



Kingdom Mosaics from Spain

Pray for Sarah and Adam.

Sarah has moved back to Spain after her year of working in Germany. The last few months were tough (recovery after her accident, short-staffed at the stables, and some difficult German culture and leadership dynamics). She learned a lot over the year, but was very ready to return to Spain. Two days before her return, her boyfriend was in a terrible traffic accident while riding his motorcycle home after working the late shift and suffered a traumatic brain injury and broken bones. He was thrown from the road and into a ditch. His helmet was thrown off in the course of the wreck. *Stop here and say a prayer of praise and thanks that there was a witness who saw what happened at 1:30am and knew that Adam had been thrown from the roadway and was laying in a ditch in the dark! Otherwise, no one would have seen him!

Adam was in a coma for 3 weeks and in CCU and ICU for 40 days. He was finally released from the hospital, but suffered some seizures and was returned to ICU last week. Please pray for Adam, for his mom Sally, and for Sarah as they work to help Adam recover. Sally is a single mom and she is originally from the UK, so it has been very difficult for her to navigate the language and all that is needed to help her son. Sarah has been staying with them and helping translate for Sally and for the doctors, as well as taking shifts staying in the hospital to help Adam so Sally can get some rest. Please also pray for Sarah—this has brought back some trauma responses from her own accident earlier in the year and it is tough to spend your days at a Level 1 trauma hospital when you have your own traumas still tender and fresh in mind.

This will be a very long road. Pray for all involved and for miraculous healing.



Celebrating 16 years with TMS Global!

this issue

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Can you say these 4 statements?

Several years ago, I began reading a series of detective mysteries by Louise Penny. The main character is Inspector Armand Gamache, an older, experienced police detective who is nearing the end of his career and is spending his final years mentoring newer, younger detectives. These are what we call his “legacy years” – the final few years of his career when he is still working, but also leaning heavily into imparting his wisdom and training up the next generation.

I was particularly struck by Gamache’s “four statements” lesson. He says there are four things that lead to wisdom - four statements that you need to learn to say and to mean.

I don’t know.

I need help.

I was wrong.

I’m sorry.

Billy and I were listening to a podcast this morning and the podcasters quoted these four statements. The hosts were discussing what it takes to build character, and they referenced the statements from Gamache as integral skills to showing maturity in character.

As Billy and I were listening and talking through this, we reflected on our lives and work as cross-cultural workers. The ability to lean into these statements is in direct correlation to a CCW’s ability to be a humble learner in another culture. We are now entering our legacy years, the final 10 or so years when we are leaning heavily into training others, mentoring, coaching the next generation of cross-cultural workers, and focusing on leadership development. One

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of the biggest values that we want to see in CCWs is that they are humble learners – that they can enter a culture or a relationship with humility and with the posture of a learner. The ability to always see that there is something more to be learned in any given situation is critical, and the humility to admit that we are not the experts, we don't have all the answers, and we have so much to discover and learn from others and their stories.

The hard part is that we come from a culture that values knowledge, that rewards independence and a can-do attitude, and we are a culture that is accustomed to being the helper or the teacher, not the other way around. All of those are good qualities and they're part of what makes America the powerhouse that it is in the world. But it's also what associates America with power, and that sometimes hinders us from being able to build good relationships and go deep with people in other cultures. When we are seen as (or perceived as) always right or independent or people who have lots of knowledge and power, we are not seen as vulnerable or broken or in need of help or guidance. That attitude actually separates us from our neighbors.

It also separates us from The Gospel.

When we can be humble learners and more 'real' to our neighbors, we can begin to break down to perceptions and barriers. When I can feel free to make mistakes in my Spanish, I am showing my neighbors that I am not perfect. When I ask for help and admit that I don't know how to do something, I'm showing that I don't know everything (sometimes even the simplest things in this culture like how to pay a particular bill or cook a typical food). When I ask for help, I'm also honoring the other person with a statement of my own vulnerability and a statement of trust in their knowledge and ability to teach me.

