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Caldwell Missionary Review

Written from David's perspective

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**David and Karen Caldwell
with Elim Fellowship**

The Caldwell family serves in
Central Mexico as founders of
Retiros Y Campamentos Con
Aventura A.C. (RYCCA)

**Set backs are
God's set up for
dynamic faith
living.
Disappointment
is part of the
adventure.**

Strategy

Pray.
Love people.
Do camp.

Tax Deductible Contributions

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Make check to: "Elim Fellowship"
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Reflecting on Disappointment

It's Saturday morning.

I was reading about the judgment on Israel prophesied by Ezekiel. Not a message anyone wants to hear. I underlined God's words, "*I will deal with them according to their conduct, and by their own standards I will judge them. Then they will know that I am the Lord.*" I am scheduled to preach in Salamanca next Sunday. What words does God have for me to say then? Likely a message of hope salted with the reality that God means what He says.

Making my way by foot over to the Morelia church, I got our 15 passenger van that was loaded with dirty clothes, empty water containers, and bags of garbage. The kids had been out at the camp site all week. I greeted the guard who opened the gate so I could drive back home. Then I woke the kids up to empty and clean the van.

The RYCCA office has been moved temporarily into our living room, so I flipped on the computer to work on expense reports. It's a marvel to see God's provision for the development of the camps laid out on the monitor. For instance, there is a business man here who gave us a financial gift last month



Marlon & Nathan in front of their creation--a rustic storage shed for camp construction equipment.

after hearing about the camps' need. Someday, we hope, there will be wide spread feeling of ownership for the camps in both countries.

The garbage-bell-ringer boy passes the house. This alerts our kids to set out our small garbage bags to be gathered up by the folks in an old pickup truck with high sides. We rushed around and handed the bags to the collector along with a few pesos to cover the daily service. Uh-oh... missed one bag. Well, a different collector will be coming around before noon. It's free enterprise at work.

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Saturday morning continues...

As the garbage truck drives away a thin bearded man stands at our entrance door dressed in a heavy sweater. A guy a bit younger than myself with a pathetic face is looking at a blessed Christian hoping... He recites his lines pointing to a broken piece of bread in his hands.

Unfortunately, it's a common scene. My children look on. I reach in our clay cup that sits just inside the house for a few pesos. Who knows what he will be able to buy with the little money he collects?

On the other hand, we are surrounded by good neighbors, a rich culture, and a fast moving society. Industrious workers are building homes and stores, roads are being improved, cable has just been installed in our area (if you call that progress). I am able to buy parts for my computer. I can pay by internet. We can get fast food but prefer traditional Mexican dishes with a touch of chili sauce.

It is in this mix of economic "haves" and "have nots" that Christian camping, Mexico style, is to make its way. In the process of nurturing camp to life, I am caught between a cell phone and my thick tongue, between vision and the calendar.

I have technology and answers. I am tempted to rely on the power of marketing to make the camps successful.

God help me! How can I even

think such a thing!

Set back

In spite of all the hard work by Adam, Ale, Ana, Bill, Israel, Jovany, Marielena, Marlon, Nico,

Roger, and church volunteers and our family, even though we have a beginning piece of ground for the 1st camp site and had around 80 potential counselors, the camps had to be postponed.

How can it be? People have been praying and giving. The RYCCA board members, Elim Fellowship representatives, and our bosses, the Spykers, all wanted to help. One pastor told me, in effect, that our price was fine; it was just that there is no money in people's pockets. My Mexican friend, Eleazer, commented that maybe I need to consider a cultural pattern that allows for spur of the moment participation rather than expecting long range planning of counselor's and children's vacation time. I know we needed more time to get the site ready. There is still no running water or electricity.

Maybe those reasons offer some explanation or a comfort that having camp in July and August 2003 was too big a task. But more than because of logic, I bow in humility to the concept that camp will be in His time. I admit that God is more interested in the leadership ability developed in counselors and the souls of the campers than I am. I submit to God. He is more interested that I know Him more, than that I made

camp happen last week (with or without His help).

At junctures of disappointment like this we want to acknowledge more than ever the faithfulness and long-suffering of those who support us in so many ways. Those who enable this fledgling camp ministry are a great encouragement to us. Thank you. We sincerely feel that you have been alongside us in the struggle to establish Christian camping as an element of blessing for the churches to use to bring Christ into this society.

What has been my conduct? How have I judged? He will judge me likewise. Do I judge that I should have used a better marketing stratagem? Do I condemn weaknesses on our team? Do I fault God's timing? Do I doubt answer to prayer?

I confess that I struggle with the loss of seeing fruit come forth from our efforts. Yet, I proclaim that I continue to be supplied supernatural hope in looking ahead to school vacations. A time will come when trained counselors will take eager kids in this city and in this state by the hand and lead them into a spiritual adventure with the King of Kings that will never end.

For the time being... the bell is ringing again and we better get that last thing out the door. Now was that the expense report or the bag on the step?

**In humility...
I admit...
I submit to
God...**

