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WHERE

I BELONG!

part 1

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Young People Special Edition

Editor's note: The following testimonies came about in response to questions that were sent to a variety of young people in different areas and ministries. Some of these questions included, "What ministries have you enjoyed the most during your time in the Family?" "Have you ever been tempted to leave the Family, and if so, what made you decide to stay?" "Tell us about your life in the Family?" etc.

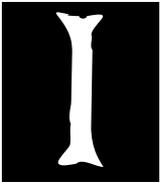
We have so many dedicated young people around the world, including young nationals and new disciples. Here are testimonies from a few who have made the commitment to be professional full-time disciples in the Family, and have decided that this is where they belong.

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My place as a missionary!

By Esther Claire (28), Taiwan



I firmly believe that the Lord has a plan for each of us, and as we follow Him, He will unfold that plan before our eyes. I've come to realize that sometimes His ways are not our ways, but they sure are not past finding out.

I was born in Barcelona, Spain.

My dear parents are Michael and Rose, faithful missionaries presently living in North Africa with my four younger brothers. I am a Capricorn and single. I joined the CM Family with my mom when I was 11, so I guess I am a national-SGA of sorts, if such a category exists, ha!

During most of my preteen and teen years I was involved in childcare and outreach in the European countries that I lived in. I spent one year in Pakistan, and some time in Canada and the U.S.

When I was 13, I attended the SATTC (South American Teen Training Camp) of '87 held in Lima, Peru. As the month-long camp drew to an end, I remember solemnly pledging my allegiance to the Lord and the Family. Alongside dozens of other teens I marched to "The Battle Hymn of the Revolution," singing it with all my heart.

It was there and then that I decided that I was going to be a missionary, no matter what it took. I would, by His grace, live and die for the peo-

ple of the country that the Lord would send me to.—That would be my token of love to Jesus!

I was eager to find out when and where this desire would come to fruition. It would still be some years before the Lord permitted me to launch out on my own, as I still had much to learn and a long list of NWOs that needed attention, ha!

When I first arrived in Russia, I honestly thought that Russia was my "destiny"—the place where I would live to see the Lord's second return. But as it turned out, He later called me to China. And it didn't stop there.

As hard as it was to leave my beloved Russia, a place where I had grown to love the dear people and precious Family, I never regretted following the Lord's seemingly crazy call to change fields. It was in China that I had a chance to understand

what it feels like to love a country and its people as if they were your own. I never felt that way about my own country of Spain. I think I am now half Chinese! ☺

Let me backtrack a bit. While still in China, I was asked by our PACRO COs to pray about moving to their CO base in Taiwan for a six-month period. It was to be an opportunity for me to work closely with them and get training as a VS, as well as in communications, office, and secretarial work. To be very honest, when it was first presented to me I didn't think it was such a hot idea. I was content in my situation and ministry in China. The thought of leaving all of that for even just six months was not a very appealing prospect.

Being a Capricorn with a Leo rising, I tend to not take kindly to sudden, unplanned changes. I prefer to calculate, evaluate all sides, allow the idea time to sink in, pray and re-pray, and get other people to pray and re-pray for me. I like to balance out all the pros and cons of a proposal before making a decision.

In the end, though, I finally prayed, "Lord, Your will be done. I don't think I am anyone great who deserves this kind of training or attention, especially as I am afraid of failing and letting people down. I'm not a confident person. I don't feel I'm exceptionally talented in any particular area ... *but* ... if this is what *You* want for me, and the next challenge You've got for my life, then I'll yield to it and go for it."

So I flew to Taiwan, where I've been for nearly a year now. You know how things go—six months turns into a year, a year turns into ... who knows!

Since being here, I've had the priceless blessing of getting to know three of our precious COs, Jeff, Sweetie, and Rachel. I can honestly say that

it's changed all my preconceived ideas of Family shepherds. My hat goes off to them! They give and give and give some more, while still remaining fun and cheerful to live and work with. They've become my dear friends and co-workers. I've learned so much from them and their sample of depending on the Lord and going to Him for the answers, as well as their genuine love and concern for the Family.

I think the board vision is the best thing that could have happened to help ease the load of our hard-working and dedicated COs, as from just helping them with communications, I have been amazed at the amount of messages they handle, P&Ps, the myriad details and projects, meetings, shepherding, coordinating, situations that they have to get involved in, ministries they oversee, etc.—not to mention taking care of their personal

● **"He told me specifically that by choosing to serve the Family missionaries, He would multiply my efforts many times, and cause much fruit to be borne."**

families, Homes, ministries, and on the list goes. I automatically absolved, forgave them, and forsook any bitterness I had for any delayed answers to messages I'd written them. Ha!

During the past year, I've had my share of trials and tests. I missed China so much, and soon realized that I was basically holding my breath until the six months were over so that I could be shipped back and things could go back to "normal." But the Lord's ways are not ours.

At the end of the six months I was asked to pray about staying for yet another six months to a year to continue to help out. I want to clarify here that at all times the COs were very sweet and understanding. Even though I ran to their room in tears many a time,

● **"I was going to be a missionary, no matter what it took."**

they always understood me and never made me feel bad for battling with these choices. I was always reminded that it was my choice and entirely up to me, and that they would be happy with whatever decision I made and would support me.

