



Greetings from the Tribeca 2010 Summer Project.

As I write this, our five weeks of ministry together here in the City are nearly over. During that time there has been significant life change for many students and staff, as the Lord has used this city to reveal Himself, our own sin, and the beauty of the work of redemption. We have seen college students and others come to faith; the gospel has been communicated through word, in pictures, through art, and in deed. Our time together has brought life to our project vision: Captivated by Christ, changed together by the gospel, compelled to express love and life to the people of the campus, city, and world.

I am reminded of what the apostle Paul writes to the church at Colosse:
"All over the world this gospel is bearing fruit and growing, just as it has been doing among you since the day you heard it and understood God's grace in all its truth." - Colossians 1: 6

Over 120 of us are participating on the summer project, most serving in one of five focused ministry tracks. As you read of what each ministry track has done, please know that we write to you with a great sense of gratitude for your partnership with us. Your prayers and financial support have been critical in making this a reality.

Thank you.

Yours in Christ,
Ross Queener
Project Director

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CAMPUS TRACK

Focus on city college students



All that has happened during our six weeks in New York City is difficult to transmit via one short letter. Our summer has certainly been life-altering for the six people who have decided to follow Christ so far during various outreaches! Students have been stretched in unexpected and immeasurable ways as they've ministered to college students all over the city. And we've all encountered God's grace and had our hearts and minds captured by how the Gospel applies to every aspect of our lives through our discussions on Tim Keller's *Prodigal God*. Following is a story of an encounter that a couple of our students had during their time on campus.

Our first day at City College Julian and I (Rebecca) walked into the school cafeteria and approached a student who was sitting quietly by himself enjoying a bagel for lunch. We introduced ourselves and told Max that we were on campus that day to learn about students' spiritual beliefs and we asked him if he'd have time for a quick survey. When we asked about his spiritual background Max said that his parents were Christians and that they had taken him to Sunday School as a kid but he hadn't been to church since he started college. When we found out that he believed in a heaven and a hell we asked him where he thought he would go when he died. He replied that he hoped that he was going to heaven. Naturally we asked him "why?" and he responded "By doing the best I can to lead a good life." As we reached the final question of the survey Max rated his desire to know God as a seven out of ten. Julian took the opportunity to share the beautiful story of the Gospel: from God's love and plan for his life, to our fallen condition which separates us from God, to God's response to our separation from Him by sending Jesus to die for us, to our opportunity to respond to God's gift of salvation by acknowledging our need for a Savior. At the end I asked Max how he thought he could know God personally and he responded that it was through Christ dying on the cross! Julian then asked if he wanted to follow Jesus and he answered "Yes!" Max prayed right there with us to receive Christ! What a wonderful day!

Students about to go onto a community college to talk to people about Christ.



Lieryn and Lauren on campus using Soularium pictures to get into spiritual conversations.



BRIDGES TRACK

Focus on international students

After playing a game of Ultimate Frisbee in Central Park one Saturday, we sat down with our new friends from Japan, South Korea, and Saudi Arabia to enjoy the coolness of a watermelon. As we began to engage with these international students, the conversations quickly turned spiritual. For some it was the first time to hear the Gospel. One student from Korea who turned out to be a Christian asked if Bridges International had a Bible study she could attend in the fall. Sadly, we had to tell her that we are only here for the summer.

More than any city in the U.S., New York has the largest population of international students with roughly 50,000. These are some of the brightest students in the world who will be the next leaders in their countries. Imagine what could happen if the gospel intersects with a student's life before they return home.

This summer Bridges staff and students stood in the gap to ask the Lord for laborers to be called to this city. We spent the majority of our time on the campuses of Columbia and NYU praying, organizing English conversation groups and initiating spiritual conversations with students.

It was not an accident that we met a couple from China. After hearing the Gospel and asking many questions, they wanted to attend church with us. Throughout the following weeks, we ran into them on campus and engaged in spiritual conversations, sometimes for several hours. One night while sitting on a stalled subway train, some team members met a Chinese believer who attends the same church here in the city. This believer has been able to connect the couple to his Chinese small group and is excited to continue meeting with them after we leave.

This summer meaningful relationships were forged, students from countries with very few Christians heard the Gospel, and even one student from South Korea received Christ. Please pray that the Lord will send laborers to reach international students for Christ in NYC.



Meeting international students at the English Cafe



Hanging out at Central Park with students.



Meeting students on campus.



