

**NOW ON  
RECYCLED  
PAPER**

# The Climbing Way

THE QUARTERLY MAGAZINE OF CLIMBING FOR CHRIST

VOLUME 15 / AUTUMN 2009



## Giant Step for Gilbert

**Raised from the dead to stand on His own two feet. Story page 5**



# Letter from the editors



Elaine takes Gilbert shopping for clothes during Colorado visit in August.

Dear Heavenly Father:

Only a God like You could save a man who fell 100 feet while rock climbing in 2002 and bring him together with the Haitian boy You saved from death's grip in 2007, and use both of their losses to celebrate Your victory in 2009.

As You know, Father, Climbing For Christ member Craig DeMartino survived (by Your grace) that fall and (by Your power), became the first amputee to ascend the 3,000-foot vertical face of El Capitan in 2006. He wrote, "In praise of God's creation: Climbing El Cap, then and now" on page 3.

But, more importantly, it was Craig who arranged for Gilbert Lindor's prosthetic leg (see our cover story, "The miracle of Gilbert").

Only a God like You could send three of Your servants to Haiti in 2005 with the idea of climbing the highest mountain, Pic la Selle, and answering divine appointments. We had no idea what You had in store for us. How You would take us to Gentilhomme and use us to build a church, a school, help people with spiritual and physical needs, and then use us in other villages on Hispaniola. And how You would use us to rescue Gilbert in 2007 and two years later bring him to the United States for a new leg ... and a new life.

Only a God like You could weave us together this way, sending us to China (see "A View: Roads not traveled – until now" on page 12) and giving the words for Philippine member Ace Concordia to share in "Why I support C4C ... and why you should, too" on page 9.

Only a God like You, Father. Thank You for loving us this way. May *The Climbing Way* (Volume 15, Autumn 2009) bring You glory. May it read like a love letter from us back to You.

– Elaine and Gary Fallesen



## Climbing For Christ

We are sent to mountainous areas of the world to deliver the Gospel where other missionaries cannot or will not go.

### Mission Statement

Members of Climbing For Christ agree that we are called to:

- Bring praise, honor and glory to God — the Creator of all things, including the mountains we love — and to our Redeemer, His beloved Son.
- Inspire believers to achieve greater spiritual and physical heights in this world.
- Introduce the Lord Jesus Christ, our Savior, to those living in or visiting mountainous areas who don't know Him personally in a new, exciting and everlasting way.

To join Climbing For Christ, visit [www.climbingforchrist.org/Default.aspx?tabid=146](http://www.climbingforchrist.org/Default.aspx?tabid=146)

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**WARNING!** Activities described in this publication and on ClimbingForChrist.org carry a significant risk of personal injury or death. Do not participate in mountaineering, rock climbing, ice climbing, bouldering, and hiking and trekking unless you are an expert, have sought and obtained qualified professional instruction or guidance, are knowledgeable about the risks involved, and are willing to assume personal responsibility for all risks associated with these activities.

