

## **Spain 1998 Journal**

### **9 Julio 1998**

I have just discovered, much to my dismay, that I somehow left the journal Beth gave me at home. So I am going to use the computer to write my journal. Paco has been kind enough to let me have a key to the office where it is safe to leave the computer.

The flight over was relatively uneventful – the best kind. Boarding in Dulles was easy; the SpanAir plane, a 767, was less than half full. I was assigned a window seat, but since most of the flight was a night and there was a cloud cover most of the way, it didn't make a lot of difference. The moon, however, was full and on my side of the plane. It is amazing how bright it is at 35000 ft.

We left Dulles at 6:30 pm on the 8<sup>th</sup> and arrived in Madrid at about 7:43 am on the 9<sup>th</sup>. They served two meals – a nice dinner and a breakfast. We had an hour in Madrid to get to our Iberia Airlines flight, and we barely made it. Getting through customs was easy, but it took a long time for us to get checked in to the plane and get our boarding passes. Then we had to go through security again.

It is very hot in Spain – at or over 100 degrees in much of southern Spain. Chiclana, however, is near the ocean; it is only a mile or so from Nueva Vida to the beach. That means that there is often a nice sea breeze. It gets cool at night (60) and doesn't really get hot until after noon. This is a very dry region, at least at this time of year, and very flat. In addition, we are quite close to one of the largest olive growing regions in the world.

On our drive from the airport we passed several things of note. There were large fields, i.e. 10-20 acres, of sunflowers be grown as a crop, much like we grow corn. Mining salt is also an activity that has been done here since the Roman empire.

We arrived at Nueva Vida about noon. Four of the men were assigned to one of the rooms here; James and Susan and the women are staying with various families.

The Spanish do not worry about time as much as we do. They're sense of time is to say that about such and such a time, etc. For example, it was originally announced to us that lunch would be served about 2 pm or 2:30. We actually ate about 3.

The food is great. For lunch we had: a potato/fish soup with a tomato based stock; lettuce/tomato salad; bread; fresh fruit and coffee. Dinner was served about 10:30 after the sun sets and it cools off a bit. It consisted of pasta with tomato sauce, anchovies, local green olives (which were excellent), bread, yogurt, and a pizza that was wonderful. The pizza was not like ours at all; it had little cheese and was spicy.

We did not rest well on the flight over, even though most of us tried. So this afternoon, after lunch, we napped for about 2 hours. It sure felt good.

The daily schedule for meals, etc. will be approximately: breakfast 8 am; lunch 2 pm; dinner 10pm; bed at midnight or one. From 2-5 pm everything shuts down.

After dinner Paco shared with several of us some of his vision for Spain. In all of Spain right now there are only 1600 evangelical churches with an average membership of 47. That is for a population of 40,000,000. Chiclana, apparently, has been a "high place" of idol worship for over 3000 years, since the Phoenicians. This is the area where Julius Caesar had a profound spiritual experience and received his anointing. Close by there is a shrine/cathedral to Santa Anna. (Anna was the mother of Mary) She is worshipped around here just like an idol. Paco believes that there are strongholds here that have been here for millennia, and that this part of southern Spain holds the key to evangelizing the entire nation. His vision is to see 1000 new churches planted by 2000. He has a big, exciting vision.

## **10 Julio 1998**

I slept well last night, although it was still hot at midnight. However, by morning it was quite cool and comfortable. We left the windows open for fresh air, but that also allowed the mosquitoes in. I got up about 8 am. Some of the men had already left, but most were still sleeping. They stay up late and get up late also. That makes sense in terms of the temperature—it doesn't cool off until well after midnight, but stays cool until 10 or so.

I took a short run this morning—2.5 to 3 kilometers and it was quite pleasant. I also got to shower after breakfast. This was the first shower since leaving on Wednesday, and although the water was cold it felt wonderful.

Breakfast is a light meal. Bread and jam, donuts, coffee.

We all met together to spend some time in praise and worship and prayer. It was a sweet time with the Lord. As a team we feel very humble to be here, and it was good to pray and seek the Lord together.

The schedule is not going to be very demanding. Today and tomorrow we will practice some, but will have plenty of time to relax. Saturday there is going to be a wedding that is very important to the entire fellowship here. The bride was a gypsy who found Jesus a few years ago and has gotten free of that lifestyle and bondage. Many from the other locations will be coming here to celebrate.

Where we are staying is called the Center and is not the location of the church building. Paco is establishing 5 other centers in southern Spain. A Center is a place to build community, minister to problem people and provide housing and teaching.

It is stifling hot as I am trying to enter this. About 2 pm we left to take a walk into and around Chiclana. We got back at 3:15 and ate lunch. It is now 5:15, which is siesta time, and I have fallen asleep a couple of times. The walk was interesting. We went by the church to Santa Anna, which Paco describes, and rightly so, as a place to worship idols. The church is located on the highest spot in this area, and that location has been used as a high ground to worship idols since antiquity. Cadiz, which is the port city not far from here, is the oldest city in Europe, so this area is old. Paco believes this area is the key to bringing revival to all southern Europe.

Tonight we meet at the church at 7 to practice, and I need to get some rest.