Twenty-one college students joined hands with Here's Life Inner City, the compassionate urban ministry of Campus Crusade for Christ, for the past five weeks. They were exposed to the needs of the poor as they served alongside inner-city churches throughout Manhattan, Brooklyn, and Queens. Their goal: seeking to serve and empower the local church in New York City to live out God's massive heart for the poor, the lonely, the lost, the hurt, and the homeless.

God commands us to meet the needs of the poor, but to do so with more than a look of pity or a half-eaten sandwich. "If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing" (1 Corinthians 13:3). We are commissioned, therefore, with a Spirit of Love. "And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love." (1 Corinthians 13:13).

We arrived at Rehoboth Open Bible Church eager to be with all the kids; our job was to help them get a jump start on the school work they would be taught during the upcoming year. We had also been assigned to present a short Bible story each day. We started sharing about Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego (Daniel 3) and how they trusted God to save them from the furnace and how God answered that trust because He is faithful and loving. The kids liked this story but our team was starting to realize that this is all God is to them, just a story. After the Bible story, each of us took a group of kids to discuss what we'd learned. I (Erin) had four kids who were around age seven. As soon as we sat down, I asked them for their thoughts on the story. Latrel, the tiniest girl with the biggest spunk, proclaimed, "That story is wack-o! That's just crazy. Saving them from fire...and then I hate how everyone says God loves all of us. He can't love us all." I smiled at her and put on my artist frame of mind as all children are artists and so am I. I talked to her about all the paintings and drawings she had created. I asked her if she loved each creation uniquely and completely. She said yes. So I told her, just as we create something and love it, God created us and loves us. She began to grasp God's love.

Cassi passes out flyer for a church outreach



Students help to feed the homeless.



EPIC TRACK

Focus on Asian-Americans



This summer we're becoming a family – a family who laughs together, cries together, eats together, serves together, challenges one another and points one another to Christ. For Asian-Americans, family is the center of life, activity and learning. In Christ, we receive restoration of relationship in the family of God and from the brokenness of our own family experiences.

For our team, some have taken significant steps of growth and healing in the safety of our little community – bringing to light pain and sharing comfort with one another. There is a model of vulnerability and reception that we pray we will carry with us from this place.

We have had regular opportunities to extend the invitation of family to college students, the elderly, the homeless in the city and children in the projects. Initiating spiritual conversations, serving basic needs and sharing the Gospel, we can give Christ's love to those around us.

A couple of weeks ago, we met a student from Queens College. After a good conversation "Marcos" left the time with a lot of things to ponder. The following week, we ran into him again. He admitted that there have been so many ways that God has been pursuing him lately. And so after sharing the Gospel with him, he prayed to receive Christ and now belongs to the family of God! With over 50 spiritual conversations and six new believers, we're seeing the Lord grow His family and trusting Him to continue restoring us through His love and mercy.

Attending church at Bethel Gospel Assembly



Daniel serving meals to seniors at the Hamilton Madison House.

ARTS TRACK

Focus on integrating art and faith



What do 21 emerging visual and performing artists do when they find themselves thrown together for five weeks in New York City? They create art!

But in the weeks leading up to the July exhibition these painters, dancers, sculptors, printmakers, photographers, musicians, set builders and actors also explored the bond between art and faith and learned how to communicate the Gospel using photographic images. While in New York City they had spiritual discussions with people from 23 different countries.

"The Theology & Arts [lecture series] has been my favorite," said Piper Dean, a senior from the University of Maine at Augusta studying printmaking with a minor in photography. "In school we talk about art. In church we talk about theology. But I've never talked about how the two intersect." A new component to the Arts Track, this weekly lecture series explored art as an enduring medium reflecting culture and commenting on the prevailing worldviews, theologies and ideologies of the day. Students learned to identify other artists' perspectives on God and society, and were challenged to consider what messages the art they create conveys about their view of Christ, humanity and salvation.

In addition to sharing the Gospel with the people who live, work and sight-see in New York City, these artists grappled with the intersection of their stories, others' stories and God's story around seven powerful words: Intimacy, Betrayal, Anticipation, Pursuit, Sacrifice, Invitation and Reunion. From this deep exploration emerged seven collaborative art pieces involving installation, live performance, film, sculpture, photography and illustration. The final exhibition, "Intersection", gave the artists the opportunity to dialogue with viewers, through both art and words, in reexamining these universal human experiences and considering the intersection of their experiences with the larger gospel story.

Caleb and Elizabeth use Soularium photos to transition into spiritual conversations.



Piper and Caleb creating their art piece for the final exhibition, "Intersection".



Piper Dean, senior at the U of Maine - Augusta