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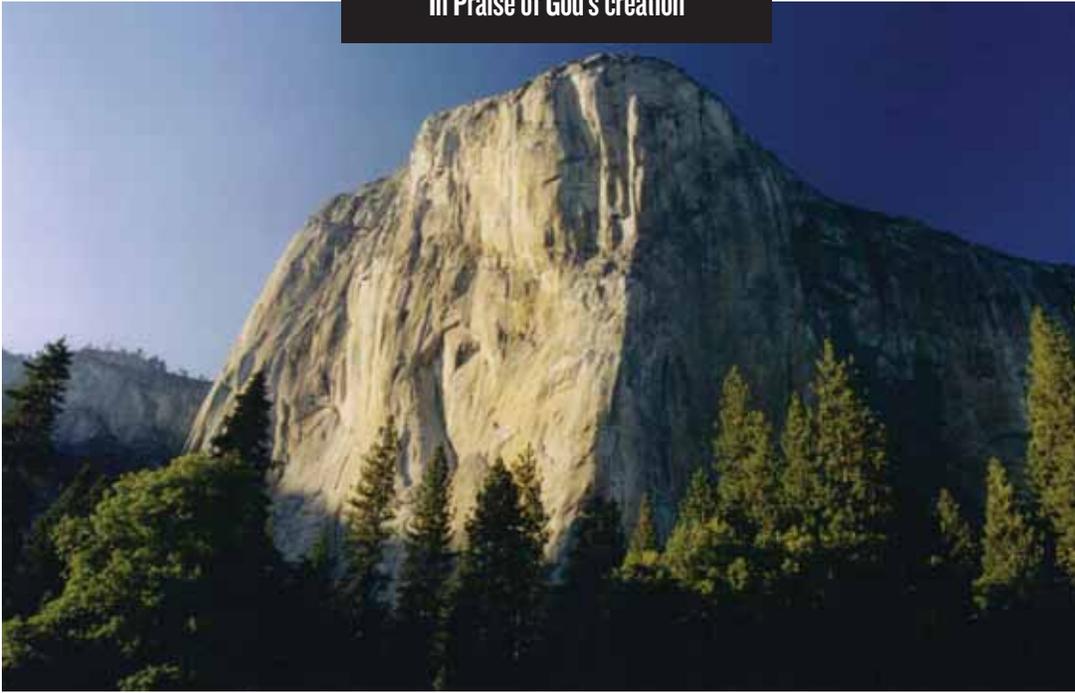
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**Now on recycled paper** *The Climbing Way* is printed on 100-percent recycled paper. The recycled papers used to make the pages of this magazine contain at least 30 percent post-consumer waste recycled fiber certified by Green Seal and meeting EPA guidelines. This paper is elemental and process chlorine free. God created the earth and everything in it for us. We are called to be good stewards, and so we support responsible use of forest resources.



Legendary El Capitan rises brilliantly out of Yosemite Valley.

# Climbing El Cap, then and now

By Craig DeMartino

The first time I rolled into Yosemite in 1995, I was dumbfounded by the sheer scope of the Valley. It's not just big; it's REALLY big. And a wee bit scary.

But that trip was a great introduction for me because I was with a crew of guys from back East who had all climbed there for years. I had a blast following them up some of the Valley's classic climbs, including Serenity Cracks, Mr. Natural, and a slew of awesome crack climbs.

But the whole time I was there, I kept looking up at the Captain — 3,000 feet of perfect granite, cut with perfect splitter cracks and amazing exposure. My friend Tom knew I wanted to go up, but he also knew how scared I was. I'd love to say I was a total hard-man ready to step up, but in reality, I was a skinny kid from Philadelphia who was trying hard to channel the legendary Charlie Fowler without much success.

Still, I must have done something right, and Tom agreed to climb the Triple Direct in teams of two with me, my friend Dean, and Tom's partner, Karen. Leading on the Captain is amazing; you feel the history and excitement that has played out on the big stone for generations. Five days later, we topped out to a meal of crushed sandwiches and warm water.

Food never tasted so good.

Fast-forward 10 years and a lot of life lessons later. I was on the phone with my friend, speed-climber Hans Florine, and he was telling me to come to the Valley to climb El Capitan. In a day.

Never mind that I was sitting in a wheelchair trying to do wheelies as we talked. Three years prior to that conversation, I was accidentally dropped 100 feet to the talus due to a miscommunication with my belayer. I saw God move in ways I didn't even know He could, and my life seemed strange and different.

I had lost my right leg below the knee, had my lower lumbar spine fused, and had broken my neck, which didn't heal right. In short, I was a mess. But still, for some strange reason, climbing El Cap in a day made sense to me. I said "yes," and started training.

## The Captain and Craig

I had returned to climbing the year before. It was a scary thing to tie in again. But over the previous year, God showed me the way through the endless hours of pain and exploration of my new body.

As June 2006 and my return date with El Cap came closer, I couldn't even begin to tell you the butterflies I was feeling. All I could do was think about the climb we were going to do, and I felt like throwing up.

I felt in shape, but my head had a difficult time getting around the idea of pushing that hard again — for hours on end.

We arrived in the Valley on June 2; we had a few days of craggin' to get our Valley feet. Anyone who has climbed in Yosemite will tell you the learning curve is steep.

