



# PHILIPPINES

**THE MARTINS**  
Your Missionaries in the Philippines

July-August, 2018

Dear Friends:

About 25 years ago one of the graduates of Iloilo Baptist College, Peter TimTim, started a church in the mountains of Negros Island. About five years later he started a Bible Institute for married men. One of the men he trained was Florencio Muleta. After graduating, Brother Muleta started a church and began to reach all types of people. This included some people who were what you might call the "hard cases," or unreachable.

You have probably heard that in the Philippines people are very receptive to the Lord. That is true but there are also people who are very hard hearted. But because of Christians like Pastor Muleta, God can do the miraculous.

We wanted to share two stories with you, of two men that were reached by Brother Muleta and the impact their lives have made on others: The Ortega family lived in the mountainous part of Negros. It was far from the town but there were many people there. Maximo Ortega's parents were members of a false religion that taught people to do good things in order to go to Heaven.

One day another false religion visited them and once again Maximo's family was deceived. This group is called "Grace." The leader of this group tells everyone they have to give all their possessions to his "church" to go to Heaven. Needless to say, that man became very rich.

Maximo became a leader in this group and was respected in their village.

Pastor Florencio Muleta, went house to house soul winning and met Maximo. He began to witness but Maximo said, "I've spent many years leading a church. I've done many good things. I have a lot of members. I will go to Heaven someday because of that," and he turned his back to Pastor Muleta.



Left to right: Pastor TimTim, Pastor Muleta,  
Pastor Ortega, and Pastor Benvenido



Pastor Muleta baptizing in a mountain river

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Brother Muleta returned home with a burdened heart. Everyday he prayed for Maximo. On his third visit, the Holy Spirit was working. Maximo accepted Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior. Maximo and his parents got saved and became faithful to church. Brother Muleta trained Maximo in his Bible Institute. After graduating Maximo started the Living Hope Fundamental Baptist Church. He also started a Bible Institute. Then he started another church in a nearby village. Several years ago I visited his church and what a blessing it was to see that he had started a Bible Institute to train married men to start churches. Since that time his men have started several churches.

Brother Maximo is still faithfully pastoring these two churches. His son just finished his 3<sup>rd</sup> year of Bible College here at Iloilo Baptist College.

Benvenido is a native of Sito Cabanbanan, Barangay Carol-an, Kabankalan, Negros. He and his wife worked on a farm for their livelihood; raising chickens, pigs,

In the early years of 2,000, people in his place were filled with fear. During that time their area had much violence because of unsettled, unsolved cases. There were many thieves. Because it is so far from the town and the road was so difficult to travel, the police rarely went to their place.

The farmers often left their cows and carabao in the field during nighttime. Often when they would wake up early and go to find their livestock to work in the fields, they would find them dead.

Because of this the people there organized a group called "Tanod." Their job was to keep watch especially during nighttime. The thieves were armed. Many people were killed during robberies. Some had their houses burned to the ground.

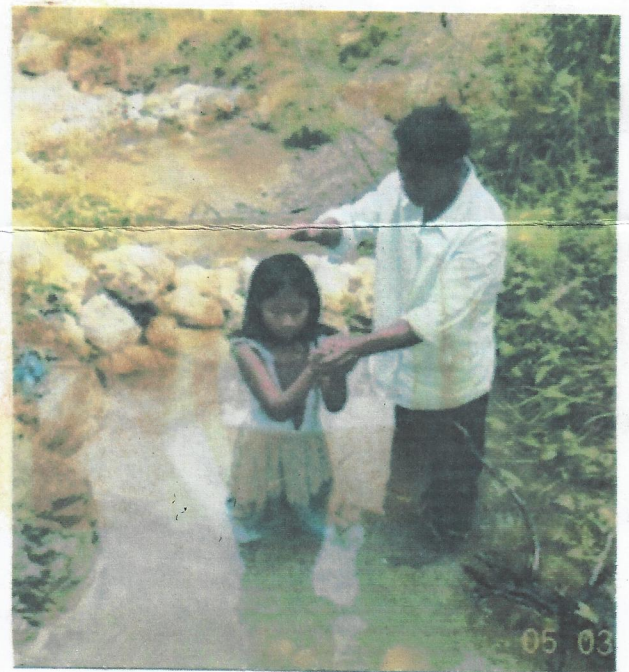
Sometimes Benvenido and his family would sleep in the forest during the night for protection so Benvenido and his friends formed another group to protect their families. This group began to go around killing the thieves.

However the people in that place were not grateful to Benvenido and his friends for killing the thieves. Instead, they became very afraid of them.

Pastor Florencio Muleta, was working hard in his church and being blessed by God. He also received death threats but he just ignored them. His dream was to reach all the people in his place with the Gospel. One day Pastor Muleta visited Benvenido in his home, together with his family. He shared the Good News of salvation but Benvenido ignored him. The next day, Brother Muleta went back to Benvenido's house. By God's grace, Benvenido got saved. Pastor Muleta invited him and his family to church and they all came. Benvenido's wife and children were all saved. They became faithful to church. When Pastor Muleta started his Bible institute, Benvenido enrolled.



Jeepney picking up visitors for Brother Muleta's church way up in the mountains



Pastor Muleta baptizing in a water hole



Pastor Benvenido promised God he would faithfully serve him. He sent his children to Bible College. After several years, his children became pastors. Bengilito and Benjie graduated from IBC, along with his daughter Emalyn. His other son Bevito, graduated from another Bible college.

Brother Benvenido is a great model as a dad. His desire is for his children to serve God. He has been faithfully pastoring Fundamental Baptist Church in Carol-an for many years.

It is such an encouragement to see Christians like Brother Muleta who doesn't easily give up on people. The Lord has blessed his five children as well as they are all graduates of Iloilo Baptist College and his four sons have started churches and also help him in his Bible College. His daughter is still single and is a great help in his ministry.

