

## **December Newsletter – Build a Bridge – Better to Give**

As I sit down to write the last bridge update article for 2010, I reflect back on the past year, stories shared, prayer, patience and waiting on answers. And, one by one, the answers came, not only concerning the bridge, but for the purpose and direction I had personally been searching for in my own life. I have changed; no longer shy about sharing my faith or my stories. A bolder Christian, yet still somewhat reserved in my conversation with others. So, once again, I share a story on giving, that when the Bible says it is better to give than receive, there is absolute truth in it.

On Saturday morning this past June, as I pulled into the drive thru line, it was backed up as usual. I had promised Jordan a biscuit before his early morning baseball game. As I waited patiently just to get into the parking lot, a couple came out of the restaurant and waited patiently, hoping someone would eventually let them back out of their parking space. But as two then three cars pushed forward in the drive thru line, not wanting to lose their spot, the couple appeared to become irritated. As I approached, I left them plenty of room to back out, which they did. But then they did something totally unexpected, they got into the drive thru line themselves. Then I noticed when they went to place their order, the screen remained blank. Maybe they simply had ordered an ice water for the road I thought. Jordan's chicken biscuit was about \$3. Then I noticed the lady in front of me handing out her credit card. As I drove up to the window to pay myself, the cashier simply stated "that lady just paid for your breakfast". I cannot explain the feeling I got inside when she told me that. Wow, what a blessing, to think I had done something so small for her, and yet, it was appreciated. It could have been any of the two or three other cars that were ahead of me, each with a car load of kids, who could have been on the receiving end of her generosity. But because neither took the small amount of time to let her back out, they missed out on the blessing.

This reminds me of my own story in giving to others. I had stopped by a busy produce stand, and purchased a bag with six tomatoes for \$3.00, knowing I would not eat them all. Then I saw a very poor man on a bicycle as he passed by and slowly looked over at all the new fruits and vegetables, staring as he passed by. And as I left, I felt like I needed to do something for him. So I pulled up beside him, let down my passenger side window and said, "Here, take this." And as he reached in the window to take the single tomato from my hand, he looked me straight in the eyes and softly said,

“Thank you”. A fifty cent tomato, given out of pure love for a stranger, and then to see the appreciation in his eyes. And at that moment as I stared deeply into his eyes, I could tell he was filled with the Holy Ghost, and it was almost as if I was looking into the eyes of Jesus Christ himself. It was so powerful of a moment that I couldn’t say a single word back to him, but slowly drive off.

The problem in today’s society is that we often are so busy with our own lives, so concerned with getting to our next destination, in such a “hurry up and get there” lifestyle, we often miss the opportunities the Lord gives us to stop and “do for others”. The Nicaraguan bridge is one such given opportunity, a chance to stop and do for someone else. A chance to stop worrying about our rainy day, and be concerned for the Nicaraguan people’s rainy day, when they can’t cross the river. Believe me, these people will appreciate it, and will look you in the eye’s one day and simply say “Thank you.”