## **11 Julio 1998**

It is now about 8.30 am and I am finally cooling down after my run. It was a good run, as I ran about 4K mas a meno. I think it is going to be hot today, as there is not much of a breeze this morning.

We went over to the church last night to set up the sound system and practice. The church is located in a business district and is basically cinderblock walls and a high ceiling. All of the construction around here seems to be cinderblock with stucco. There certainly is no wood framing. Practice went well, although the room is loud and it is hard to hear ourselves. Don's drum set was a curiosity.

We got back a little late for dinner; about 10:45. The food has been very good. Last night the main dish was chicken noodle soup with hard boiled egg. The salad was the usual lettuce/onion/tomato but with hard boiled eggs as well. The food is all donated, and they feed 60-70 people here. The main dish at lunch yesterday was interesting: tomato/rice soup with seafood. The seafood was small shrimp, still in the shell; small mussels and pieces of fish.

Yesterday afternoon some went down to the beach. The ocean here is supposed to be the cleanest of anywhere in Europe, and those that went said that it was exceptional. I'll go later.

Last night was rough. I went to bed at about 1 after trying to read my Bible and pray. The mosquitoes are quite bad here after dark. When I got to the room the other three were already asleep. But I discovered that my pillow was nowhere to be found. I looked for it as best as I could, but I ended up rolling up my towel to try and make a pillow. That really didn't work well, and between the discomfort and the mosquitoes incessantly buzzing I did not get much sleep.

The night sounds are interesting. There are a lot of dogs, mostly used I think for watch purposes. The houses around here are all walled in with iron gates. Occasionally something will get the dogs started, and they will join in a chorus. I also heard the braying of a donkey. About 6 am the roosters start. (The sun vs. clock time here is about 1.5 hrs. different from at home. The sun sets about 10:15 now.)

There is a small courtyard just below our window. One of the rooms off the courtyard is the kitchen. It is interesting to wake from a nap late in the afternoon and listen to the women as they are fixing dinner. They work very hard, but they seem to really enjoy themselves. There is a lot of laughter and singing.

Tonight is the wedding. They were busy at the church last night decorating it for the wedding. This is going to be a big time for the entire church body here.

I will be teaching on Thursday evening next week. I have been trying to be sensitive to what the Lord would have me share, and I think that it is be on what it means to be created in the image of God and what it means to worship the Creator of heaven and earth. I really desire to bring a good word to these people.

It is almost 9 and I would really like to shower. Breakfast should be soon, also.

## **12 Julio 1998**

It is 9:20 am and we are waiting to go to the temple. I am really tired, it was such a long day yesterday. The morning was relaxing.

Yesterday we met as a team and had a sweet time of worship and prayer. The team members are really coming together and are much more relaxed with each other. The girls spent some quality time playing children's singing games, but they had a ball.

Lunch was lentil soup, and it was delicious. I ate somewhat in a hurry as I got involved in a project that ended up taking all afternoon. We brought 7 microphones with us, but they do not have enough mic cords here. As a result, I spent all afternoon soldering microphone cables.

Paco asked me to use the digital camera and be the "official" photographer for the wedding. So I got there about 6. The wedding was extremely interesting, and I got a lot of pictures.

The chairs were set up with one large isle in the center which had a white ribbon tied across it. Only the side isles were used for people to get to their seats. Two young girls stood at the end of the isle at the ribbon. There were four chairs set up at the front of the isle facing the stage, and two white pillows on the floor in front of the chairs. To the left was a small table with flowers and a small pillow that had the rings. The groom came in earlier and was standing by the chairs when the bride came in. They played a wedding fanfare and the bride entered. The ribbon was untied and she came down the isle accompanied by her a gentleman, who was the father of the groom. Since everything was in Spanish I could not understand what was being said, but it was obvious that Paco preached an evangelistic message. After the message they exchanged vows and rings. The couple then knelt on the pillows, and there was a laying on of hands and a time of fervent prayer. The couple rose, kissed and were presented to the congregation.

The couple then left the temple to drive around the city. Immediately all the people sprang into action. The chairs, which are white resin chairs, were cleared and tables were brought down from upstairs. The tables were set up, somewhat of a noisy process, and set. The food was brought out and placed on the tables, but nothing can happen until the couple returns. When the couple returns the eating begins. The

food was delicious. I am really enjoying the food. You do not generally place your food on a dinner plate, although when we eat here you could. Things like salads are just eaten from a common plate.

The wedding cake was huge and beautiful. The meal ended with the cutting of the cake, and then the room was cleared, swept and the chairs set up for church today.

We then spent some time as a worship team practicing, and I did not get to bed until after 1 am. I was really tired—wary. I still don't have a pillow, but I was so tired I fell asleep fairly quickly. The morning came to quickly.

They only have one volume level here for the worship team—loud. We find that a little disconcerting, but are adjusting to it. The room also has a long reverberation time, so it is loud on stage. Gloria and Nicki, Paco's children who lead worship here, are very talented. Nicki particularly is excellent on the keyboard. Gloria leads the singing.

### **10:50 pm**

It is now the end of a long and exciting day. First was church.

Church starts at 11 am Spanish time, which this morning was 11:20. Paco started with a lengthy introduction, and then their worship team led a time of praise. Their team is led by Gloria, who leads singing and plays guitar; Nicky, Paco's son, does keyboard; a drummer; bass player and about 6 singers. There are no harmonies; everyone sings melody. They apparently do not know how to sing harmony; it not be a part of their culture. They have one volume level—loud.

