

Firmly Planted

The Micah Project

Summer 2012 Letter

But I am like an olive tree
flourishing in the house of God
Psalm 52:8

Uprooted from home and family, Hector was already living on the streets by the age of seven. His mom had been killed in a car accident when he was just a toddler and his dad, who has severe physical disabilities, sold bottled water on a street corner to try to make ends meet. As the family sunk further into poverty and despair, his older brother Osman left for the streets, where he would be murdered in a drive-by shooting in 2011. Young Hector followed his brother to the streets, and soon became a permanent resident of the alleyways of Tegucigalpa. During his years on the streets, Hector occasionally spent time under the bridges with other street kids, but mostly, he preferred to be alone. So totally addicted to yellow glue was he that his days were a glassy-eyed blur of wandering...sometimes begging for food, sometimes sleeping in the doorways of closed-down businesses.



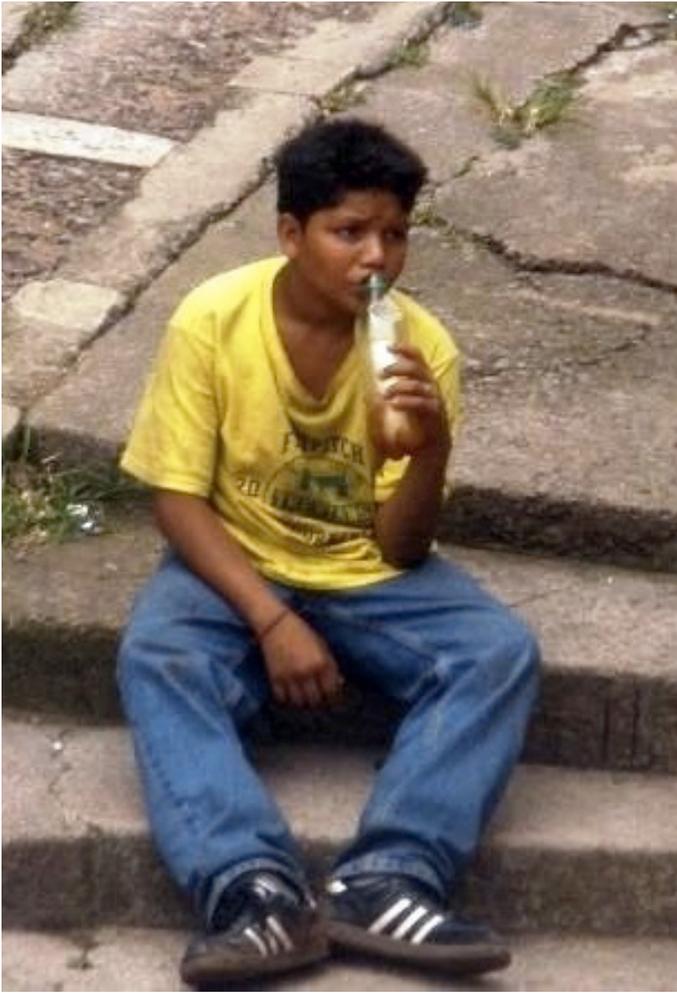
He wasn't a troublesome kid, even on the streets. In the years that we made an effort to get to know him through our street ministry, he was sweetly amiable, resisting all of our attempts to get him off the streets with a shy, slightly vacuous smile. It wasn't that he was so rooted to street life that he couldn't imagine leaving it; it's just that wandering had become his habit, floating through life in a cloud of yellow glue fumes...drifting.

Uprooted.

Hector asleep on a sidewalk in downtown Tegucigalpa.

I have tried to describe for twelve years what it is like to be a child of the streets. I can paint an accurate picture of the surroundings in which they live and describe the causes and effects of being a street kid, but it is almost impossible for me to describe *what it feels like* to be one. When I look back on my life, I have been blessedly "rooted and established in love" (Ephesians 3:17), both by my own family and by my broader family: the body of Christ. How can I possibly describe what it is like to be rootless?

This past spring break, several of our boys felt a burden to do just that: to put into words what it's like to be a street kid. Marvin Morazan, along with Wilmer and Edwin, wrote a song called "Nobody's Child" and then spent an entire week back on the streets they came from to film a video to accompany it. Rather than me trying to describe to you what it is like to be a street kid, listen to their own, heartbreaking words...



Hector inhales yellow glue on the streets of Tegucigalpa.