It was then that I found out that I was to be appointed by the COs as a member of the regional CGO board and as executive secretary for Rachel, the regional CGO board chairperson. Our region includes Taiwan, China (yeah!), Australia, New Zealand, and Tahiti. I was honored, yet baffled.

Frankly, I struggled in making my choice, simply because my heart was still in Mainland China while my body was in Taiwan. Kind of uncomfortable; I don't recommend it! I couldn't shake the feeling that my life's calling as a missionary was out there waiting for me, and so I was biding my time. Jeff shared something from his personal experience that helped to put things into perspective, and ultimately made my decision an easier process. He told me that when it really comes down to it, there are really only two jobs in the Family:

1) being a missionary on the field, and

2) helping the missionaries through the pubs, or in an administrative and shepherding capacity.

The bottom line is that witnessing and reaching the lost is what the Family is all about, but you've got to decide in your heart and seek the Lord as to *which* category you fall under. Once you find that out, give it your best shot. Wow! Simple truth and yet so deep!

I desperately sought the Lord and He told me specifically that by choosing to serve the Family missionaries (as in the second category), He would multiply my efforts many times, and cause much fruit to be borne—much more than I could ever bear alone out on the field.

So I finally yielded, and am so glad I did! I've been happy and fulfilled since that decision, and have quit struggling in my heart. I'm no longer torn between two worlds and ministries. Of course, I still love China dearly and it will always be in my heart. But now

I have a peace as to what the Lord has called me to do. I am persuaded that what I am doing now is the best way for me to help reach the field I love so dearly.

Meeting with and talking to the new Mainland Chinese and Taiwanese disciples has been such a thrill. I pray that the Lord will raise up many more in the months and years to come.

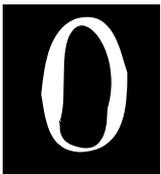
So far, my job on the board has been exciting and challenging—attending board meetings, working closely with Rachel and learning from her, handling board communications, praying about new outreach, follow-up, and *Activated* ideas and initiatives for our region. I've also been helping with the production of Chinese *Activated*, as well as attending to my responsibilities as the outreach teamworker and secretary for our Home, working together to care for our

Home's sheep, follow-up on my friends and sheep from China, going on road trips to China, helping with the city's youth club ministry, etc.

It truly is a wonderful life! And all because I finally said yes and yielded long enough to give our precious Lover a chance to work in my life. It's a pleasant road we walk, when we are hand in hand with Jesus!

Wherein does a calling lie?

By Isamu (22), Japan



Our Home is extremely busy; I'm sure that's the case most everywhere. It seems like it gets busier and busier, but I'm so thankful for the exciting ministries the Lord has blessed us with. However, I didn't always feel this way.

My parents are Marco and Dorcas, and I am the eldest in a family of 12. I was born and raised in the Family. I'm not married, but I do have a girlfriend. I live in a Home here in Tokyo with my family and other wonderful people.

My seventeenth year was thus far the most difficult, painful,

trial-filled year of my life. Many of the friends I'd grown up with left the Family, including my sister, who I was very close to.

It was around that time the "Call to the Rescue" GNs (MLs #3114-3115) came out. I knew the call was for me! I wanted to do what I could for my brothers and sisters and the other JETTs and kids in

the Home. So I quit going to night school in order to help. It was a challenge, to say the least!

Five to six days of the week I'd wake up at 6:30 AM to give the kids Word class before they went to school. (It was during the "learn the language" push a while back.) I was also with them after school. I was learning a lot about teaching, but it was also difficult, as I was the only teen. There were no other YAs or SGAs around, and it was a stricter situation. Many times I wanted to move to a different Home, but at the same time I knew that I was the only one who could really connect with and do something for the JETTs and kids in our Home. The Lord had told me to stay and stick it out a while longer, so I made a commitment to stay for another three months, till what would've been the end of the year.

It wasn't easy! I went through numerous trials, which I won't get into here. One thing that helped me through that time were prophecies that Robin, an FGA in our Home, got for me. She seemed to get them for me right at the time when I needed them, just when I felt like giving up. The prophecies said that there were big blessings around the corner if I'd just hold on. Shortly thereafter Robin's daughter, Tina, came back from her world travels and started helping out with the kids—a total lifesaver!

The Lord did little things like that to help me make it. He'd give me a little "way of escape" during those times when I'd think I couldn't last one more day. Three months passed, nothing happened, and another three months passed, but I continued to hang on to what He had said. And in my 18th year it all happened—everything the Lord promised me, and more!

Since I was 12 I had wanted to get my driver's license. That had been a big desire of my heart. I had also wanted a change in situation. I wanted to meet new people, live and work with other young people, have more fellowship, and do something new. And



Isamu

the Lord gave me all these desires of my heart!

I went to the States and was able to get my license. I stayed in a Home with a number of young people, where I had plenty of fellowship with other Homes. On my third day in the States, I was asked to go to Mexico to help set up for some meetings. When I got there I found out it was the Summit of 1998. I later got to meet King Peter! Another dream come true.