Hans showed up the night before our climb. We checked out the Captain from the meadow and decided on Lurking Fear. A 22-pitch 5.9 C3 climb on the left flank of the rock.

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Craig DeMartino hanging out on Lurking Fear.

### EL CAP, from page 3

Looking over the gear in the basement that night seemed funny. It seemed like we didn't have enough gear, but I figured since Hans had done El Capitan so many times, he knew best.

"I only did this route once, a long time ago, but I think it was fun," Hans confessed finally.

*Think?! You think it was fun? Man, I needed to hear better news than that.* But again, he knew best, so off to bed I went.

The alarm dragged me out of bed at 3 in the morning. It was dark and cold. I walked to the kitchen and did my regular thing: coffee and a bagel, then prayer. Lots of prayer.

I didn't want to die, but for some weird reason that's all I thought about. I kept having visions of rapping off the ropes 1,000 feet up, ripping out gear and slamming into a corner, crushing my already messed up body.

Yet I really felt like God was leading me through this whole process. Climbing for me is like breathing. It is something I have to do or I go crazy. At the time, I really felt like God kept putting people in my path who I needed to be with, including Hans.

As Hans came bounding up the stairs, I realized God was orchestrating this whole thing. I felt relaxed, and we chatted about the day to come.

My wife Cyndy had agreed to carry my pack to the base to save me for the day. I also think she wanted to see the base and our route to get a better idea of what we were doing.

I can't tell you what a huge part of my recovery my wife has been. On the days when all I could do was lay and cry, she was there. And now, on the days when I am well, she's there, too. Always supportive and honest. She keeps me grounded, and I'm amazed at her love for God and for me.

## The climb

Hans tied in. We planned to lead in blocks of time. This would help us save time at belays, and allow the leader to stay in that mode for a good stretch of time. We blasted off at 6 a.m. and Hans blistered up the first two pitches like he was walking on a sidewalk.

For my part, I got the rope jammed behind a flake as I tried to catch him on my jugs.

We all do what we can, right?

After about two hours and four or five pitches, I started leading. We soared up through incredible features of granite. And then it hit me halfway through a pitch: *I'm back climbing in Yosemite, on the Capitan with Hans Florine!* I was totally humbled that God brought me so far from where I'd been. And I don't mean just the accident and recovery; it goes far deeper than that.

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## Mountain Profile: El Capitan

**Location:** Yosemite National Park, Sierra Nevada, California.

**Height:** 7,569 feet / 2307 meters (El Cap's granite face is 3,000 vertical feet).

**First ascent:** Americans Warren Harding, Wayne Merry and George Whitmore on Nov. 12, 1958.

**What's in a name?** The formation was named "El Capitan" in 1851 by the Mariposa Battalion, a military unit established by the governor of California to end raids by Native Americans during the Mariposa Wars. *El Capitan* ("the captain") was a Spanish translation of the Native American name for the cliff. The Native American name was *To-to-kon oo-lah*, which means "Rock Chief."

**Speed climbing:** Hans Florine and Yuji Hirayama set the current speed record of 2 hours, 37 minutes, 5 seconds on Oct. 12, 2008, when they climbed 31 pitches of The Nose.

**Routes:** The quintessential big wall, there are more than 70 routes on the southwest and southeast faces of El Cap. While Hans Florine, and the like, can climb El Cap in a matter of hours, the average party takes 4-to-6 days to make the ascent. Groups haul hundreds of pounds of gear, food and water, while in El Capitan Meadow tourists will gawk at the climbers above.

**Guides:** *Yosemite Big Walls* by Chris McNamara and Erik Sloan (Supertopo, 2nd edition). For more information about climbing regulations in Yosemite, visit [www.nps.gov/yose/planyourvisit/climbing.htm](http://www.nps.gov/yose/planyourvisit/climbing.htm)

# The miracle of Gilbert

15-year-old Haitian amputee is given a leg after God restored his life



Gilbert and Miguel show the joy in their hearts during a visit to Colorado in August. **ON THE COVER** (counter-clockwise from the top): The first steps with a prosthetic leg; Gilbert after surgery to remove his left leg two years ago; with one of his sisters and his father at Miguel's house after he was released from the hospital in October 2007; after receiving his new leg in August 2009.

