



TAKEN FROM CHURCH MAGAZINES....

submitted by Chris Palmer

The ladies of the Church have cast off clothing of every kind. They may be seen in the basement on Friday afternoon.

Ladies, don't forget the rummage sale. It's a chance to get rid of those things not worth keeping around the house. Bring your husbands.

This evening at 7pm there will be hymn singing in the park opposite the Church. Bring a blanket and come prepared to sin.

Irving Benson and Jessie Carter were married on October 24th in our Church. So ends a friendship that began in their school days.

For those of you have children and don't know it, we have a nursery downstairs.

The Rector will preach his farewell sermon after which the choir will sing "Break forth into joy".

At the evening service tonight, the sermon topic will be "What is Hell?". Come early and listen to our choir practice.

Looking back, I'm finding it very encouraging to see how God exceeded my expectations and answered my prayers. The first sign that God was working in my situation was Phil. After one horrifying week into my Jungle project, feeling God had abandoned me completely and losing sight of all purpose, I met a boy who had also asked God for a Christian companion. We agreed to meet up twice a week to study Hebrews and encourage one another by prayer. During those first 3 months, I have never grown so much in my personal relationship with God. My faith grew and the fruit of that experience has prepared me for the rest of my life. Very exciting stuff!!!

The conversation project that I was helping with was to be honest very frustrating and a big disappointment. If there were any fruits to my labour they seemed very distant and I was so discouraged that I wasn't making the difference that I had hoped to make in an environment where everything was so confusing. I literally clung to God and depended on him more than ever. I wasn't afraid to talk to my friends about God honestly and openly because he was rapidly turning into the only thing that made sense to me. Looking back, I really hope that God used this time to reach out to some of my friends. I remember one night in particular when I was up a 30m ladder on a small platform overlooking the canopy. My friend Lizziey and I climbed this jungle observation tower to watch the sunset. The view was one of the highlights of my Ecuador trip and was so beautiful I can't even put it into words. As the sun set, the stars began to appear and saturated the sky. We lay on our backs looking in silence for about an hour. I felt absolutely bowled over by God's majesty and reality and I could feel God's heart burning with love for Lizziey and it was all I could do to pray passionately for her. I had the most amazing conversation with her about God.

My final 3 months were a completely different experience. Moving back to Quito, the noise and stress invaded the quiet intimacy I had enjoyed with God in the peaceful environment of the rainforest. I was really distressed at first because I thought I had lost God. Despite feeling a little more distant from God, looking back I can see that I learnt perhaps as much but in a completely different way. The children this time were my greatest teachers. To love them, I was quickly learning that you really had to be selfless. The process was very humbling and taught me a lot about God the father ie parent figure. To sum up, my gap year was a massive growth curve in independence and at its heart my personal walk with God. The experience turned out to be as much about receiving as giving and has given me a greater perspective on life. I hope that through God I was able to make a difference.