## SUMMER CAMPS

*Thank you for praying for the summer camps and youth conference. One of our staff pastors, Roger Gelladula, wrote the following about his camp:*

"One of the highlights in the Antique area is a yearly Christian youth camp. It's wonderful to see pastors and workers uniting in this to encourage different young people who've gathered together. During the five days we all learned more about Christian service, and how to be more effective in different areas of our lives, especially in prayer and how to live by faith. I was blessed to see our pastors and workers joining and working together, sharing and contributing, and to see how God provided for our needs.

"We had 38 workers, and 198 campers, with a total of 236. We saw 35 campers saved and 15 surrendered for full time Christian service.

"The Lord greatly used Pastor Rey Omallao, our camp host, who provided most of our camp needs such as transportation and some of the food. He was so kind to take care of any campers who got sick or had minor accidents.

"We were shown a huge cave nearby where Filipino soldiers hid from Japanese soldiers during World War II. We heard that our friend and World War II veteran, Mr. Ricardo Hechanova, often went to this cave during the war. There is another cave nearby that has a large bamboo "guest house" built over it. This house can hold 20 people and we often have our area meeting with pastors there. There is a coolness coming from the cave.

"The place used to be infiltrated by NPA (New People's Army) communist rebels. One of the pastors showed us where they used to have their training ground. A few years ago there used to be a lot of ambushes there and many people were killed. Now however, the government has built a good road and there was an army detachment just one kilometer away from our camp. There are several Baptist Churches in the two towns near the camp and many people there are now open to the Word of God.

"I'm thankful for my kids who did most of the program. They led the different groups in games, special music, and power point lessons. They took pictures and videos, and printed T-shirts with our theme, "Dare to



Morning line up at one of the youth camps in the mountains



Run." They conducted Christian film showings and printed certificates and awards for the campers. I appreciate those who provided prizes on our closing night. I'm also thankful for my wife who was chief cook that week, and for my nephew who provided a large, powerful PA system. This was a special blessing because the whole week the whole barangay (village) could hear all the singing and preaching going on at camp.

"Our camp was held in a beautiful mountainous area. Our campers enjoying seeing a large strawberry farm nearby, as well as having their pictures taken on the numerous horses there. When we climbed up the highest part we could look down on the towns and also see the ocean, which was nearby. They enjoyed hiking and seeing the caves, cliffs, lakes, and the beautiful forest all around.

"All of these things were enjoyed by everyone but they can't compare with hearing the preaching of God's Word, and the encouragement received from the lectures, morning devotions, and messages from chapel hour. We were so happy to see so many saved and many promised to be baptized in their home churches that following Sunday. We praise the Lord for those who surrendered to full time Christian service and those who dedicated themselves to be faithful to the Lord after camp was over."

Camps like Pastor Gelladula's can have an impact on young people that will last for the rest of their lives. I can remember growing up and how my dad would always send me to camp. When I was in high school he not only sent me as a camper but also as a worker. My jobs were very important, washing dishes and serving the campers their meals! Camp was very helpful to me as I was able to get away from my regular schedule. I really liked being around all the preachers and being with them each day and not just at church.

Being there made me think about a lot of things. One night during a service I walked down the aisle and made a commitment to go into full time Christian service and go to Bible College. Two or three times a year at our church my dad would ask all the young people who had made a commitment to go into full time service to come down to the front and there would be sometimes 40 to 50 people lined up across the auditorium. One time, for some reason, I decided not to go down to the front. Of course my dad noticed and when I went home I could tell how hurt he was. I ended up going to Bible College and by the Lord's grace I am still a missionary.

When I got to the Philippines Dad would write often and send me sports news. He did a lot of things to encourage me. I will never forget one day he wrote me and told me something like this: "Ricky, everyday when I wake up the first thing I do is get down on my knees and pray for you." Who could ever be unfaithful after having such a good dad as I had? Camp had a lot to do with my attitude about the ministry.

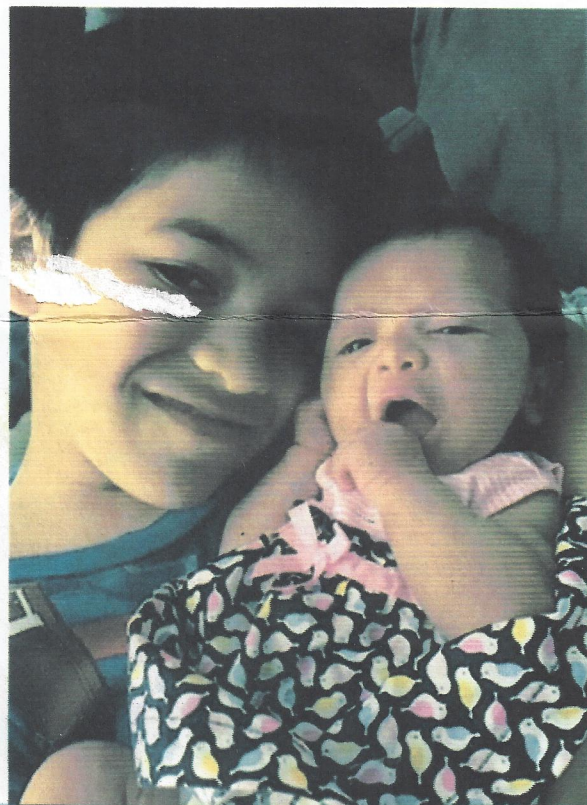
As always, Becky and I want to thank each and every one of you who pray for us, and who sacrificially give for the Lord's work here in the Philippines.

Sincerely in Christ,

*Rick Martin*



Antique campers making decisions on their knees



Landon with his new sister