While in the States, I also went to the Rainbow Gathering and

witnessed to the hippies there. Then we went to the Grand Canyon on the way back—something that I'd never dreamed I'd do. All of the above happened in a stretch of three months.

I'm now 22. There are still trials and sacrifices, but I'm so thankful that I stuck it out! One of the ministries I'm involved in is the "True Colors Club." It's an English discussion club for university students. We started it about four years ago with a guy we met while out rollerblading. He looked like your regular skate freak, with his green hair and stunt skates. But he turned out to be the president of an English organization for universities in the Tokyo area. His hope was to start a club where students could exchange their true thoughts and ideas in English. So after praying about it, we started the club with him, holding weekly discussions at our Home. Over the years, through this ministry we've been able to witness to thousands of university students!

With this ministry we've won many souls, gotten numerous *Activated* subscribers, have people attending our Bible classes, and we also won a disciple. Presently we are on the brink of something real big, with numerous opportunities ahead to witness to hundreds of university students in one of the top universities in Japan.

We wouldn't have been able to do this without all the help we got along the way. Many FGAs and young people from near and far have helped us out in our witnessing to these students. A big thank-you to all of you!

Another thing I'm busy with these days is being a member of the East Japan JT board. We're only getting started, and it's totally new to all of us, so it's keeping us desperate. It's a new challenge, but I'm excited at all the possibilities.

If I've learned anything through all this it has been to trust and obey. I know that's been said so many times, but I've seen it become a reality in my life. No matter how difficult the situation is, if you give the Lord your all, regardless of the sacrifice and seeming hurt, the payback is always worthwhile. It makes you forget the trials, and you revel in the blessings instead!

Recently, I've been learning how building any kind of work takes time. It takes a lot of patience, especially here in Japan. It's fun and exciting to travel to the far ends of the earth, and at times I want to pack up and go to what I feel would be a "real" mission field. But no matter where I go, I know I'll have to be faithful and do the "plodding"—the everyday stuff—to accomplish something that's going to last. Here we've been faithfully planting the seeds, and I don't want to walk away right before we see all the results and fruits of our labors. I wouldn't want to miss the last big harvest that the Lord has promised us here!

Don't get me wrong. I am all for those who go to other mission fields, and I'll probably be taking some trips in the future, Lord willing. In short, though, if you're where the Lord wants you to be, no matter how difficult the situation is, or whether it's a foreign mission field situation or a home field situation, that's where the Lord can really bless you and where you'll be the happiest in the long run.

They can't stop our rain!

By the Cosquin Road Team, Argentina



We were a fairly young team with no more than average witnessing experience, in a country that is presently experiencing one of the biggest economic, political, and social crisis in its history. Our team consisted of Estrella (20, six months PG), Steve (20), Danny (19), Heidi (19), John (19), and Santi (17).

We landed at Cosquin, a town in the middle of green, forested hills, with a crystal clear river running through it [in northern Argentina, outside Cordoba]. The Home there, Martin and Angela, let us stay with them, and took good care of us during the time that we were there.

Though Cosquin is a small town, and almost deserted most of the year, in the summer they have two large three-day festivals: a folklore festival and a rock festival. We arrived right in the middle of the latter to find the city bursting with people from all over the country. Due to the political crisis, the town officials hadn't expected many people. But in spite of the situation, about 30,000 people made their way to Cosquin, the majority being backpackers, artisans, and university students. Many arrived with little or no money and a slim chance of seeing anyone play for the concert, but were content to simply be there to "absorb the energies."

We met many people who were on a pilgrimage of sorts, traveling around the country. While they find a measure of freedom and are friendly and spontaneous, you can tell that they're lonely, hungry (both physically and spiritually), and disillusioned. They would be considered the *desligados* (dropouts) of this time.

Even though we were only able to take full advantage of the last night of the festival, it was time enough to meet the people the Lord wanted us to meet. There was huge potential, and we knew the Lord would bring in the harvest.

The Lord told us to get out MO Letters in tract format, so we worked on condensing "Holy War," "Don Quixote," and "Are You a Sightseer ... or a Seer-Sighter?" for this trip. These Letters-turned-

into-tracts were a tremendous success! Sometimes we'd leave them with people who had struck us as goats, but when we'd see them later, we'd find them friendly, and sometimes even asking us for more lit to give to their buddies or promising to write us. The Words that work wonders!

Since most of the people we met live in different parts of the country, after the road trip we found e-mail to be the most effective way of keeping them hooked. When we met a potential sheep we made it a point to get their e-mail address.

After the festival there wasn't much going on in Cosquin, so we went on to Villa Carlos Paz, the most popular summer hangout in the region. The Lord supplied a hotel for a few days and then a camp site. At night the streets would fill up, making that our prime witnessing time.

We learned some valuable lessons on this trip about working together despite our varying personalities, and most importantly, hearing from the

Lord about everything. At times it was easy to ignore the spiritual side of things, but time and again the Lord would remind us of the importance of the Word, how drinking it in at every possible opportunity and hearing from Him together every day was the only way we'd survive. The Word came to life for us, and it was an excellent opportunity to practice using our newfound power in the keys.