The praise is very expressive. They dance, clap, shout and generally have a good time. They do not do much in the way of what we call worship songs.

During the singing about six dancers—all teenage girls wearing white skirts, colorful over-blouses and playing tambourines, lead down front of the stage. All of the worship team are young. Gloria is 18, Nicky is younger.

Then Paco spent some time introducing all the visitors, and there were many, partly because of the wedding. For the offering they come forward to bring their tithes and offerings.

After the offering we were invited to come up and lead worship. It took us a few minutes to change keyboards, etc. Kevin had some introductory remarks that Rhonda interpreted for him. He brought greetings and explained we were not there to perform, but to worship with them and serve them. Then we started with one of the Spanish songs.

The reaction was overwhelming. Their worship was tremendous; the energy just flowed. I never experienced such excitement. We praised and worshipped. They knew many of the songs we did in English, and so the language barrier was virtually non-existent. It is hard to explain the depth of our praise as a team.

Paco's sermon was taken from Acts 14:8 ff. While I did not understand much of he said, I caught some of it. His main point was that we do not need to go to someplace special, like Toronto or Pensacola, for God to minister to us. If we do that is magic. But God ministers to us where we are. The faith is in us.

The ministry time was intense. It is very Penticostal-type, with people being slain in the Spirit. Paco does not do the ministering, but many of the people come down to minister. Then those who were ministering in turn get ministered to. Some of our people went forward to minister. Susan ministered to two women, one with AIDS, who were both slain. Rhonda interpreted for her and others. Kevin ministered as well as Renee and Michelle.

The service ended about 2:15-2:30. Afterward we all went to McDonalds for lunch. It was nice to have an air-conditioned place. Today has been very hot and very windy. We then took a drive to the beach, where we spent the rest of the afternoon—till about 7 or so. The beach where we were is one of the top rated beaches in Europe. Just out a little from the shore is a small island with a structure call Hercules' Castle.

We are getting used to the money here. The unit is the pesato, which has a current exchange rate in range 140-150 pst/dollar. The coins go from 5 to 500 pst, and then bills from 1000 on up. Some things are less expensive, some more, but not much either way. At McDonalds the McPolla (McChicken) meal deal was 670 pst (\$4.50), but that included the tax. A can of coke from a vending machine is 100 pst.

Paper products are expensive, since there are no trees in southern Europe. Here at the "comunidad" there is no toilet paper in the stalls; each person keeps their own. Napkins are only used here on special occasions. That is true on a more broad scale than just the center, because even those who are staying in homes remark on the scarcity of paper. It was funny at McDonald's, because napkins were plentiful. Several of us took a wad of them with us.

Dinner was served here about 10 pm. The main dish was spaghetti in a sauce not unlike Spaghetti-O's. It also had pieces of sausage. There was the usual salad and bread. Watermelon was desert.

I am very tired. I started the day tired, but was greatly energized at church. I do not know how I could keep up this pace if I were not in such good shape, physically. I hope that I can get a good night's sleep tonight. It is still quite early to go to bed (11:30), but at least I can sleep in a little. I am going to try to spend some time with the Lord.

### **13 Julio 1998**

Interesting thing happened after I prayed last night. While I was writing on the journal and praying I could hear some clapping, like people were singing. I couldn't hear the singing, but it sounded like some of the men. So I decided to investigate. It turns out 6 or 7 of the men had dragged mattresses out onto the roof and were just praising the Lord. I just stood in the doorway and listened at first. When they sang some tunes that I knew in English I joined in. At one point they sang Paco's song, which he wrote based on "Blessed is the nation who's God is the Lord.". During the song you shout out the name of the nation you are singing for. The first time they shouted "Italia" (there are many Italians here), then they shouted "España". It sounded like they were finished with the song, so I shouted out "America". So they sang it again for America. They then prayed for a while.

I was really tired from the activities on Sunday, particularly since I danced for about 20 minutes straight during the praise time. Still, I didn't get to bed until 1 am. I was tired enough that I went to sleep in spite of the mosquitoes and not having a pillow. Actually the wind was blowing so hard that there were no mosquitoes. But during the night that changed. I woke between 5:30 and 6 to the buzz of mosquitoes in my ears. I tried for a while to created so carnage, but that was a lost cause. I realized that this was hopeless, so I got up and came down here to the commons room. I thought maybe there were no mosquitoes there since it was closed up and dark. WRONG. In five minutes I gave up and went into the office. There are screens on the windows of the office, but even there it was hopeless. So I ended up with less than five hours sleep.

I tried to work on some of the pictures on the computer, but fell asleep at the keyboard. I ended up missing breakfast, but that was ok.

I finally got my first hot shower this morning. Many of the houses do not have hot water heaters that stay hot. Rather they light a gas burner that heats the water as it comes in. I did not realize this and up to now have been taking cold showers. The woman whose house we use for showers does not speak any English, so communication has been difficult, but both of us finally understood the problem. So today I had a hot shower.

The construction of all their buildings is block and/or brick covered with stucco. As a result plumbing is difficult to run up walls. Their showers are hand held shower heads on a hose.

