

BSU Summer Missions: Breaking down idols in the Philippines

By Lindsey Williams

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Editor's Note: This summer, 120 Mississippi Baptist Student Union (BSU) students served in 20 countries, 14 states, and two U.S. territories. This is the final in a series of articles illustrating that what the summer missionaries had comprehended on paper, they now experienced for themselves: the power of the Gospel.

Serving on the "Rural Healthcare and Nutrition" team in the Philippines, Lindy Holley, a student at Mississippi College (MC), provided basic healthcare in villages. Unsure of the work ahead, Holley and the team were eager to go and share the Gospel to the spiritually sick as they cared for their physical needs.

"The assignment didn't turn out as we expected," Holley admitted, "but we also had very little expectations, because we wanted to be flexible and ready to do what was needed of us. This helped us so much because we just looked forward to being obedient to the Lord and not following our own ideas of what the summer 'should' or 'should not' be. One of our biggest answered prayers was that God helped our team work well together. He unified our team in the way we ministered, shared the Gospel, interpreted Scripture, and just with how His Gospel laid at the forefront of our minds. I think having very few expectations allowed us to adapt quickly to anything we were not prepared for, which was about every day!



Mississippi BSU summer missionary, Lindy Holley (center), provides medical care as part of the “Rural Healthcare and Nutrition” team in the Philippines. (Photo credit: Lindy Holley)

“Our supervisors utilize a way that was eye-opening to what missions really

looks like.
We worked directly with national partners (Filipino Christians) on a

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able to build ministry in places our partners had not spent as much time in. We had

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“Overall,” Holley shared, “our team overlooked many of the challenges and would just laugh when things became difficult. We knew any temporary discomfort was worth sharing the Gospel with those who had not heard it before or had heard false teaching. A personal challenge was praying for compassion on the people we shared with. One day, we shared the Gospel with a woman who had been very blessed in her life. She responded with, ‘Yes, I believe that. We worship the same God, so our beliefs are the same, but I don’t know if I will go to heaven or hell.’ A shrine was sitting just a few feet away, and it was upsetting that she claimed Jesus’ name but clearly did not follow Him. I prayed that God would show me compassion for the people, because they had never been told the truth. I had to learn to trust that He has authority over who He has mercy on, and whose ears and eyes He opens, and I only had to be obedient in sharing and loving them.

“On our very last day, we saw someone completely realize their previous beliefs were not true. A few days before, *Ate Tikess* (*Ate*, pronounced Ah-tay, means *aunt* or *sister figure*) had heard us share with another woman but we had not seen or heard from her again until, out of nowhere, she asked us to visit

her home on our last day. She was very eager to speak about the Lord, but she also prayed to saints and idols. We sat in her living room and shared for two hours. We used 'the Woman at the Well' in John 4, especially verse 24, about worshiping God in spirit and in truth and how that means there is one right way to worship God and He has a design for that, and then showed her other Scripture against worshiping saints and idols. The whole time I prayed for God to open her eyes, desperate to see her know the truth. I also kept praying for God to 'just let us see one, just one come to You' for our four to five weeks we had been there.

"At the end, we asked what her thoughts were on what we shared and she started to cry, saying, 'When I prayed to God before, I named all the saints, but now I know when I pray, I will only say His name.' We were so shocked that we asked her to repeat herself. When she did, we all began to weep with her. She said that her head felt like it was on fire, so she drank water, and we prayed with her. Not only did Ate Tikess see the truth, but Ate Louselle, who had been with us for two weeks as our 'person of peace,' leaned over and whispered to our teammate Emily, 'This is the true Gospel.' We had been praying for her to also see the truth during our time there.

"If someone is unsure about Summer Missions or mission trips in general, I would point them to many passages where God commands us to GO. I have found Romans 10:14-15 to be a great encouragement to me: *'How can they call on the One they have not believed in and how can they believe in the One of Whom they have not heard and how can they hear without someone preaching to them? How can they preach without being sent? How beautiful are the feet of those who bring the good news of salvation.'*" God clearly tells us that the Gospel must be taken to those who have never heard it. As believers, this is our task. I also think of eternity, and how every person who has never heard the Gospel has an eternal destination, just as we do. If we consider eternity and how vast it is, we realize we

cannot even begin to comprehend it. If we can capture just a fraction of that, however, and compare how short our lives are here, then nothing seems too big to give up for the sake of the Gospel. Especially not one of our college summers.”

Pray for the Spirit to move within the Filipino community, that the spiritually sick may find true healing in the name of Jesus alone. Pray for the national partners who continue to minister there, that they would be uplifted and propelled forward by the power of the Gospel.

And pray for the BSU Summer Missionaries as they settle back into college life, that they would not forget the things they have seen and heard but treasure His mission in their hearts and take His Gospel to the dormitories, the cafeterias, the classrooms, the campuses, and the ends of the earth.