

Reflections

As the train pulled up to the crowded Tokyo platform, we hurried to the end of an impossibly long line of people waiting to board. Inside “our” car, people were literal squished up against the doors as they opened to let a few people out. Then our line started pushing its way forward. I spoke aloud the words of faith conviction that filled my heart: “There’s *no way* we’re going to fit in that car!” But the missionaries, knowing how things work, were already backing into the open door – literally crowding people further inside so that there was about six inches of floor space for us to fill. I barely got my toes inside as the doors slid closed. With my face pressed up against the glass, I wondered again, “How do I ever communicate all this to people back home?”



Missionary Janine Alvarado (Tokyo)

There’s a pattern here!



Pastor Victorino & Family (Mexico)

Just a few weeks before that experience, I was wondering the same thing. I was interviewing a 70-something, soft-spoken, Presbyterian missionary in a part of Mexico that is listed as a “No Travel Zone” for U.S. citizens. As we stood alongside a road that is largely controlled by the local drug cartel, he told stories of having a sawed-off shotgun in his face with threats to blow his head off. Later we enjoyed another round of freshly made tortillas and interviewed Pastor Victorino who is planting a church in this dangerous region. I asked myself, “How in the world do I tell my friends about what it is like to do ministry in a place like this?” Do you see the pattern?

But as I think back over all our travels in the past three years, I recognize that this is the “sweet spot” for our mission. This is our calling. We get to help missionaries tell their stories in a compelling way to their friends and supporters back home.

Our documentary-style films take people much deeper than the vast majority of missionaries ever could in a newsletter. By means of our videos, people are “transported” to the mission field where they join the missionaries in their homes, on their streets, and with their people. They hear the sounds and see the sights in a much more powerful way than any photograph or slide show ever could. The missionaries we have served all agree. And they’re grateful.

“How did you get into this?”

That’s the question people almost always ask me when they hear about what we do. And they are usually pretty surprised by my answer:

“We got into this because God gave us a vision. I had never produced professional quality documentaries. In fact, neither photography nor videography was a hobby. I didn’t own any of the necessary equipment. In spite of all this, several of our missions-minded friends around the country believed in the vision. And they believed in Lynn and I. They prayed for us. And some of them started sending financial support.

Before we had produced a single video, we had enough support to purchase a basic set of gear to begin learning how to do the work. And now people use the word professional to describe the quality. But here’s the deal: We are not videographers. We are ministers of Jesus Christ. He got us into this. Our faithful partners make it possible.”

All together now

We feel so loved and *trusted* by you all. You believe in God and in the mission of Jesus. And in a way, you also believe in us. We are so grateful for the relationship we have with you that involves us all together now in ministry. Isn’t that cool?

We hope you know this: Those of you who **send** us are as important as those of us who are called to **go**. We are in this together.