It is so hot and dry. No clouds in the sky day after day. No rain from May to September. Yet there is plenty of water. There is a river that runs through the city, and there are also wells. We are only a few miles from the beach. But it has been hot even at night. The first night we were here it got quite cool, but since then it has not been comfortable to sleep.

Milford and Derrick finally got a chance to go to the supermarket and get some things, including a mosquito repellent device. Hopefully it works so we can get a good nights sleep.

The major event of the day was a prayer walk. The entire team, except Kevin, who was working with Paco, walked into town. There are four areas of the city Paco wanted us to pray in: Santa Ana, the city center, the city plaza and the temple. We left a little after 11 am and didn't get back until about 3. As a result we spent 4 hours in the sun during the hottest part of the day.

When we got back to the comunidad I was exhausted. I ate a little lunch, drank a lot of water (I had drunk more than a liter before we left) and fell into bed for a siesta. About 5:45 I got up, still sore and aching, washed my face, etc. and got dressed for tonight. I really didn't know how I was going to get through the praise, with the excitement and dancing. We are leading worship each night this week. I took a couple of Advils.

Things did not get started until almost 8 – the meeting time is 7 – and worship was just sweet and wonderful. The energy of the Lord just flowed into me and I danced and sang. The sweat was literally running off me; my shirt was wet. Right at the end of the worship time I lost my voice, though. To the Spanish, singing in harmony is almost unknown, and they love to hear our harmonies. As a result they turn up the volume on the alto and tenors.

Kevin preached/taught a prophetic message on worship that was enthusiastically received. When he gave the call for ministry, every single person went forward. His message was from Amos about how the Israelites went up to Gilgal (man-made worship), Bethel (worship of past events) and Beersheba (worship of man). All of these are temptations that we can fall into, so he was warning them. Paco was very appreciative.

We ate dinner about 10:30. It was delicious, as usual. Thursday the team is going to fix them a good American meal: barbecued chicken, potatoes, gravy, etc. We have to build a small barbecue pit, etc. Don has done this many times before, and has a good recipe.

It is now 11:35, and I am physically very tired. I am not going to stay up much later, but personal time has been scarce. Hopefully, I will have more time tomorrow. I would also like to get to the mall.

There is a tendency to think of this place as a third world country, but that is a mistake. The city is very old, the streets are very narrow, the cars are small, with a wide variation in design, but it is a modern city. Petrol is very expensive: 110-140 pst per liter. The dryness and sand make for a lot of dust, but there are beautiful flowers everywhere. The Spanish architecture is very evident. All of the peaked roofs are the curved tiles. There are accents everywhere of ceramic tile. It is very colorful. The insides of the houses, from what I have seen, is beautiful.

I found out a few things about the comunidad today. Nueva Vida actually operates a construction-type business. When the men first come into the program they do not work in the business for a year or so. It is very important to rehabilitate them. The ones that do work do not necessarily go out every day. I am not sure of all the details, but it provides a wage for the men and income for the fellowship. They also have women in the program. The woman who was our guide for the prayer walk has AIDS, although the doctors cannot understand how her blood count is so low. Her husband died of AIDS, and both her two sons have been healed from AIDS. Drugs and alcohol are a big problem in Spain. You can go into almost any little store and they will be selling wine and distilled liquors. Some of the residents are from Germany and Italy.

Today as we were praying at Santa Ana I had a special experience. I really felt prompted to ask the group to pray for me and Kevin as we prepare our messages, but as I was sharing that I was just overcome with emotion and started to cry. As one of the team members was praying she mentioned that strongholds were going to fall, and I realized I had not cried since I was a child. I believe God is breaking that stronghold. I hope I do not become a blithering idiot.

This has been a long one, and I need to pray before I head to bed.

### **14 Julio 1998**

Here it is, 11:45 pm and we have just finished our meal and had a meeting. I am really feeling badly that I have not been able to send Carol and Judy emails. But tomorrow I will get them off.

Last night was a rough night; for the first time mosquitoes were not a problem. The mosquito repellent thing seemed to work quite well. I was so tired, anyway, I don't think it would have made much difference. But sometime during the night I work up shivering. As hot as it was I had to close the windows above the bed. I figured I had a temperature, and that was confirmed in the morning. I also had a headache and some other muscle aches, and took some ibuprofen. I stayed in bed, and except for the two times I got up to go to the bathroom, slept soundly until 11. I think I just was dehydrated and suffering some reaction to the heat. I took a shower and felt somewhat better.

This afternoon we went over to San Fernando to do some shopping at a large mall. You can see San Fernando from Chiclana. Both Paci and Juanshu are from San Fernando, and Juanshu works there in the ship yard. It is primarily a port and military installation, and is larger than Chiclana. The population of Chiclana is about 55 K. San Fernando's historical claim to fame is that it was the only part of Spain not conquered by Napoleon and the French. When Napoleon's army approached San Fernando their heavy equipment got bogged down in the saltwater swamps that surround the city. This area has been used to mine salt since Roman times. As a result, the Spanish government was able to continue to function in San Fernando until they could regain the country. You can see some of the breastworks that guarded the only bridge into the city.

