

# Fear Not

A Micah Project Christmas Letter  
December 2016

*"Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people"*  
-Luke 2:10



There is a place down by the river that runs through the outdoor market of Tegucigalpa that the street kids call "Los Chorros." It is created by a creek that runs down the mountains and forms a small, natural waterfall where it flows into the polluted waters of the river. Though the area is strewn with trash and on the warmest days the water smells strongly of rot, many of the street kids use this place to wash the grime of street life off their bodies and clothes.

On July 13 of this year, a fourteen-year-old boy named Josue was doing just that. He had spent the morning at one of the biggest intersections of the city, where, during the red lights, he would move out into the middle of the street and juggle three tennis balls for about thirty seconds while the cars waited their turn at the stoplight. He would then scurry down the center lane and beg for money from those who watched his performance in the remaining seconds before the light turned green. After a couple hours of this, the black diesel exhaust would create a grimy film on his skin as he crisscrossed the intersection.

Josue slipped into the cool water and began to try to rub the grime off his body, but soon he realized that he was not alone. Coming through the alleyway that runs towards the river were five young men affiliated with one of the violent gangs that fight for turf in the narcotics trade in Honduras. Josue jumped out of the water and gathered his things to flee; they quickly surrounded him to block his path. The tallest one of the group demanded his money, but he knew that the few lempiras he had earned at the stoplight were his only means to eat for the rest of the day; he shook his head no. Almost immediately, the group jumped on him and began to beat him mercilessly. He cried out in pain until a blow to the head left him unconscious.

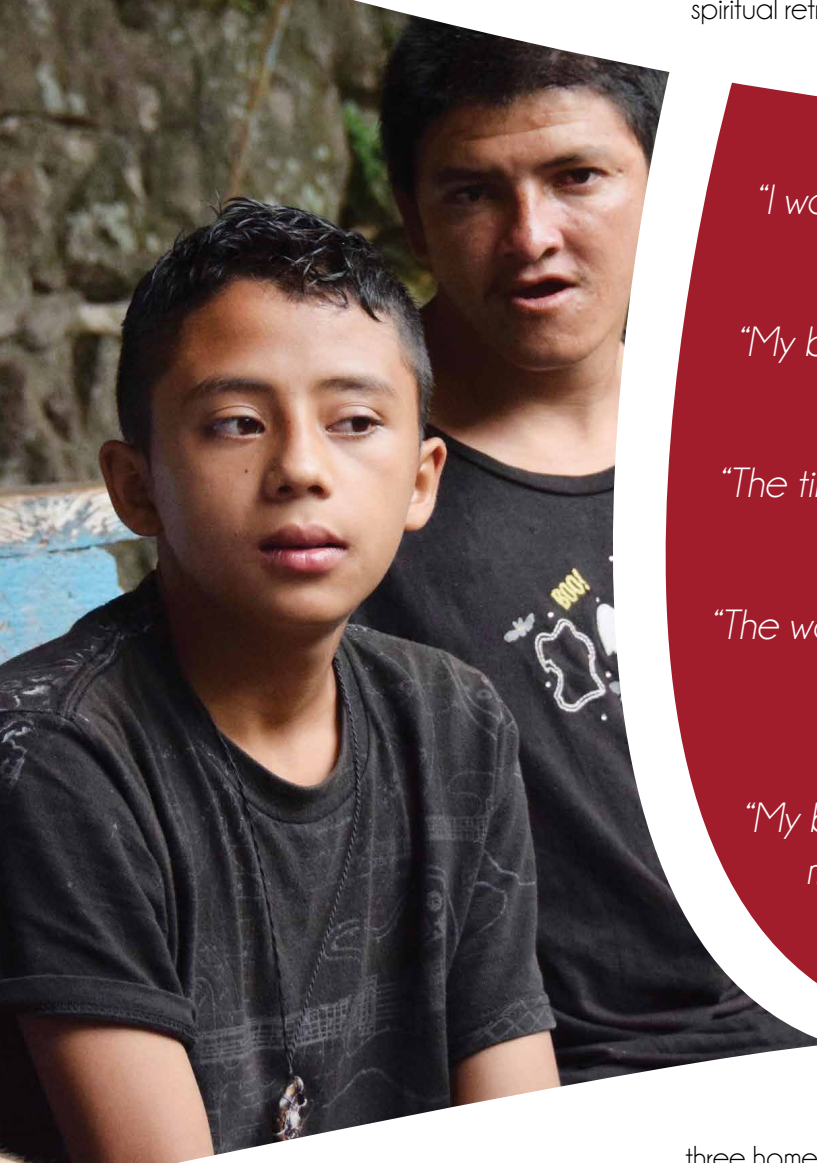
Josue woke up in the public hospital, unsure of how he got there. Most likely, some good Samaritan had called an ambulance for him when they saw his crumpled body by the side of the river. The hospital kept him for a couple of days to monitor his severe concussion and then released him back to the streets.

