cherries" from the branches on that misty January day on top of a cloud enveloped mountain in Honduras. Fifteen of us had ridden up the winding dirt road in the double cab and bed of a 4x4 pickup truck to meet Juan and his family. They led us up the mountain path lined with coffee and banana trees and pointed to a narrow path leading up to the top of the mountain where the coffee needed to be picked that day. We tried our best to wedge our shoes into the steep muddy path and find enough leverage to climb up the pathway without damaging any of the rows of coffee plants that lined the mountainside. As we emerged at the top of the mountain, a foggy outline of a few eucalyptus trees were visible as they towered above the man-sized coffee trees.



Our family with Juan and his family

After about an hour of picking coffee, we slid our way down the slippery mountain path to compare our "harvest" with Juan's family's expertise. Needless to say, we would need years of practice to be able to pick enough coffee to survive. As we waited for the "coffee truck" to arrive to record their daily "harvest" and take it to the processing station, Juan shared with us how thankful he was for people buying his specialty grade coffee through the association of coffee farmers from which HOPE Coffee purchases their coffee beans. His coffee harvest provides for his wife and family as they live out their Christian faith in that small mountain community.

About an hour later, we had traveled down the mountain and up another to watch the coffee trucks arrive at the processing station. As the freshly picked coffee cherries were sorted, de-pulped, washed and then prepared for a couple days of drying on the concrete patio, we were able to observe the beginning of their coffee bean journey toward the cup of HOPE Coffee so many of you enjoy.

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"Our church has 16 families that we've been sharing the gospel with in the village by the river with big rocks. Let's go talk with them about their spiritual and physical needs." The small van bounced up and down as we drove along the rutted dirt road outside of Tela, Honduras. We stopped at several houses where Pastor Luis and his wife Wendi talked with the families, asked of their needs for shelter and/or water and listened to how engaged their families would be in the projects should the church be able to help them. We heard families share, "Our house has been flooded four times in the past eight years. Each time, we've had to rebuild it." "My husband is out looking for lunch" said one elderly lady as we stood in her mud-and-stick kitchen, the fire built with wet wood from the river filling it with smoke. "We use the water from the river when the city water isn't available."



The village where Luis and Wendi are working



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A few days later in Siguatepeque, we listened to Pastor Rigo share how free music lessons for kids and Bible teaching were building relationships with the parents of these kids in their community so that they can share the gospel. We watched church members shovel dry concrete mix into a wheel barrow to donate to the family across the street. The single mom needed the concrete to help in the burial of her only son, just 8 years old, who was killed the night before by a “run-away” truck.

As we ended our week in Honduras, we attended an outdoor worship service along with several new believers who came to trust Christ in the past few years because of the gospel being shared and demonstrated by Pastor Lenin and his wife through meeting some of the water and shelter needs of families in that village.

This is why we serve with HOPE Coffee – to help the Honduran church spread the gospel through servant-evangelism projects that meet the shelter and water needs of the poor. We lovingly encourage your church to follow the example of these Honduran churches and seek out servant-evangelism projects in your communities that share the gospel. Thank you for praying, for walking and for sharing in this ministry enterprise alongside us.

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