The mall was beautiful. It is amazing for such a dry area in the summer how beautiful everything is. We had about an hour and a half to shop before meeting for lunch, and I was able to find presents for everyone. (I am not going to tell since you will be getting this as an email.) Not very many people speak English here, but it is surprising how well you can get along. I wish I knew the numbers better. Counting to ten does not do much when the price of something is 3195 pasetas and I have to see it written. The people are very gracious here.

I got a short nap before the meeting tonight. It is impossible not to enter into the spirit of praise, but I made a real effort to be moderate. Even so, I sweated through my shirt. But I have been making a conscientious effort to drink much more water. I really feel pretty good now. The service tonight was another excellent time of worship. I really felt the Lord prompting me, even last night, that if I would bow before him others would follow. So I did. This has not been easy for me (another stronghold broken?). When I looked up after some time on my face, the entire team was kneeling and several people in the congregation. They love to praise here, dancing, clapping, singing; but I do not sense a real worship. While I was worshipping the Lord I received what I believe was a word. It was a hard word, to the effect that the Spanish people were a proud people, but their pride was not from the Lord; that they needed to learn to humble themselves and God would lift them up. Perhaps I should have waited and submitted it to Paco, but that thought did not enter my mind. I was trembling as I brought it forth. This evening I asked Kevin about it, and he had some misgivings. I told him that I was submitted to him and Paco, and if Paco wanted to bring a correction that was fine with me. Kevin will speak about it tonight.

Tomorrow is going to be another exciting day. We are going on a prayer drive to five cities, including Gibraltar and the southern-most city in Europe. From there you can see Africa. We leave at nine.

**15 Julio 1998**

**6:35 pm.** We have just gotten back from our prayer drive through southern Spain. At the meeting last night Kevin stressed that we would leave at 9 am American, not Spanish, time. We got off at about 10. The 17 of us were loaded in two cars and the Mercedes van. Juanshu drove the lead car, Bonnie the second car and James came last in the van. It is hard to believe how fast Juanshu drove at times – James had to go over 120 kph (75 mph) just to keep up.

Our first stop was Tarifa, which is the southern most city in Europe. Morocco is just 8 miles away and quite easy to see, but it was quite foggy when we got there. We were there to pray concerning the vision Paco and Nueva Vida has to spreading the gospel. The crest of the city has two keys on it, symbolizing that Tarifa is the key to both Africa and Spain.

There is the remains of a castle there, where the story is that when the Moors invaded Spain they captured the son of the king. They gave the king the choice of surrendering the city or they would kill his son. He chose to surrender his son rather than the city.

We split into pairs to pray for a while, then we prayed together. Then we drove to Tarifa's high place. It seems that when the Roman church spread to Spain the people did not want to give up their Roman gods and goddesses. Each city had a male and female god for that city. (Jer 2:28). The Roman church then just changed the name of the gods to make them more acceptable, but the worship basically remained the same. For example, in Tarifa the goddess is "Our Lady of Light" for Tarifa. That sounds like a typical RC name, but that is where the similarity ends.

**00:45** I had to quickly since the van was leaving for the temple. Now to continue:

One of the ancient goddesses is Astarte. According to Juanshu, she is usually represented by a statue of a woman holding a baby, and at her feet is a crescent moon with 8 pointed stars on each end. That is exactly what this statue of Mary holding a baby Jesus looks like, including the crescent. It is a beautiful shrine, and people come from all over the area to bring sacrifices to her.

From there we went to Gibraltar. It turns out that we could not enter Gibraltar because not everyone had their passport. The top of the rock was covered by clouds; according to Josue, it has its own microclimate.

We finished the drive by circling back towards some of the towns, including Medina, where Nueva Vida has fellowships. The countryside is beautiful; rugged hills; windmill farms near the coast; cork trees; large (huge) fields of sunflowers. The road is very good, but mostly two lane.

Tonight's meeting was special. (They all seem to be that way.) Kevin taught on worship. Last night he taught on how praise brings us to an awareness of the presence of God. Tonight he talked on what happens when we come into the presence, which is worship. He used three pictures: Is 6:1-6; Lu (the story of the woman who broke the alabaster ointment) and Rev 4:17-end. He mentioned that the first thing that happens when we come into God's presence is that we fall on our face; then we become aware of some area in our lives that God wants to deal with (Isaiah's lips); that we need to confess that. Next, God lifts us up in restoration, and finally sends us forth.

For the ministry time Kevin invited all of us to stand and sing a worship song; at some point he was going to invite us to bow. Long before he got to that point everyone was on their face. As I was worshipping I began to be aware of pride; at that moment Kevin said that God was particularly wanting to deal in the area of pride in worship. When I heard that, I broke down and just wept. I have never sobbed like that before. I believe God broke something in me tonight, and if it took me coming to Spain for that alone, it was worth it.

Also, Tiffany and Amanda shared a bit of their testimony; mostly of what happened at Brownsville (Pensacola).



Last night I had a difficult time sleeping. I kept thinking about what I am going to share tomorrow. Hopefully I will get more sleep tonight.

## **16 Julio 1998**

**11:35 am** I have just finished the best shower I have had since being here. I also had a good nights sleep, although I struggled with a sore throat during the morning hours. But that seems to be going away.

It is very, very windy again today, the day when beach was on the schedule.

I think I am ready for tonight. I am going to see if I can get it recorded.