A couple of weeks later, Josue showed up to our street kid soccer ministry at the dilapidated facility we rent every Tuesday in the downtown area. He sat down beside me in the stands while the other street kids played and began to tell me his story. He was from a rural village in southern Honduras, but his life changed dramatically when his dad was jailed just after Josue's tenth birthday. A few months later, his mom disappeared one night with her boyfriend and never returned home. Josue got on a bus to Tegucigalpa hoping to find her but landed in a homeless shelter instead and eventually ended up on the streets. He quickly became addicted to the yellow glue that the street kids use to forget such painful memories.



When he finished telling me his story, he had tears running down his face. With his head in his hands, he said, *"I'm afraid. If I stay on the streets, the gangs are going to kill me. I don't want to live on the streets anymore."* I hugged him as he wept, and as the soccer game wound down, I gave him a few lempiras and told him to come out to the Micah House on the bus later that week so that we could talk some more.

That night, I just couldn't shake those two words out of my heart: *I'm afraid*. In a perfect world, the only thing a fourteen-year-old should be afraid of is not getting his homework done on time or getting a bad grade on a test. But when the guys in the Micah Project talk about their past lives, fear is often a defining factor. In fact, at a spiritual retreat in November, our pastor John Bell asked the guys to write about a time when they were most afraid. Their answers were truly tragic:



*"I was most scared the first time someone pointed a gun at me."*

*"My biggest fear is to fall back into drug abuse and return to the streets."*

*"The time I was most afraid is when they almost killed my brother and me."*

*"The worst fear I ever had was when my dad came home drunk and tried to stab me with a knife."*

*"My biggest fear comes from never having known my mom and realizing that the lack of motherly love left a big hole in my heart."*

So much fear.

So much despair. Truly, the young men that live in our three homes are the victims of a world order that has been broken down by sin and evil. Innocence is quickly lost as they come to realize that, on the streets, much of the world is against them, and they must be smart, fast and lucky in order to survive.

Thankfully, our guys' stories do not end in fear. That is due to the great love of another homeless Child who also had to flee for His life when the evil world of His day threatened to kill Him when He was still just a baby. In fact, the first words the angels spoke to announce His birth were "fear not!"

*"Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord."* - Luke 2:10-11

The Micah Project exists because of the tremendous hope in those words: fear not. The young souls wasting away on the streets no longer have to live in bondage to fear. Praise be to God: joy has come through a homeless Savior!

Two days after Josue wept in my arms at the soccer facility, he showed up at the front gate of the Micah House. Walking up to the house, he passed our soccer field and saw the boys chattering happily as they dribbled the ball back and forth. He walked onto our front porch, and heard two of the boys in earnest conversation with one of our missionaries. He smelled the delicious aromas wafting out of our kitchen, where our cook Aida was passing out coffee and cookies to those gathered around for an afternoon snack.



Josue saw joy in our house, and he wanted in. That was July 20, 2016: his first day as a Micah boy!

