



STUDENT JOURNEYS

 *Tanner Garvin*

A Student journey can begin anywhere. Mine began as a missionary in Mexico.

I've always known that I was called to missions. Even when I was a little girl, I used to tell everyone, "I'm going to be a missionary when I grow up!"

It wasn't until years later that I learned that I didn't need to make that little-girl dream come true.

In my thinking, the right connections were important to seeing my dream become a reality, so I attended my church's Bible college. This connection led to a six-week internship at our sister church in Mexico.

My dream was taking shape, and I was finally on the mission field!

It was during this six-week internship in Mexico that God planted a seed in my heart that would blossom years later. We did a lot of street evangelism and hospital ministry. In one of these hospital visits, I saw a lady sitting in the waiting area. I immediately knew I was supposed to ask her if I could pray for her. As I walked up to her, she put her arms out and said, "Don't touch me, I'm dirty." I stretched out my arms, said "I'll make you clean," and hugged her. It was strange to me that I said that, but as I held her and she began to cry, I knew God was doing something. I prayed with her, and then she told me why she was



crying. The night before, she'd had a dream. A man dressed in white came to her, and she told Him to not touch her because she was dirty. But He stretched out His hands and said, "I'll make you clean." I told her that the man she saw was Jesus and that He had sent me to tell her about His love for her. She received Jesus that day!

I was awed as I realized what God just did through me. God did the work—through me.

After a second six-week internship, I moved to Mexico as a full-time missionary working with the church's youth pastor, the praise and worship team, and teaching English. Six months after returning to the States,



I became connected with a ministry in Romania. I moved to Romania for two years, teaching in the gypsy camps, giving humanitarian aide, and teaching English in the organization's orphanage. I then completed a five-month mission school at a Bible college in Texas before moving back to Mexico.



I was living out my dream and loved being a missionary. But at the same time, everything I did came with a sense of struggle. The burden of having to say all the right things and make all the right connections in order to make this missionary dream come to pass was to getting to be too much for me.

That's when my mom told me about Charis Bible College. I had attended my church's Bible college because I wanted connections. I had attended the second Bible college because I wanted more training.

I attended Charis because it was changing my heart.

Even though my days as a missionary in Mexico were packed from start to finish, I managed to take my Charis

courses online. I would download the audio of the lessons and listen to them as I walked or rode the bus between my home and the places where I ministered.

The teaching I was getting at Charis Bible College opened my eyes to see that I was relying on my own works and ability to do God's will. But Jesus' opinion is the one that matters, and He can make connections for me that I'd never be able to. I was freed from pleasing man and relying on religious politics for advancement. I found freedom when I began to rest in Him and let Him do the work.

I'm reminded of this revelation every day as I drive up into the beautiful Colorado Rockies to work. You see, my student journey brought me to Charis Bible College World Outreach where I work with missionaries around the world, helping to spread the same message of God's unconditional love that changed my own heart.



That little-girl dream was much bigger than I ever imagined. It was a God-sized dream that only He could bring to pass.

If you would like to share your Student Journey, email us at Online@CharisBibleCollege.org

A staff writer will contact you if your story is selected to be featured in the Charis Community.