## Cover story

It normally takes a month to build a full-leg prosthetic like the one 15-year-old Gilbert Lindor of Gentilhomme, Haiti received on Aug. 11, 2009 in Windsor, Colo. Gilbert's leg was constructed in less than 36 hours.

It normally takes one-to-three months for an amputee to learn to walk after being fitted for a prosthetic. Gilbert walked without aid — no parallel bars or crutches — within the first hour of receiving his leg.

Nothing short of a miracle.

But, then, Gilbert Lindor's life is a walking miracle.

### Rescuing Gilbert

Missionary Miguel Rubén Guante was making a monthly visit to Gentilhomme on Aug. 17, 2007, when he asked the teacher Mathuren if the children were ready to return to school. Mathuren told Miguel that the best student was ill.

Miguel went to see 13-year-old Gilbert Lindor. To find him, Miguel needed only to follow his nose.

Gilbert had broken his leg while playing with a friend. He'd fallen in one of the many ravines surrounding the remote mountain village of Gentilhomme, which is located in southeastern Haiti not far from the border of the Dominican Republic. There was no medical care in Gentilhomme. The nearest clinic was an 18-mile walk away — over two mountains. In Gentilhomme, the sick or injured often faced one of two options: get better without medical assistance or die.

The Lindor family prepared for the worst. Gilbert's father, John, dug his son a grave. He believed a voodoo curse had been placed on his family and there was no hope for Gilbert. Gilbert lay inside their home, his badly broken leg wrapped. He'd been there for 27 days. Death was on the doorstep as gangrene spread through his left leg.

"All I remember is I cry very much when I thought I will die," Gilbert said in Creole. "I never thought I could be still living."

The odor from his leg was as gruesome as the sight of it.

"It's the first time I cried," Miguel recalled on Aug. 10, 2009 at Quorum Orthopedics in Windsor, Colo., where Gilbert was receiving a prosthetic leg to replace the one he lost two years before. "I never cry. When I saw Gilbert, I cried.

"I tried to pray for him. I could not pray because my eyes were filled."

### The Spirit's deed

*"The hand of the Lord was upon me, and he brought me out by the Spirit of the Lord and set me in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones." — Ezekiel 37:1*

Miguel knew something needed to be done, but he did not know how. He hiked back down Mon Buoukan ("Mountain of Fire") to Soliette, the village located on the riverbed 2,000 vertical feet below Gentilhomme. From there, he drove in the truck he'd rented back down the riverbed road to the highway leading to the border and his home in the Dominican village of Jimani about two hours away.

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## The miracle of Gilbert, cont.

He then sent an e-mail to Climbing For Christ president Gary Fallesen. It read:

“Gilbert Lindor is a boy of the school. Today is the (28th) day from that (day) he fall down and break his leg. I will send a photo for you to see if you may help to save his life because we cannot save his leg.”

The photograph was hideous, showing a compound fracture with rotting flesh.

“My Lord, how did that happen?” Fallesen e-mailed back. “I cannot even look at the photograph. Can you take someone from the clinic in Jimani to help the boy?”

“Of course we will help. How much will it cost to get the boy medical attention?”

With that, an urgent prayer request went out to Climbing For Christ’s Prayer Team.

Miguel spoke with the doctor at the Jimani clinic, who gave us an estimate for hospital care: \$2,000. Another e-mail was sent to the members of Climbing For Christ, telling them of our need. In less than six hours, more than \$2,000 had been pledged.

The rescue of Gilbert Lindor was underway.

### Saving Gilbert

“The rescue of Gilbert started with the wish that God had put in my heart to save him for His glory,” Miguel recalled from the Dominican border town of Jimani, where Gilbert lives with the Guante family.

On Aug. 21, four days after Gilbert’s dire situation had been discovered by Miguel, another rented truck was sent to Soliette. Gilbert was carried down Mon Buoukan from Gentilhomme to Soliette, where driver Janelle transported him across the border to Jimani. He was then driven another six hours to Santo Domingo.