A few months later, in the first week in November, Josue celebrated his first birthday as part of the Micah Project. He chattered excitedly to me as he and I walked around the Micah property that day: he was so excited because it was the first time in his entire life that he had ever celebrated his birthday! At dinner that evening, we gathered in the dining room with the rest of the boys and staff to sing "happy birthday," open presents and blow out candles on the cake. A few of the guys shared some words of encouragement to Josue, and then he asked to speak. After thanking everyone for their support, he said, *"I just want to thank God that He has allowed me to be here at Micah. Now I am happy because I have a family."*

Our work is never easy, and we are often grieved by the effects of sin and brokenness on the population that the Lord has called us to work with. There are still many children on the streets – many of whom we know by name and love dearly – who continue to live in daily fear for their lives. But when Josue declared his joy to the gathered guests that night, he reminded us why we fight to keep hope alive, and why we fight on behalf of these boys. We are called to create a family for them: a safe, loving, hope-filled family – one that puts an end to fear.

The prophet Micah also reminds us why we must keep fighting. In one of the most beautiful passages of all the Scriptures, he gives us a vision of a world in which homelessness, poverty, violence and the bondage of addiction will no longer exist. Of that future kingdom, he writes:

Everyone will sit under their own vine  
and under their own fig tree,  
and no one will make them afraid,  
for the Lord Almighty has spoken.  
-Micah 4:4, (italics added)



This promise may only be realized when our Savior comes again to restore His kingdom. But every time a child leaves the fear and death of street life behind, that day of restoration and hope moves one step nearer.

Your part in this restoration is absolutely vital. Currently, there are thirty-four young men living in our three homes--all at different stages of their journeys--but each one committed to leaving the bondage to fear in the past and pushing on towards God's plan for their lives. There are also many young men on the streets, to whom we minister on a daily basis, that desperately need to join the Micah family and begin this same journey towards healing. Along with your prayers and love for them, your gift in December and your investment in their lives throughout the next year tells our boys, "Fear not! Your lives may have been tragic, violent and sad up to this point. But through His faithfulness, our Savior has provided you this place where there is no more fear, a place of joy and restoration."

Thank you for helping us bear these tidings of good news to the street kids of Honduras!

Su hermano en Cristo,

Michael Miffer

# #WhyMicah?

"It's hard not to come and see that God is working here in the lives of the boys and in the lives of the staff, but I think the other thing that I think has been so surprising to me is how God has chosen this to work in my own life."

- Becca Herbold



"It's not just an organization or ministry we're part of. It's a family, and now we're entrenched for life."

- Chris Herbold

"Micah helped me know Jesus... Why wouldn't I love Micah? Micah is my family."



- Olvin Funez

We are inviting our friends and supporters to describe why they feel called to be a part of the Micah family. We would love to hear from you! Film a short video explaining why you support Micah, or write it on social media. **Be sure to make your video "public" and include the hashtag #WhyMicah in your post. Join the #WhyMicah movement!** [micahprojecthonduras.org/resources/videos.html](http://micahprojecthonduras.org/resources/videos.html)

## News and Notes

### Micah in El Salvador?

That's right! Long-time missionaries Israel and Jenna Zaldaña have felt the Lord calling them to open a home for street boys in neighboring El Salvador. Keep up with the progress and sign up to get updates at [goo.gl/oWb8A8](http://goo.gl/oWb8A8)

### Waste Water Treatment Plant

The Wastewater Treatment Plant that serves Micah 2.0 and Villa Linda Miller is in need of rehabilitation. A properly operating plant is important to the environment and health of the community. To learn more and see how you can partner in this work visit [goo.gl/Uqbkxf](http://goo.gl/Uqbkxf)

### Job Openings

We are looking for missionaries to serve with the Micah Project as Director of Operations and as the Micah House Coordinator. Please contact us at [micahproject@hotmail.com](mailto:micahproject@hotmail.com) if interested in knowing the job descriptions and qualifications.

[www.micahprojecthonduras.org](http://www.micahprojecthonduras.org)