After a while we began to understand the



Left to Right: Santi, Danny, Estrella, Heidi, Steve, and John

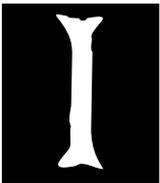
meaning of “instant witnessing.” There was hardly a person we’d talk to who we didn’t manage to witness to. That’s how we could tell it was entirely the Lord’s doing; there was always someone to witness and reach out to.

One man approached two of our team members who were having Word time in the park. He said he had noticed the *Daily Bread* they were reading, and was curious as to what it was. This man turned out to be a very unique person. He had been through everything, from the guerrilla movement on through every religion in the book. He spent about an hour with us, and in the end he told us how he felt that we were going to be the leaders of the future, and that there are no impossibilities for us.

There were dozens of little happenings like that—people the Lord put in our path, and the many witnessing opportunities that came of them. The Lord expanded our vision and faith, and gave us a glimpse as to the potential of this country. He also taught us how to overcome adverse circumstances. Surely the harvest is plenteous, but the laborers are few.

Knowing this is my place

By Nick (22), Japan



I like Japan! It’s the kind of place where you have to be fulfilled in what you’re doing; otherwise, you’ll end up doing nothing and feeling very dissatisfied with the country, the people, and even the Family.

I was born in Hawaii in 1980, but only lived there for a year. My family moved to Japan and I have been living here ever since.

Learning the language is one major hurdle to overcome. Actually, it’s more like trying to cross a mountain range, except that when you reach the top of the mountain you’re climbing, you find an even bigger

one in front of you. It’s a never-ending process, and one that takes a lot of time, willpower, and effort. You have to *want* to learn in order to get anywhere here.

I’ve always known that the Family was the place for me, and I’m trying my best to stay on board with all the new moves of the Spirit. I just made up my mind that I was going to stick it out. Being an Aries, I can



Nick

Status: Single with a girlfriend

Current ministries: carpentry, mechanics, wedding minister, computers, and driving

minister in a ceremony for Japanese who want to have a Western-style wedding). At first I didn't want to and told myself that I would never do it. But look at me now ... you never know till it happens. I feel fulfilled in this ministry, because every couple that I wed, I also get them saved and filled with the Holy Spirit as part of the ceremony. I'm so thankful that the Lord has given me a job where I have the opportunity to witness to every couple that I marry, and get paid for it at the same time. I also give a gift pack to every couple containing two *Activated* magazines, a booklet on marriage, and a *Glimpses of Heaven*.

be quite stubborn when it comes to things that I've made up my mind about.

Life in the Family is not always easy, but usually the things that you have to work the hardest for, pay off the best in the end, right? I know that it will definitely be worth it all when this life is over. Great things await us on the Other Side, and that is when life will *really* begin for us!

I've always enjoyed driving and working with vehicles. I've learned a lot from my dad who is also a mechanic, among other things. I've had a fascination for cars ever since I was a boy. My mom told me that she used to give me a toy car and I'd be happy with that one car all day long. Talk about extreme! Ha!

I officiated at my first wedding when I was 19, and I've been doing them ever since (being a

- **"Life in the Family is not always easy, but usually the things that you have to work the hardest for, pay off the best in the end."**
-

I started working with computers when I was 19. Before I got into it, I used to write over twenty people by snail mail. But the Lord did a miracle and supplied a computer for me to have and do mail with. It was then that I started getting interested in computers and working quite a bit with them. I'm no programmer or anything like that. I install and redo operating systems, change and work on hardware, fix simple problems, and basically take care of the computers.

Other than that, I help around the house with fix-it jobs, carpentry work, as well as a bit of electron-

ics. I really enjoy fixing things.

My hobbies are: driving, writing people, computers, photography, and just plain having fun!

Closing words: "Keep the faith!"

I made a commitment

By Noah (24, of Lily C.), Taiwan

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irstly, I'd like to say that the only reason I'm still here and going for the Lord is because of His mercy in my life. I feel so undeserving of the many blessings He has bestowed on me. I also give a lot of credit to a very loving mother, Tabitha, who single-handedly raised us five children in the Family. (My dad went to be with the Lord in a car accident when I was five.)

Serving the Lord can sometimes be a real challenge for me, but the more I do it, the more I love it. I wouldn't trade it for anything in the world!—Yes, even for being a famous Hollywood actor with a 20-million-dollar payroll! If there is anything I've learned, it's that "It's von ting yust to shtick."

Before, I used to wonder why I'd gotten stuck in Taiwan. But I never felt I had the faith or leading to go anywhere else. As I stuck it out, I found out that the rewards for hanging on are big and well worth it.

My commitment to serve the Lord in the Family was not a sudden, overnight change, but a gradual increase of faith and spiritual growth. About three years ago, around the time of Feast 1999, I wasn't doing so well. I was beset by many

vices, doubts, and serious thoughts of leaving the Family. Two of my brothers and sisters were also making decisions to leave the Family.

