

HOW BIG IS YOUR GOD? - RYAN GAUSS, India Mission Trip, "Stand at the crossroads and look; ask for the ancient paths, ask where the good way is, and walk in it, and you will find rest for your souls." Jeremiah 6:16



*Throughout my trip I kept hearing God ask me  
"How Big is Your God?"*

*He continually revealed himself to me in unexpected places and faces and allowed me to see Him in new ways that I had never known before. I saw Him in the smile of an orphan, the handshake of a stranger and the greeting I did not understand from someone speaking in a different language.*

*God blew away my perception of how amazing I thought He was, and I came back knowing He is far greater and bigger than I ever imagined.*

*The trip was priceless and I have returned far richer in faith than when I left. I often find myself reflecting on what I experienced, trying to make sense of it all and thankful God allowed me to take this journey. I cherish all of it, even seeing the deep sorrow of those less fortunate and hurting, the joy of worshiping together with our brothers and sisters on the other side of the world, and heading out to share Jesus when fatigue, sickness and nausea*

were setting in.

Scripture tells us to **'Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds.'** I had never felt joy in sickness before and thought it sounded impossible, but I was surprised to actually experience joy in my sickness and the hard times because I knew our team was functioning solely with God's power and it was so energizing to know God was using us even in the midst of our struggles

**'...sorrowful, yet always rejoicing'**

I went on this mission trip with the intent of serving others, but the truth is I got far more out of it than I ever gave. I was wrecked and shaken by their great faith and joy. Whether it was an orphan saying how blessed and fortunate they were even after losing both their parents, or an elderly person proclaiming how happy and blessed they were even though they had been disowned by their children and had not had a single visitor in over 3 months. I could not help but count my blessings after all of these encounters.

**'...poor, yet making many rich'**

Whether in India or the U.S, we all struggle with the same things: frustration, hurt, hopelessness, loneliness and more. But at the end of the day when everything is stripped away, all we have left is hope. Hope in Jesus Christ. A hope and faith that we will spend eternity with him in heaven. The people we met in India have so little compared to us in America, but they have a hope and joy far greater than I see in the US.

**'...having nothing, and yet possessing everything.'**

We analyze and measure every decision we make, calculating how it will impact us. We look at the pros and cons until we paralyze ourselves from ever making a decision and acting. When

*I was in India I was free to just act and not worry about how I might be perceived by others or how it might impact my immediate future. I touched the hand of lepers as we fed them, I sat and worshiped with an Aids patient and walked hand in hand with an orphan through an unsaved village proclaiming the name of Jesus.*

*India is a beautiful country, with some of the most friendly and hospitable people I have ever met. They welcomed us far more warmly than I ever expected. They stamped my heart with their love and faith, and I will never be the same because of them. They inspired and challenged me to be a better believer, husband and father.*

*God says **'seek me and you will find me, when you seek me with all of your heart'**. Because of the generosity, support and prayers of all of you I was able to seek God and not worry about anything else. Thank you for this opportunity and helping to make it happen.*

*Your support also allowed me to not have to worry about my family I left behind. I knew they were taken care of. With this peace of mind I was able to focus solely on following and seeking God while in India. God allowed me to be in the moment and experience all of Him, instead of worrying about what was going on back home.*

*In the book of James it says **'Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes in the world, to be rich in faith, and to inherit the kingdom he promised those who love him'**. I can say we may be materially rich in the eyes of the world, but many of the people I met in India are far richer in faith than we are. I want more of the rich faith, thankfulness and joy they possess.*

*I began this journey feeling humbled that God would call me to be a part of it, and I feel even more humbled now that He allowed me to experience His power and goodness in raw and mighty ways.*

God started out by challenging me with '**How Big I thought He was**' and He showed me He is bigger, mightier, more loving, more righteous, more powerful and more faithful than I could ever have imagined.

Thank you for allowing me to take part in this adventure with Jesus. That is what life is, an adventure with Him. It is not a dull and stagnant life, but an exciting journey. He is calling each of us into a relationship of adventure with Him.

I pray that when God speaks to each of you, that you will follow Him on the adventure He is calling you to join Him on.

Thank you again for all of your prayers, support and encouragement. They were felt and appreciated more than you will ever know.

In Him,  
Ryan Gauss

This is what the Lord says:  
**"Stand at the crossroads and look;  
ask for the ancient paths,  
ask where the good way is, and walk in it,  
and you will find rest for your souls."**  
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