Some random thoughts: It is virtually impossible to have any solitude/privacy here. I share a room with four men; the dorm has many more. The noise level is high. The only place and time is late at night, when I have been journalizing, here in the office. But the lighting is poor and the mosquitoes are plentiful. I have not had any time to read or study, and hardly any time to pray.

No one outlined the rules, etc. for living at the comunidad. For example, there is no toilet paper in the public bathrooms. Each person carries their own. But this was never explained, so when I went to use the bathroom there was no paper. Fortunately, the bathroom where we showered had paper, so I was able to use that. But it was a couple of days before this was clear.

## **17 Julio 1998**

**11:55 am** I have just finished another fine shower, and feel much better. Last night the sore throat turned into a chest cough. I stayed in bed rather than go with the rest of the team to Cadiz. We didn't get to bed until very late, after 2. But it was a fantastic evening.

The service last night was exceptional. The praise and worship times continue to get sweeter and sweeter. The Lord's presence is so evident. I was being bothered (attacked?) with a sore throat all day, but I asked to be in the worship team anyway. There were only a handful of us there: Kevin, Michelle, Jana, Don, and Amanda. The rest were busy preparing the supper for tonight.

This evening, as yesterday, Gloria and Nicki joined us on the team, and many of the songs were done in both English and Spanish. Michelle has been leading the last two nights. On the English songs that they did not already know here we prepared Spanish overheads. So Michelle would lead it first in English, then Gloria would lead in Spanish, and it would go back and forth. That way they learned some new songs, and everyone could sing. The anointing has been getting sweeter.

At first I could sing all right, but began to notice my throat getting sore. I really figured that it would not make a lot of difference whether I was on the stage or not. I backed off the singing, but it is impossible not to join in the praise dancing. But even that was bothering my throat.

As we moved into the worship time I left the stage and went to the back area to be alone with the Lord for awhile. I know it sounds strange, but I have never worshipped the Lord like this. My emotions are so involved. I sat at one of the small tables and bowed my head before Him for a while. I was just filled with gratitude. After a bit I went back into the room, down to the front row where Paco and Juanshu sit. I bowed before the Lord and just worshipped for awhile. I was still hot and somewhat sweaty, and as I was before the Lord a cool breeze just blew over me. It was so refreshing, and I was so grateful.

About 9 I started my teaching; I stayed pretty close to my notes and outline, and as a result finished earlier than I anticipated—9:45. So I asked for questions, and for the next hour the questions came. Not a person moved. The questions were good, and it was so enjoyable. I was relaxed.

At one point, Ulli, a German resident who knows Spanish well, some English, but speaks German best, started a long question. Paco understands German very well (his wife, Syglinda, is German), so Ulli presented this dissertation/question in German. It took him at least 3 or 4 minutes; of course, along with all the other people there, I did not understand him, but when he finished, before Paco had a chance to say anything, I answered "Yes". At that point the entire room erupted in laughter.

So the meeting did not end until 11. It turns out that was a real blessing to the cooks back here. The chicken was cooking slower than expected, and had we gotten back here at 11 it would not have been ready.

Dinner was a smashing success. Barbecued chicken quarters (the chicken was outstanding), baked potatoes, green beans and chocolate chip cookies. The oven for baking the cookies was not as hot as they expected, so it took longer to bake, but they were excellent.

We were also seated differently. Instead of the team at one large table, we were split up. At the center, there is strict separation of the sexes. For example, men do not sit at the same table with women, even married couples. The women of the team feel very comfortable here. They do not get any looks that make them feel uncomfortable. I asked the four men "Enscribe tu nombre, por favor." Their names are (left to right in the picture): Jose Carlos M. S., Juan C. Rodrigo, Fransico Fernandez, and Jose Maria R. F.

The consensus is that everyday is building. The first few days in which we did not do much were very important for us to get settled and let them learn to know us a little. Every day the worship has been getting more powerful and the interaction between the team and the church, as well as among the team members, is getting freer and freer.

Everyone here works very hard. (I have not heard one angry word here. I did not even hear a child cry until yesterday) Cleaning is a major chore. Since the wind and sand create a perpetual layer of grit on the floor, the floors are swept and mopped everyday.

While I was sitting here typing, one of the women brought drinks. They seem to have an unending supply of Pepsi Max, the Spice Girls collection.

**5:10 pm** I have spent the afternoon since lunch talking with Josue (Ho-sway). He is one of the teachers in the fellowship here and has a special interest in creation.

The group got back from Cadiz right at lunch time. They were asking me what 46 degrees was. It seems that the temperature gauge at the bus station said 46, but nobody know how to translate that. They thought it was about 104 F. I told them it is actually 115 F, and they were shocked. They said it didn't feel that hot, but then I have never been where it is 115. It is oppressively hot here.

## **18 Julio 1998**

**1:15 am** Tonight was another long service and late dinner. Kevin taught/preached on the anointing: following the pillar of cloud and fire. The anointing is the Holy Spirit, and so the anointing goes with us. He pointed out that the same word that is used to describe the anointing on Jesus in Luke 4 is the same word used to describe the anointing on the believer in II Cor and I John. Much of his discussion of Jesus' ministry under the anointing dovetailed with my teaching last night. He pointed out that we can hinder the Holy Spirit, however, if we are do not move with God when the pillar moves.