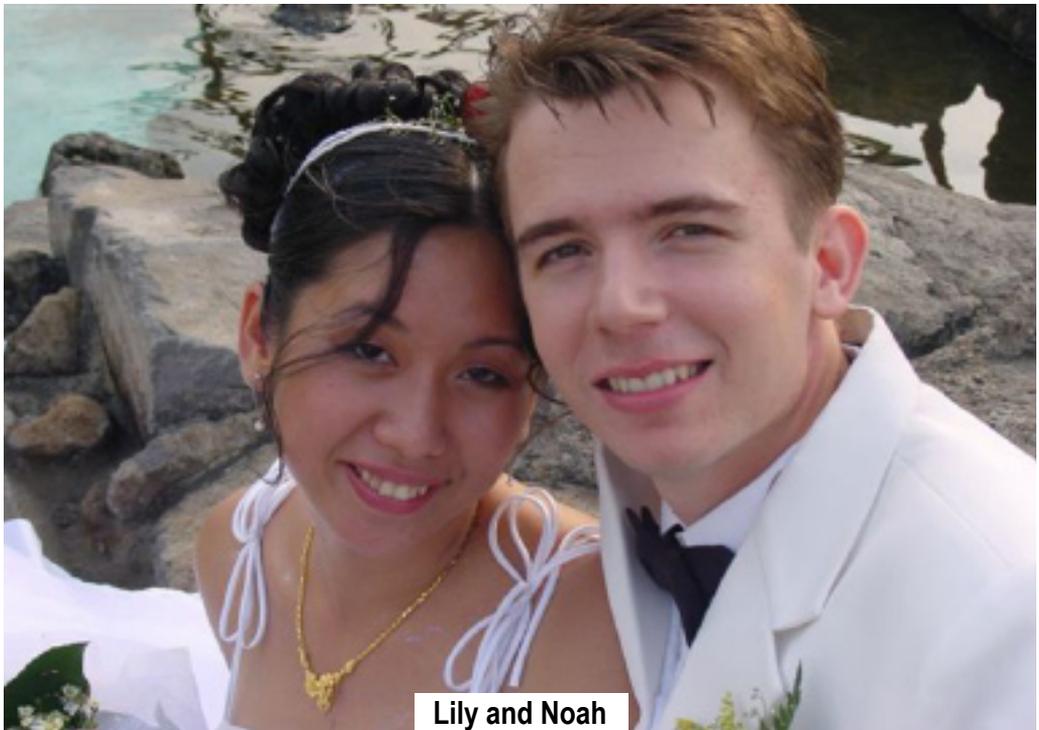
However, in my heart, despite the things I was battling, my prayer was, “I want to believe. Lord, help

them by sending a special angel, Lily, to encourage me (now my wife), who helped give me faith that the Lord could use me, and let me know that I wasn’t a loser.

Before Lily and I got together we went through a six-month probation and separation period before actually getting married, as we had committed a Charter infraction when she was still a babe. (Need I say more?) The Lord was giving me my heart’s desire in Lily, even though I kind of jumped the gun.

● **“In my heart, despite the things I was battling, my prayer was, ‘I want to believe. Lord, help my unbelief.’”**

my unbelief.” In one of the 1999 Feast GNs we were asked to make a list of things we wanted to commit to the Lord in prayer. Some of my prayer requests were that I wanted to win new disciples, find a mate, speak the language better, not be so shy, etc. The good news is that He answered my desperate prayers—one of



Lily and Noah

● **“My commitment to serve the Lord in the Family was not a sudden, overnight change but a gradual increase of faith and spiritual growth.”**

When thinking of my ministries in the Family I couldn't put my finger on any one thing and say, "That's my ministry." I'm living in a smaller Home with 14 members, so there's a need to help with many different things. I've become a "jack of all trades." I can do a little of just about everything, but not well enough to where someone would say, "Noah's really good at that." Besides some cooking, JJT, dumping trash, changing diapers, etc., the main ministry I'm involved with is our citywide youth club, which has been active for almost five years.

It's encouraging how the Lord has used our youth ministry to bring in four new disciples in the last two years. There are more catacombers who want to join. This has been the fruit of several Homes working together, sacrificing financially to pay the rent for our club, as well as investing time into this ministry.

I also work with a national brother on an inspiring prison ministry at the second largest prison in Taiwan—a ministry that's been going for well over five years. We sing and preach the Gospel to about 100 inmates twice a month. Even though about 95 percent of the inmates are Buddhist, they are always very enthusiastic about praying, singing songs about the Lord with us, and learning verses from the Bible.

Status: Married to Lily C. (Taiwanese new disciple) and we have a baby girl.

Place of residence: Taichung, Taiwan R.O.C. (I've been here for the last 12 and a half years.)

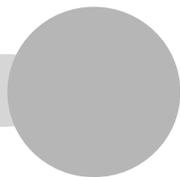
Sun sign: Pisces

I've always had a burden to learn Chinese, which I've been doing through personal study in my free time, going out witnessing, and teaching Bible classes. Marrying a Chinese girl also helped give me 24-hour practice! Even after 12 years of learning Chinese, I still have a desire to learn the language better, in order to express myself clearly. I guess the same could be said for my English, ha!