Three-and-a-half years after moving into the Micah House, the blank stare that defined Hector's daily life on the streets has been replaced by a twinkling gleam and a quick and ready smile. He celebrated his 16th birthday last month...a student, an athlete, a faithful friend, a born-again child of God. Even at 16, Hector is still giggly and goofy and always ready for a hug. While it took him a while to put down roots and to kick his glue addiction (he still wakes up at night dreaming that he is inhaling yellow glue), I can honestly say that what keeps him rooted in our Micah family is love. Look at the picture of him surrounded by the Micah family at his birthday party! The smile on his face and the joy in his eyes speak of rootedness...of being surrounded and safe: firmly planted by love.

Hector celebrated his 16th birthday in April surrounded by his Micah brothers!

Nobody's Child (Hijo de Nadie)

I am nobody's child, nobody wants me and nobody loves me;
Everybody blames me for having been born this way,
without having my parents at my side because
ever since I was little they left me abandoned.
And I've scared people with my unpleasant face
I ask them for something to eat and they just insult me.
How I wish I had a family like you have:
eating together and celebrating Christmas...
but that's just a dream...
My eyes close to the darkness that I have to live every day.

(Chorus) Because I am nobody's child, nobody wants me,
nobody loves me...I am nobody's child.

The darkness around me screams out to me
to just die and bear no more.
The cold wants to break my bones;
I see people walking past me but I can't get close to them
because my clothes are dirty and I fear they might hit me.
In order to forget I run away in tears,
I inhale the glue bottle stronger each time to ignore
and forget why my parents had to abandon me...
Maybe I should just stop talking because
They're not gonna want to listen to me when I ask them.
What good does it do me to scream and cry if they aren't
gonna help me,
I know that hurt...and only hurt I'm going to cause.

It'd be better if I just stop talking...

[Nobody's Child, lyrics by Marvin Morazan.

Watch the video here: <http://youtu.be/q-IgdchJzmo>]



I am like an olive tree flourishing in the house of God.

A firmly planted tree: what a beautiful symbol of the indestructible, unshakeable, immovable love we experience when our Heavenly Father adopts us as His sons and daughters. No longer a child of nobody, we become a child of the One whose love never fails. At Micah our first goal is to introduce our boys to that love. In ourselves, we cannot take away that terrible loneliness that comes through the words of their song so clearly. In human terms, they've lived through way too much pain to ever truly be healed. But over and over again, we have seen God gently take hold of lost boys like Hector, envelop them in His love, and plant the seeds of a beautiful new creation in their lives. Strong roots begin to bear much fruit.

The peace that comes to our boys through this process is a spiritual one. Even so, over the last few years, we have been feeling called to work towards a point in which our physical environment matches that inward peace. The downtown neighborhood where the current Micah House is located has become a war zone, as drug-related violence threatens to overwhelm it and the rest of the city. Our boys and staff are in constant danger, and have been the victims of and witnesses to several violent occurrences over these last months. This is one of several reasons why we are about to build a new Micah House on several acres of land about six miles north of the city. We have just launched our capital campaign, and we invite you to learn more about it at our new website, <http://www.micah2point0.org>. We are so excited about setting down roots on this beautiful new property!

We know that many of you are not able to visit us in Honduras (although you are certainly invited!), but if you were to come, you would hear our boys express to you in their own words their true gratitude to you for helping them to become established in our home. As they grow strong and mature in their faith, they begin to understand that they are surrounded by a group of faith-filled people that provides the love, prayers and financial foundation that they need in order to flourish! So, on behalf of each one of them: ¡muchas gracias! For those of you that have come to visit, you know that the many thanks that you get from the Micah boys come with a lot of hugs and laughter!

As you look at our new website and ponder what the Lord is doing in the Micah family, we ask that you would prayerfully consider your continued participation in this ministry that the Lord has given us. We need missionaries to help us raise the boys, volunteers to help us raise awareness, financial backers, both for our operational fund and our capital campaign, and prayer warriors! Many of you are already a combination of all those things, and for that we give you thanks! The summer months are an especially important time for us to raise operational funds to help us continue to run this ministry through the rest of the year; we would deeply appreciate your generosity!



A group of Micah boys poses on our new property, where they are soon to be firmly planted!

Even as you pray for us, please know that we pray “that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord’s holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ...”
Ephesians 3:18-19

Su hermano en Cristo,

Michael S. Miller
Michael Miller