The ministry time after the message was powerful. Paco, Kevin and Juanshu ministered, and many, including many of the team, went down under the power of the Holy Spirit. As I was up front on my face before the Lord I experienced what I can only describe as being under the power. I was in that position for a long time and was virtually unconscious of what was happening except for very brief periods.

It is very windy again tonight. Josue says that it is an oriental wind, i.e. out of the east. To the west of us is the Atlantic and to the east the Mediterranean, so the winds can sometimes blow very hard. That is why

there were the large windmill farms around Gibraltar. The wind is very dry, and is blowing so hard they decided not to go to the beach to witness tonight.

There is an interesting accent in the speech of the people from this area. In this province (Cadiz) and one other (Malaga) they slur the soft c and z sounds as “th”, e.g. grathias.

I continue to get a favorable response to the teaching last night. Some of the questions that were asked were very difficult, and I had never thought about them before. For example, one of the questions concerned Jesus as a boy, and if he did any miracles as a boy; why did he wait until he was 30? I believe the answer came straight from God: I had said earlier that Jesus ministered as a man filled with the Holy Spirit, and that he only did what the Father told him to do. It was apparently God’s plan for Jesus not to perform any ministry until he had submitted to the baptism of John and spent the time in the wilderness; that it says in Luke 4 that he returned from the wilderness in the power of the Holy Spirit. So while it is possible that Jesus could have performed miracles, he would have been in disobedience to his Father.

People continue to ask me questions. Today at lunch and again at the temple people asked questions. There is a great deal of interest. Josue has a great deal of knowledge, but at this point his knowledge is way too intellectual for the people. He talks about the Heisenberg uncertainty principle as being an argument for creation, but people recovering from a life of prostitution and drugs need to hear something more pertinent.

In the morning some are going to go to the doll factory, which is close to here. Later we will be going to Paco’s house for the evening. That should be a lot of fun.

**4:30 pm** This has been a relatively uneventful day. I had a good nights sleep and woke about 10 and was feeling pretty good. The cold is still there, but it is not bad.

Chiclana is famous the world over for the Marin porcelain dolls made here. There was a great deal of interest in visiting the factory in town, since there is also a museum and store. One of the women at Nueva Vida works there, and she and her husband sort of organized a trip there this morning. The dolls certainly are pretty impressive.

The attitude of the team right now is very upbeat. The first few days after we arrived were spent just kind of learning our way around—what the rules were, so to speak. The people here were polite and friendly, but still a little reserved. Now things are different. We speak more, even with the language barrier. We joke and laugh together. The people living in homes now know their hosts and hostesses, and we are all familiar with our surroundings.

Just about every member of the team has expressed a feeling that something has happened to them that makes it worthwhile coming. Last night, Milford was really set free during the ministry time. He was dancing without any reservation. All of us have been stretched and ministered to in ways that have surprised us. I guess there is a feeling that perhaps God has accomplished most of what He sent us here to do. Paco testified last night that he will never be the same, and I think the same could be said of all of us as well.

Today is much cooler than yesterday. The wind has shifted to the west and as a result is cooler. Paco said earlier, though, that when that east wind comes it usually lasts a long time, even weeks.

Well, it is probably time to get ready to go to Paco’s house, and I want to get an email ready to send to Carol.

## **19 Julio 1998**

**1:00 am** We are back from our big cookout at Paco’s house, and it was wonderful. In addition to our team he had his leadership team there. Unfortunately, none of them speaks English, so we did not get to directly interact very much. We started with grilled mackerel, which they consider a specialty, chopped tomatoes,

onions and bell peppers, and olives. Then came the grilled pork on skewers. Then watermelon, chocolate pudding and finally cake.

Paco's house is very nice. He said when they first moved here 13 years ago the market price for that house was 7-8,000,000 pts, but the woman who sold it to them only asked 3,500,000 pts and then financed it for them for 5 years. The house is now worth 25,000,000 pts.

This fall there is a large conference in Guatemala, and Gloria and Nicky have been invited to lead worship. It is such an awesome thing for these 2 young people. Before we left, we gathered around them, laid hands on them and prayed.

People on the team are beginning to talk about leaving soon. There was very little talk of that earlier. This morning's worship is for all intents and purposes the end of our ministry here for now. Paco and his wife will be in the US in a month. He is teaching 2 courses at the seminary this fall. Gloria and Nicky, and hopefully Juanshu and Paqui, will be stopping for a week on their way to Guatemala. It should be a happy reunion.

**11:10 pm** This is the last night in Chiclana, and we finally figured out how to work the mosquito repellent device. Maybe no mosquitoes tonight.

Church this morning was good, although I did not understand Paco's message. The best part was at the end when he called the entire team up front and spoke a blessing over us. He said that of all the visitors he has had, and there have been many of them, we were the best. He called his leadership team to surround us and pray for us as he spoke a blessing. He spoke of eagles soaring. As he looked at me he said that the old eagles surround themselves with young eagles and draw strength from them. I was weeping anyway, and just about totally lost it.

After the service was over there were many hugs. Gesseppi was clearly touched as he tried to communicate God's blessing in his Spanish. This church and community was clearly reluctant to accept us at first, possibly because of very bad experiences in the past, but has totally embraced us. There were tears on both sides this morning.