Presently I'm also helping on the National CGO Board, as the appointed but penniless "treasurer" of the board. This is real exciting! I sincerely feel that the board vision is going to be a big blessing for the field. It's also excellent leadership training. I pray that He can use us to help to reach the people here more.

In closing, I'd like to say to any young people who might be going through numerous trials and battles, and wondering about their future in the Family ... don't give up! If you just keep going, later down the road you'll be happy you did. You'll come through it all a winner for Jesus!

No longer a misfit



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ow time flies! Seems like such a short time ago that I was in my teens, looking forward to the Lord's imminent return and being happily settled in Space City no later than the age of 23.—Sound familiar, anyone? Well, time has passed, and I dare say that my outlook on life and my expectations have been modified. Here I am, with a quarter of a century behind me, looking forward to at least a few more years of service.

My name is Patience (a.k.a. Pat). I was born in Norway (land of the midnight sun, Vikings, goat cheese, smoked salmon, and such). My parents are Peter and Praise, formerly Gaius and Glory. I was born on August 3rd, 1976, and that makes me ... let me see ... that makes me ... GASP!—Almost 26 years old! Argh! Oh, and I'm single.

My family (consisting of my folks, two brothers, and one sister) moved to India when I was five. We spent six years there, followed by three years in Nepal, and then the last 12 years in Thailand. I won't get into too many details of my earlier years, although I could probably fill a book with the experiences we had as children.

Honestly, I never thought I would end up doing outreach as a ministry. I've been doing full-time outreach

By Patience (25), Thailand

for almost nine years now, from fundraising to CTPs, personal witnessing to follow-up, shop-to-shop, office-to-office, factory-to-factory, and house-to-house. I always wanted to be a secretary or a singer/performer. I had given no thought whatsoever to taking up the challenge of witnessing and fundraising as a full-time job. However, the Lord had His plans for my life, and without me totally realizing it, He sort of pushed me into finding my place.

When I first moved to a field Home, I was 17. I had been in a school situation basically since I was 12, and as such, I hadn't had much exposure to non-Family life or experience other than the usual ministries involved in running a Home of 100-plus people. I had done laundry for a spell, dabbled in childcare from babies to OCs, and engaged in my share of meal prep and

JJT (which at our Home was a full-time ministry in itself), but I never found my place. Then the BPs (Brave Pioneers) came into being, where we “older” young people were sent to field Homes to make room for the incoming JETTs and teens.

On the field I tried my hand at a number of different things, and like most young people, helped here and there as the need arose. Since there was a shortage of personnel at the time, I started to be an outreach partner quite frequently, where I got a bit of practice in outreach, tool distribution, and fundraising. Before long, a brother joined us from the States who was on his way to a nearby country, but wanted to spend some time in Thailand first. So we were partnered up and I was suddenly the team leader.

By this time I knew a bit of Thai, but was by no means fluent, and my dear partner spoke nary a

word, being new here. So it was a case of being pushed out of the nest and learning to fly, because there was no other option. As difficult as it was at first, it was probably the best thing that could have happened to me. It forced me to step out, develop my gifts, and get to know the field, because I didn’t have anyone else to fall back on. I was the one who spoke the language. I was the one with the

most experience, and as minimal as that experience was, I had to build on it and use what I knew. It wasn’t like all of a sudden I became a star outreach partner or tool shiner, but I do believe that the Lord allowed that situation to train me and give me the experience that I needed for the ministry that He had called me to.

Since then I’ve been doing outreach, follow-up, and fundraising full time, and although it took a while for me to realize and accept that this is my life’s



Patience

● **“I was a bit of a misfit ... until I realized that no matter what my gifts and talents, or lack of them, I could be a fruitful witness.”**

calling, and that I would probably never be a great singer or CO secretary, I know that I wouldn't be as happy or fulfilled doing anything else. I can see how the gifts and talents that the Lord blessed me with do help me a lot in my ministry, and looking back on the years that have passed, it's easier to see how it all makes sense.

I've had the privilege of working on this extremely receptive field for many years, of being part of a wonderfully productive and fruitful work, of meeting so many wonderful people that are now good friends and faithful supporters—which is probably the most fulfilling and rewarding part. And most recently I was asked to co-chair the national CGO board for our area, which is a totally new experience and one that is keeping me extremely desperate, ha!

I'm still learning new things every day and getting training from the Word and the more seasoned and experienced veterans of the field. But I've also found that there's a lot that I can give and pass on to those younger than me, and that many of the experiences I've had and the lessons I've learned along the way can be beneficial to others. I don't consider myself to be a great outreach worker or expert. I know I still have a lot to learn and I can't claim credit for any of the things I may have accomplished over the years. Nevertheless, I'm thankful that I've been counted worthy to be called to be an apostle and have had the privilege of serving on this wonderful field for so long.