Perhaps the biggest one is the ability to say, "I'm sorry." Sometimes we make mistakes. Sometimes our mistakes are hurtful. While I never intend to hurt anyone with my actions, sometimes my cultural ignorance gets in the way and I do, indeed, hurt someone. Saying "I'm sorry" is modeling a key component of the Gospel. Admitting that I did something that was hurtful is admitting my guilt or my sin, and asking for forgiveness is the obvious next step. When we model the process of admitting our faults and asking for forgiveness, we are living out a Kingdom principle in everyday life with our neighbors.

The best place to start is practice. Practice saying these four statements. I promise, it won't take long for a situation to arise in which you could say, "I need help" or "I don't know". I don't think a day goes by when I don't have cause to say, "I'm sorry" or "I was wrong" or "I don't know" and "I need help". In fact, I'm pretty sure that every single day holds reason to say at least some of these statements.

Start with today. Keep your eyes and ears and heart open for the opportunity to practice one of these statements. I wonder where it might take you? I wonder how your relationships might be different if you start to practice using these?



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Cross-cultural training at Asbury Seminary

In July, we completed another training intensive for cross-cultural workers. This year, we held our 3-week training at Asbury Theological Seminary. TMS Global and Asbury have a long-standing partnership and it was a natural fit for us to work on the Asbury campus. (Some of you may recall the Asbury name from the recent awakening or revival that occurred on their campus earlier this year, bringing tens of thousands to their chapel from around the world and sparking renewed worship and service.)

This year, I led a team of 12 facilitators with a shared experience of 150+ years living and serving as cross-cultural workers. Our facilitators have lived in Kazakhstan, Peru, Jordan, India, UAE, Spain, Kosovo, Liberia, and Kenya, and they have served in too many countries to name! With that depth of experience in various cultures comes a depth of stories and real-life connections that only our training can give.

One of our trainees said, “It was a training like no other. I am leaving better than I was. This was an incredible time of learning and connection. When you get a room full of people who are passionate about Jesus, the transformation and learning comes naturally.”



Our cross-cultural worker (CCW) trainees this year were also diverse. We hosted trainees from the USA, Kenya, North Africa, France and other places I cannot specifically mention for security reasons. Some of our trainees are already working in their places of service, while others are preparing to launch to fields in Asia, USA, East Africa, North Africa, and Europe. All of this diversity in the room also means there are various cultures, worldviews, languages, religious backgrounds, and values represented. This always makes for an amazing opportunity for learning and growing together!

We have an intense curriculum that covers 75+ hours of sessions covering three threads: Cross-cultural ministry and skills, Spiritual Formation, Member Care / Personal Wellbeing. We incorporate daily scripture engagement and worship. One of the things that makes our program unique is the fact that alongside our adult training program, we run a program for children and families who will be serving cross-culturally. The children’s program follows the adult program topics in age-appropriate curriculum sessions. When adults are learning about Serving on Cross-cultural Teams or about Conflict Management and Resolution, the children’s sessions are also touching those same topics.

“Humble learning was a very helpful concept to me. When I started cross-cultural ministry work, I was offended if people couldn't change and be like me. I went to the mission field thinking I knew it all, but I realized that I also have a lot to learn from others.”

A strong sense of community is a key factor in a comprehensive training program. While we are training individuals to go out and serve, we are also training people to live in community, to go out and be relational beings, as God created us, and to love their neighbors well. As we consider a strong training program, we also want to consider building a strong community of people who feel grounded and nurtured and supported, and who have the attitude of humble learners ready to learn from the community around them. “It was such a blessing to get a glimpse of the highs and lows of cross-cultural work. It’s a place where we formed community and a deeper understanding of God’s heart for us and for the nations,” said *Abraham.

It is such a privilege and honor to have the opportunity to speak into the lives of cross-cultural workers serving around the world.

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- Our greatest desire is to see people become who God created them to be and to live into their purpose. We believe that everyone has value. Everyone has talents, skills, and unique abilities. We want to see that come alive!
- Nurturing and developing people to be healthy spiritually, physically, emotionally, and relationally - because "care" is not just an emotional feeling word, "care" is a verb - an action. That's what we're about - developing and caring for people so they can live into their unique design and God-given purpose.

Become a Partner! We would love to have you on our team!

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