“We can’t imagine the amount of pain he’s been through,” Fallesen said.

Gilbert is very reserved, almost stoic. When asked later if he was in great pain, he said simply: “Oui.”

“It was bad,” Gilbert said in Creole. “So bad I don’t know anything (going on) around me.”

Discomfort is a way of life in the mountains of Haiti, where there is no electricity, no easily accessible clean water, little medical help, and little food to eat.

Gilbert reached Santo Domingo in the evening of Aug. 21. The first hospital Miguel took him to could not do what was needed, so Miguel went to another. At nearly midnight, a doctor examined Gilbert at the Public Hospital Facility. Her response, unlike the reaction at the first hospital, gave Miguel a sense of peace.

“The doctor said, ‘Let’s pray for Gilbert first thing,’ and then they would try to cut lower on the leg,” Miguel recalled.

Gilbert’s physical life was saved in the early morning hours of Aug. 22. “That was when God saw him free of his leg wounds. That day was the new birthday of Gilbert,” Miguel said, quoting John 11:43 (“When he had said this, Jesus called in a loud voice, ‘Lazarus, come out!’”).



(Clockwise from above) Gilbert with Joe Johnson; the mountainous terrain found in Haiti; Gilbert with one of the women who cared for him during his 45 days in a hospital in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, after his left leg was amputated in August 2007; Joe Johnson, left, and Bryan Fairbanks making a plaster-cast mold of Gilbert’s torso to start building his prosthetic leg; The workshop at Quorum Orthopedics in Windsor, Colo., where Gilbert’s prosthetic leg was made; A young man and his new leg.



“Same with Lazarus, when Jesus raised him from death. He was born again. It is the same thing with the surgeon for Gilbert. His physical life was saved. But not yet his spiritual life.”

### Gilbert's salvation

“That started at 1 a.m. on Aug. 22, when I was asleep in a hotel after the surgery of Gilbert,” Miguel remembered. “I was thinking about the future of Gilbert and I felt that God tell me, ‘Keep Gilbert with you.’ So I called Gary and asked him if I can keep Gilbert with me because I understand God want some special thing with Gilbert.”

Miguel knew that the spiritual life of Gilbert was not guaranteed “in the house of his father,” John, who believes in and practices voodoo. In fact, as Miguel and Fallesen learned later, John Lindor was prepared to kill the boy who was playing with Gilbert after his own son died in an act of vengeance for the voodoo curse he felt had been placed on his family. On Aug. 17, 2007, God had actually saved more than one life. He had saved many by taking Miguel to the injured Gilbert.

“Keeping Gilbert with me is exactly for his future life,” said Miguel, who was trained in the seminary in Santo Domingo, teaches Climbing For Christ's monthly seminary for dozens of pastors and church leaders from numerous Haitian villages, and is referred to as “Pastor Miguel.”

“It is important to know that Gilbert was not in school (in Gentilhomme) by his father's wish. That makes strong my idea about God wanting to do something with Gilbert. If Gilbert was not in school, how could I know him and let me be used by God to rescue him?”

“I thought, as God sent me to rescue and save him, God want to make him an instrument of salvation for other lives — spiritually and physically. So my wish for Gilbert is make him a pastor and a doctor. A pastor to rescue the lost people for Jesus. A doctor to save the ill people and bring them to Jesus.”

*“As Jesus walked beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. ‘Come, follow me,’ Jesus said, ‘and I will make you fishers of men.’” – Mark 1:16-17*

The spiritual training of Gilbert began immediately, with Miguel reminding him about Who saved him. Anyone who had witnessed this rescue knew that God had something special in store for Gilbert.

After two operations and 45 days in the hospital in Santo Domingo, Gilbert was released into Miguel's care. At the beginning of Gilbert's fateful story, Fallesen had posed the rhetorical question: “How much is a human life worth?” In Gilbert's case, the hospital expenses added up to only \$4,450. A small price to pay for the life of a young man who would witness to the power, love, and glory of God.