To any of you who are looking for your place in the Family and don't seem to fit in anywhere:

Turn your eyes outward; look on the fields that are white and ready to harvest. That's the cool thing about being a witnesser—you don't have to be able to cook a gourmet meal; you don't have to be able to write computer programs; you don't have to be able to put in a new electrical system or fix the plumbing; you don't have to be a prolific writer, or even an eloquent speaker (in case you're wondering, I don't fall under any of the above categories, ha!). You just have to love the sheep and be willing to use what you do know of the Word (which is probably more than you realize) to feed those that you meet.

I was a bit of a misfit myself, a fish out of water, until I realized that no matter what my gifts and talents, or lack of them, I could be a fruitful witness and find fulfillment and joy in pouring out to others! And I've found that!

● **“I'm thankful that I've been counted worthy to be called to be an apostle.”**

Not as hard as I thought!

By Amy (15), Romania

M

Do you teach a Bible class? Not a subject often thought about by young people; at least, I never gave much thought to the subject. As a 15-year-old, the subject never crossed my mind. I always thought it was the job of an adult, a person who's had experience, someone who's done that type of thing before. My job was to get the person saved, then hand the person over to an experienced Bible teacher who could take over for me. Basically, I was passing the buck.

To tell you the truth, I was scared to death whenever my dad would bring up the subject of me giving a Bible class. I told him I didn't think I had what it took to be a Bible teacher (such as boldness or an extensive knowledge of the Bible), and I certainly was not a memory whiz.

He simply replied, "Don't you think we were scared when we first started? We didn't know that much. We just had to go out there and sock it to them."

Still a skeptic, I questioned him. "It couldn't be that easy, could it?"

"Tell me," he said, "what's so difficult about looking up a topic and some verses from the *Word Basics* and reading and discussing it with a sheep?"

Okay. I finally broke down and decided to give a Bible class to a few good friends.

The day arrived: my first Bible class. Yikes! I was super nervous! But hey, isn't it like that with a lot of things?

After putting up the white board and writing down the verses, the doubts came: *How do you think you'll do? Bad, of course! You're so young and inexperienced. And to top it off they're smart, older people and you're giving them a class. What if you can't answer their questions? What then?* Yup, all part of discouragement, and it almost worked on me, because I didn't think I could do it. But I thought to myself, *If I don't try, I'll never know.*

Just then my friends arrived. I shot up a quick prayer before the Bible class, a simple yet effective prayer that said it all: "Lord, give me courage!" And He did. Throughout the entire class I was pleasantly



Amy

surprised that once I started, everything came naturally.

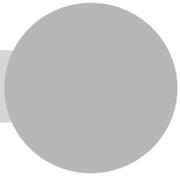
I found that you get to the point where you read and get full of your subject for fifteen minutes or so, and before you know it you've got yourself a good forty-five minute Bible class. The most important thing to remember is this: Don't get discouraged. I sometimes peek into one of my dad's Bible classes, and I think to myself, *Oh, man, I could never be that good.* But then, practice makes perfect.

I thought I had to be all-knowable to give a Bible class, but if you think about it, we have so much knowledge on hand, as well as input in our everyday lives, and it's not all that hard. You've just got to venture out and try!



Amy with orphans

The purpose of our every sacrifice



M

y story isn't awesome, nor do I have any outstanding spiritual experiences to speak of. But maybe my lack of the above will inspire someone out there who feels that they're just a little person giving the Family their best shot. That's really all it's about, at least for me!

I'm 19, single, and an Ozzie (full-blooded Tasmanian, though I've never lived there). I was born in Thailand, where I also grew up. The last two years I've spent in the Middle East, which is an incredibly exciting mission field. It does seem to be the happening place these days, for sure by world standards. People here are so needy, desperate, and sheepy! For me, it's the only place I would want to be right now.

My life is one big potpourri of ministries, from cooking to being a board member, from toddler-care to layout. Sprinkle in some secretarial work, kitchen organization, and clean-up, and you'll get the basic gist of what I do. Multiple part-time jobs—a true Family young person, eh?

The latest addition to my work has been joining the national CP board here, which has added new challenges to my life. The board has only begun, but with so many people focusing on and praying about the needs of the kids, as well as generat-

By Libby (19), Middle East

ing new ideas, hopefully we'll be able to make a difference in childcare. The need has always been there, as desperate as ever, but now we're finally able to combine parents', teachers', and everyone's talents and make something of it.

We have been working on a witnessing pack for the kids, covering topics such as how to become one on this field. In the witnessing pack there will be tips on how to witness to Muslims, Word studies, testimonies, etc. As the outreach here is very specialized due to the culture, hopefully this will be a blessing to the kids in our area. We hope it will give them an understanding as to the reasons behind the way things are done as far as witnessing in this part of the world.

Another inspiring happening in our little corner of the globe is that we've created a

magazine called *Motivated*, based on *Activated*, but relatable to Muslims. I've been helping a bit with the layout for that project. I'm not on it full time (tell me something new!), but I laid out the first two issues. Presently I'm focusing on laying out and PDFing an adapted version of *Reflections*, so that we can up our amount and quality of Muslim-friendly, follow-up material. We want to get them posted on the MO site so that other Family members who minister to Muslims can have as much material to work with as possible.

