

# The Winslows

Movements everywhere so that everyone knows someone who truly follows Jesus

## A Trip to Beautiful Fiji

As I flew over Viti Levu, the main island of the nation of Fiji, my eyes were glued to the plane window. The scenery was gorgeous. Deep blue water, gave way to crystal clear shallows where waves lapped up onto large, white-sand beaches. The interior of the island was filled with steep, mountain hills covered with tropical forests and dense grass giving the appearance of soft green sponges. Everything was saturated in hues of blue and green. I was enthralled... and admittedly, I was a little disappointed that I was arriving in Fiji to spend two weeks teaching theology rather than swimming and diving and exploring the mountains.

Nevertheless, the two weeks that I spent in that part of the world at the end of January were very meaningful. I was asked to come there to teach two different theology classes to the Cru staff in the South Pacific. Over the course of two weeks, we studied the doctrines of the Bible, God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, Man, Sin and Salvation. I was impressed with the maturity of the staff and was encouraged to hear how the gospel is being preached not only in Fiji but in other places in the Pacific as well.



One of the staff in my class the second week regularly shares the gospel and sees people coming to the Lord almost every week. I was told that this man usually shares the gospel with more than 1,000 people each year. What a great gift God has given him in evangelism and what an encouragement it was to hear from him and talk with him about how to approach people with the gospel. In fact it seems

that people in the South Pacific Islands generally have a history of being evangelists. The gospel first came to Fiji almost 150 years ago when Christians from Tonga came over by Canoe to preach to the tribesmen. Later the Christians from Fiji took the gospel to places like Papua New Guinea and other islands.



Another staff was there from Papua New Guinea. He was from a town whose name means something like "leather sole." It is called that because as recently as the early 20th century, cannibals lived there and were known to boil and eat early missionaries including eating the soles of their shoes! Now this town has many Christians and Elton is excited to take the gospel to other people in various parts of Papua New Guinea.

Most of the staff in my classes were from Fiji but a few also came from New Zealand, Samoa, Papua New Guinea and Guam. We spent five hours together each day as we discussed various aspects



of what we believe and how to apply it in our own lives and ministries. We all stayed busy but, many of the staff said that the classes were very useful and they were already applying various things that we learned in their lives and ministry.

After the two weeks together, I was very anxious to get back to see Sijie and the kids, but I was also a little sad to have to leave the staff there. On the flight back, the scenery again enthralled me but my heart was also warmed with the knowledge of all that God is doing in the South Pacific. I was thrilled to know that in only a few generations some of these villages had gone from cannibals to great evangelists. I was comforted the God could use me in a small way to bless the ministry that is going on there and to help the staff think carefully about how they are teaching others and living their own lives.

I have been asked to go back again in a couple of years, maybe next time I can bring Sijie along and take a few extra days to enjoy the beaches and beautiful scenery!



Sijie had fun teaching the ladies in her mentoring group how to decorate cup cakes with fondant. It was a fun way to spend time together and talk about life issues.

## Thanksgiving

- ✦ Praise God for a good time with Matthew's family over Christmas.
- ✦ We thank God for sustaining Sijie while Matthew was away for two weeks in January.



## Please Pray For Us:

- ✦ Pray that both of us would walk closely with the Lord even amidst the busyness of life.
- ✦ This semester at EAST, Matthew is busy teaching a systematic theology class as well as a class on spiritual life and transformation. Please pray that God would enable him to teach and prepare well.
- ✦ Matthew will be teaching a week long intensive class for the local Cru Singapore staff in April and again in August. Pray that this would be a beneficial time for all involved. Pray for him as he prepares.
- ✦ Hudson just started elementary school. Please pray that God would give him some good friends.

*Blessings, Matthew, Sijie, Hudson, Amber and Alethea Winslow*

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