### Back on two feet

*“He said to the paralytic, ‘I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home.’ He got up, took his mat and walked out in full view of them all. This amazed everyone and they praised God, saying, ‘We have never seen anything like this!’” – Mark 2:10b-12*

Almost from the moment Gilbert lost his leg, Miguel started to think how he could get him a new one. Miguel did not know that only hours after the news of Gilbert's situation had been announced to the membership of Climbing For Christ, amputee climber Craig DeMartino of Loveland, Colo. had e-mailed Fallesen, saying, “I can talk to my leg-maker.” The wheels were already in motion to fit Gilbert with a prosthetic.

DeMartino had lost his leg after a rock-climbing fall in 2002. He had returned to climbing with a below-the-knee prosthetic and became a champion competitive climber and the first amputee to ascend the 3,000-foot big wall of El Capitan in less than a day.

At an appointment with Joe Johnson at Quorum Orthopedics, DeMartino posed the question to Johnson. Johnson's response: If you can get him here, I'll make the leg for free.

## The miracle of Gilbert, cont.



Gilbert's future is bright in Hispaniola, where he is attending school and worshipping God.

## Helping Haiti

Support the work the Lord is doing through Climbing For Christ in the mountains of Haiti. We have served there since 2005. In December, a mission team will again visit Gentilhomme and surrounding villages with a laundry list of to-do items, including:

- Teaching medical first care and conducting health clinics.
- Installing a water system in Gentilhomme.
- Improving/re-teaching sanitation.
- Teaching Vacation Bible School and working with teachers in the three schools we support. Also, making our third annual Christmas gift delivery.
- Working with pastors in numerous villages and worshipping with the Climbing For Christ churches in Gentilhomme and Malasi, Haiti, and Jimani, Dominican Republic, and possibly other churches.
- Answering divine appointments.

This will be our seventh mission trip to Hispaniola. But even when a mission team is not in Haiti, we send monthly financial support to missionary Miguel Rubén Guante, six schoolteachers, and the ministry work being done there. We need your help. Please consider contributing to Mission: Haiti by sending a gift to Climbing For Christ at P.O. Box 16290, Rochester, NY 14616-0290 USA.

DeMartino and Fallesen knew they needed to wait until Gilbert had recovered from surgery and had grown some more. It was a two-year wait.

"When you start to do something and you do not finish, you do not feel well," Miguel said, explaining how everyone felt until Aug. 10, 2009.

"After the surgery on Gilbert, I could sleep (for the first time in a week). I was so happy. A new life had started for Gilbert. Then I thought, 'We must get him a leg.' When I talked to Gary about it, he tell me what I can do for Gilbert. I can get him a passport."

On Aug. 1, 2009, Gilbert arrived in the United States, accompanied by Miguel and Climbing For Christ member Sarah Brownell (along with two other Haitian children, Sainte-Anne Paul and Miche Fleurisme, who'd been brought to the States for other medical procedures). Marsha and Ron Hogan, Gilbert's "sponsor parents" from Golden, Colo., had paid for Gilbert's airfare.

Ten days later, he walked into Johnson's office in Windsor, Colo., on one leg and two crutches. Miguel told newspaper reporter Pamela Dickman of the *Loveland Reporter-Herald*: "At the beginning, he didn't like the idea of coming to the U.S.A. He afraid to come. Now, he feel very happy. He would like to be again with everybody (able to walk on two legs)."

Gilbert's fear of coming to America was rooted in his childhood, growing up in a home and culture wed to voodoo. He'd been taught that white people in the United States eat Haitian children.

That lie had been overcome. As would any and all obstacles meant to keep Gilbert from glorifying God.

When Johnson and his assistant Bryan Fairbanks examined Gilbert they discovered something they hadn't expected: no left femur. Gilbert's entire left leg from the hip down had been removed.

"It's a complicated injury," Johnson said about Gilbert's hemi-pelvectomy amputation.

"This would normally take about a month (to make a prosthetic). But he has to have it in two days."

So Johnson and his team, which included technician Paul Martin, rolled up their collective sleeves and went to work. About 36 hours later, they had a leg ready to start fitting on Gilbert.

"It's basically a bucket for him to sit in," Johnson said as Gilbert tried on the leg for the first time.