Something that I've come to realize is that in order to make progress and move forward, I have to be committed. This applies in all areas of my life, whether it's obeying the New Wine, learning something new, or pushing something through till the end. The key for me is committing on a regular basis—a *daily* basis. I guess being the freedom-loving, liberal-minded type, I have to recommit to the Lord regularly or else I go off on my own tangents. But when I do get ahold of His will, He always comes through for me, and makes the yielding so much easier. The Lord then helps me find a real sense of enjoyment and fulfillment in the very thing I'm fighting so hard.

It wasn't until just recently that I fully committed to staying on this field and giving it my all. In early 2002, I was going through a particularly rough time. Incidentally, it was right after the "Conviction vs. Compromise" GNs came out, and I was beginning to feel the heat of them coming alive in my heart and life. I went on a trip to visit my family in Thailand at the time. It was then—just when I thought how wonderful it was that I could "run away from God"—that my spiritual life started to crumble around me.

While in Thailand, I got a letter from my shepherdess in the Middle East asking me to pray about my level of dedication and commitment before returning. The whole field was going through some pretty heavy battles at the time, and it was very important that everyone was fully on board. At that point, I wasn't even sure if I wanted to return to the Middle East, much less maintain the level of commitment in my life that I knew the Lord was expecting of me. I received some very needed prophecies about the state of my spiritual life, and the Lord told me that

His highest will was for me to return and give it my all.

To make a long story short, I came back, my heart chock-full of reservations. I really went through it. In those first few weeks I felt depressed 90 percent of the time. The Lord obviously wasn't about to let up on me until I made the commitment He wanted me to make. (I'm sure you can relate to that kind of spiritual pressure, heh!)

Finally, the toll of the depression began to wear me down. It was 3 AM one morning and I couldn't sleep. I went to the living room with my trusty prophecy book in hand. Right when I was feeling that no one could possibly understand the depths of my frustrations, I got a little message from the Lord that was so encouraging. Even though it was short and simple, and I felt so muddled and confused when I received it, it did the trick. I can already see it being fulfilled in my life. I consider it a milestone prophecy, as that was the turning point when I was able to commit to this field. I am so much happier for it!



Libby



Left to right: Sisters Claire (2), me, Ruth (21), and Christie (5)

Here's what it said: "Can you say yes to Me tonight? My peace that passes all understanding will take over as you let go of your tight grasp on your Huddersfield and let My will reign supreme. Don't worry; the struggling will pass and the beauty will remain. Tomorrow morning you will wake with a new zest for life; your outlook will have changed, if you can just say yes to Me tonight. Can you do that for Me? There are wonderful rewards which will be fulfilled in your life right here and now, as you put everything else on the altar and give your heart wholly to Me. Remember, life is what you make it!"

I'll be the first to admit that it costs a lot to be a committed CM young person. But I wouldn't—not for one second—want to miss out on the excitement and fulfillment I've experienced in serving the Lord. Not to mention the rewards that are in store for us a little further down the line. There's too much at stake in letting all that go!

There are numerous temptations that hover over my head, which I

have to consciously fight. I don't usually get hit with big doubts, or gag and choke on Family issues. I'm talking smaller scale, the little earthly pleasures that I often equate happiness with—tempting careers, modern gadgets, the wider array of technically perfect music and singers that the System has to offer, fashion, being able to earn money in the System, etc.

Every now and then when I start thinking about what the System could offer me, and I begin going down the road that train of thought is leading me, I pull out letters like "Benefits of the Family" (ML #3172, GN 777) and "Hold On to Your Crown" (ML #3168, GN 773-774). They always help to remind me

not to talents. They must look to the Giver of the gifts, not to the recipient. To you I say, fear not, for there is always a falling away and a purging, but My work goes on and My truth continues. I am able to raise up new talent, as they yield to Me and let Me sing through them."

Right now my greatest heart's desire is to be able to do more outreach and ministering to the needy, desperate people in this part of the world. I've been praying for the Lord to continually engineer my life and put me in situations where my heart will break for the lost. It's so important; it's the reason for it all! I truly believe that the purpose for our every sacrifice is to help us reach the lost. When I can manage to keep things in that perspective, my outlook changes, and my battles seem pretty trivial in comparison.

If you're a young person who's struggling to find your niche or calling, always remember that anything wonderful can happen in that moment when you don't give up!

● **"I've been praying for the Lord to continually engineer my life and put me in situations where my heart will break for the lost. It's so important; it's the reason for it all!"**

of the blessings and rewards I have in serving the Lord.

Life would be so empty without the Lord and the Family! Since I've never personally experienced the System to the full, I have to go to the Word with a believing heart, and when I do it gives me the boost of courage to keep going.

When I heard that some of my favorite young Family singers had left the Family, woeful thoughts entered my mind. *How many notches down is Family music going to go now?* I wondered. Recently I casually asked a musician this same question. He knew that some young people would probably consider it a very sad loss, and he had asked the Lord about it. He read me the prophecy, which I'll include here:

"It's hard for the young people, especially when their contemporaries leave, particularly the really talented ones. But they must learn to look to Me and