It is something of a tradition for a bunch of them to go to McDonalds after church on Sunday, so that is where we went. Church wasn't over until 3, so we were not finished there until after 5.

From McDonalds we all went to Juanshu and Paqui's house. Juanshu's father and mother have a house right next to theirs which they only use on the weekends. They have a business in San Fernando and have a very nice house there. They use this one as a weekend getaway in the country. Several of the women are staying there. They invited the team out for coffee and sweets in the evening. It was very pleasant, with a nice cool corner of the yard. We sat around and talked for a while, and then they brought out the coffee and two huge platters of pastries.

We got back here about 8 and spent some time packing. For the most part we are ready to go tomorrow. There is no telling what Madrid and the YWAM base is going to be like.

## **20 Julio 1998**

**2:40 pm** On the plane from Jerez to Madrid. Things have gone smoothly so far. We checked our luggage as a group, which is much easier than each one checking his bag. This flight is a short one, just 45 minutes.

Yesterday at Juanshu's house Paqui told us something about the program here. A person makes application and goes through a thorough physical exam and interview process. The application costs 10,000 pts (\$70), but after that everything is free. The process of admittance takes about 3 weeks. During the waiting period it is expected that they would attend church services.

For the first month or so the new person is shadowed 24 hrs. a day by a resident that has been here longer and is doing well. It is important that they start a process of building discipline in a new resident, since one of the characteristics of a drug addict is lack of discipline. If they smoked coming in they are given 30 days. The first week they are permitted to have 4 cigarettes in the morning and 4 in the evening, but they must come and request each one from a staff person. The second week it is dropped to 3, etc. The only place they can smoke is back in the trashy, smelly corner. All communications that first month are strictly monitored, so they learn a lot about the person and their family, which is important.

Typically a person receives Christ in a couple of months, but that is not a requirement. They have regular Bible study and prayer, and are kept busy with chores, of which there are many. Eventually they may work for the construction company. Some back after finishing just to work for the company and live at the center. Anyone who works and gets paid gives half to the center and the rest is theirs.

Husbands and wives are separated to different locations (they have another center in Medina). They are permitted to see each other for six months. There is strict separation of the sexes. Men in the program are not permitted to speak or look at the women, and vice versa.

Juanshu, who is Paco's assistant, went through the program about 6 years ago. Francis, who is in charge of the center, was once a major drug dealer; he was the Amsterdam connection for all of Spain.

## **22 Julio 1998**

**11 pm** This is that last entry that I will make in my log. I did not get to make an entry yesterday, so I will start with that.

The flight from Jerez to Madrid was basically uneventful, except that we checked in late enough that I think we were responsible for holding up the flight for about 45 minutes. When we arrived at Madrid Lynn from WYAM was waiting for us. It was refreshing to hear her proper British accent. Her van could hold about 8, so we made three trips of six (our teams). The YWAM base is about ½ hour from the airport. So it was pretty late by the time we all got here and settled.

We had our first debriefing session in the evening. The purpose of debriefing is to be sure to leave everything negative here. The first session deals with interpersonal feelings, the second with ministry and the third with the culture. The session lasted an hour and half, or two, and went smoothly.

About 10 we left for dinner at a nice Spanish restaurant. It was a small restaurant, but the food was excellent. Spanish restaurants have what they call a "menu", which was like what we had during the prayer drive. The first course was a soup of potato and spare ribs in a pork broth. The second course was veal and french fried potatoes. Finally desert. A lot of restaurants would include another main course as well. The cost was about 1300-1400 pts for everything.

This morning we met again for the second session. During the worship time the Lord surprised me again and showed me the depth of my pride. This time it started as pride in singing, but before it was over I realized He was breaking down a stronghold of pride. I just wept before Him. Worship is so sweet that way. Each person shared in order, and it turned out that I was last (except for Kevin), and I was able to share with the group what God did. I think I could share anything with this group.

Lunch as fantastic and fun. We went to a Spanish pizzeria. First came the salads, which disappeared quickly. Then five large pizzas; only two pieces were left. Desert was great, also: raspberry cheesecake, ice cream, crepes con chocolate, chocolate cheese cake. We didn't finish eating until almost 5, and from there headed downtown to pray at the statue to the fallen angel and some shopping.

We walked to the bus stop, took a bus (they have large, articulated buses) to the end of the Metro line, and took the Metro into town, transferring lines once on the way. We arrived alright, found the statue, but it was an adventure to find the shopping district. We finally ended up taking the Metro to the Plaza of the

Sol. We arrived there at 8:30 and decided to meet back at the Metro station at 10:15. The last bus leaves from the end of the Metro at 11.

Most of us did some shopping for souvenirs and a few just went to Burger King. We all met at the right time, got on the Metro, transferred lines and arrived at the bus stop exactly as the bus arrived. God is so good!

Tomorrow we leave. All are ready to go, some more than ready. The women miss their children and are anxious to get home.

It is hard to express the depth of gratitude I feel to the Lord for all He has done. His provision has been exceptional; there have been no health problems of any consequence; traveling with 18 people can be difficult, but never has there been a problem. There have been no interpersonal problems of any consequence. What a trip!

Thank you, Jesus!