A plastic mold of Gilbert's lower torso had been made and a metal leg complete with joints and sockets for the hip, knee and ankle were attached to it. It is not what Gilbert expected. In reality, he did not know what to expect. But it looked more like a robot's leg than his other leg. Getting accustomed to the state-of-the-art metal leg worth \$20,000 took him longer than learning to walk again.

### Back to school

Gilbert's dream was one day to walk into school on two legs. With no crutches. On Sept. 1, 2009, he realized that dream. Wearing dress pants and the school's new uniform shirt, he went to school.

On the outside, he appeared to be a normal student, like any other schoolboy in Jimani, Dominican Republic. But on the inside, he was very different. God is performing a work in Gilbert Lindor. We can only wait to see what is to come in the restored life of this young Haitian upon whom God has shown great favor.

*"O Sovereign LORD, you have begun to show to your servant your greatness and your strong hand. For what god is there in heaven or on earth who can do the deeds and mighty works you do?" – Deuteronomy 3:24 †*

# Investing in eternity

By Ace Concordia



As I write this article I'm planning to buy a new tent. I'm carefully considering what brand, and the design specifications it will feature. The most important part of all this is the budget — how much I am going to set aside to buy this new tent.

Any outdoor enthusiast knows he can't go cheap on gear when it comes to living in the wilds. The amount we spend on our equipment always improves our success rate on any expedition. As mountaineers we make our biggest investments on the best gear, because we know that in the long run we are the ones who will benefit.

This is what a good investment should be — something that brings a return profit. As a businessman I understand the value of making good investments. It's the key to ensure the sustainability of a good life for my family. So I try to make as many good investments as I can. It's like spreading seeds and looking forward to seeing them grow. But I have to admit that not all my investments produced bountiful fruit, some only a little, and most none at all. So when I discover an investment that really gives a good return, I keep planting seeds in that plot. Which reminds me of the parable of Jesus regarding four kinds of soil:

*"Then he told them many things in parables, saying: 'A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop — a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown.' (Matthew 13:3-8)*

Many times this passage in Scripture is used to describe four kinds of people who hear the Word of God. But God's Word is inexhaustible regarding what it can teach us. I would like to use this parable to describe the kind of investments we make in life:

First, there are the seeds that the birds ate up. These represent investments that do not give us any profit at all. We spend a great deal, but they never produce anything and we end up feeling like we are robbed in the end.

The second seed fell on rocky places. These are investments made in haste that are good at first, but eventually go down as fast as they go up.

The third seed fell among thorns. These are investments that are growing, but when hit by a crisis are also lost.

The fourth seed fell on good ground. These are investments that produce continuous benefits and profits.

What's my point in all this? I just want you to know that the worst investment is in something that won't last and has no significance. The best investment is in something that makes a difference and has eternal value.

I support Climbing For Christ (C4C) because I believe it is a ministry appointed by God, to make a difference in the lives of the people who live in the mountains of the world by sharing the Good News about Jesus Christ, and that the result of bringing men and women to a

relationship with God produces an eternal reward.

As I read the recent story of how Gilbert from Haiti has a new leg and is able to walk again, I just praise God because I am a part of C4C! In my own country, the Philippines, because of our mission trips tribal people from Badeo were able to get free medical help. Teachers from Tacadang were able to receive much-needed school supplies for their students. Every member from the Philippines has made a personal investment in C4C by funding their way to mission climbs and by giving to the people of the mountains. During our weekly Bible studies there have been countless

testimonies of how the Lord has blessed the lives of C4C members because of their giving.

As I continue to write about supporting C4C, I realize that we can do more to support this ministry. I would like to encourage my fellow C4C Philippine chapter members to send support to the main headquarters in the U.S. In the future, we will be planning "Climb for a Cause" programs to gather financial resources to help support the international missions of C4C to China, Nepal, and other places where Christ is not yet known.

C4C is composed of men and women willing to serve God; all that's missing are more of those who would support these men and women, so they can be mobilized to spread the love of Jesus to those who are still lost.

I guarantee you that whatever investments you make here on earth will be temporary, and bring no assurance of a long-term return. The current global economic crisis is testimony to that. The best investment is in the Kingdom of God, because there is no way of losing, and the benefits and returns last for eternity. This is why I believe that supporting Climbing For Christ is one of the best investments one can ever make. †

**Ace Concordia, who joined Climbing For Christ in June 2007, was elected to the Board of Directors in February 2009. He became the first board member from outside the United States. He is the coordinator of Climbing For Christ Philippines, which will host another international mission (Mission: Philippines 2010) in February 2010.**

## Pray, go, give

**Our desire is to see that each of our nearly 1,100 members is involved in Climbing For Christ — through prayer, going on Evangelic Expeditions, and giving financially. You can use the enclosed envelope to send your gift to His ministry. It will be used to spread the Word to places where other missionaries cannot or will not go. Maybe you'll be one of those sent to deliver this Good News. Pray about it, and for the work He is doing through us. To God alone be the glory!**



Craig DeMartino, left, and speed climber Hans Florine in Yosemite, Calif.

**EL CAP, from page 4**

Before I got hurt I was a cruise-control Christian. My life was good and I squeezed God in when I had time. After I got hurt, I couldn't do anything. All I depended on was gone. The body I worked so hard to train was a twisted train wreck. And the head I used to move God around where I wanted Him was ashamed.

It took nearly dying to understand where I needed God. It took nearly dying to put God first in my life. Once I gave up control, and let God do His thing in my life, things took off.

I finished the pitch and handed the reins back to the Blonde Machine. We rose higher and higher, and at the top of pitch 15 I led the most awesome hand-crack through a perfect shield of granite that I've ever seen. I got to a ledge that I could stand on and fixed the rope for Hans. We were close to the top.

We topped out at 8 p.m., 14 hours after starting. I was again dumbfounded. Never in my wildest dreams did I think we could do it. But there I was on top, with a great friend, and the whole Valley peeling away at my feet to the perfect horizon off to the West.

I also knew we had a lot of rappelling to do before it was all done, and after a high-five or two, we were headed down. Darkness had fallen and we attached our headlamps for the descent. Hans went first and, as I was rigging my first rap ready to follow him, my headlamp fell off into the darkened void. At the rap station below me, Hans was rigging the next rap when my headlamp passed him as he hung from the anchors.

From where I was I heard a voice filled with dread and fear as Hans yelled up to me to see if I was attached to the headlamp that was now well on its way to the Valley floor.

Then I heard that same voice cackle with laughter when I explained what happened. I love when someone can make jokes in a stressful situation.

We landed safely back on the ground around midnight, tired but happy. As we drove back to the house in Yosemite West, I was amazed at how God had paved my way for being there. Just by letting Him take control, my life had become fuller and richer.

I climbed into bed with Cyn around 1:30 a.m., giddy with what we had pulled off, and excited to see where God was leading me next. †

**Craig DeMartino, a member of Climbing For Christ since March 2007, became the first amputee to climb El Capitan in less than a day. A photographer by trade, he lives in Loveland, Colo., with his wife Cyndy and their two awesome children, Mayah and Will.**

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A yak cowboy rides off after hearing about Jesus.

#### A VIEW, from page 12

From my journal:

*Friday, July 10 – We drove 50K on paved road and then turned up a valley road. We went about 30K to our ultimate goal — to the end of the road. We decided to set up a base camp and go out to deliver “gifts” from there. After we settled on a location, we put up tents, brewed coffee, and ate lunch. During this time, a partially crippled Buddhist monk arrived, spinning a prayer wheel. Aaron (a member of our team) greeted him and the monk immediately asked for help. He wants to be healed.*

As this first day continued at the end of a road heretofore not taken, others came to visit our camp. We shared an MP3 player and picture book of God’s story (from Genesis to Revelation in 45 minutes in the local language). I gave a book and a cassette to a man who rode a yak into our camp.

“The Word has gone out,” I said to Aaron, as we watched the man ride away.

“And it will not come back void,” Aaron said.

The man on the yak turned out to be the father of the crippled monk and over the next week we grew close to their family. We were invited into their tent for yak tea and meals. They visited our camp daily. We shared with them and prayed for them.

The spiritual warfare we experienced early eased as the Holy Spirit softened their hearts.

Again from my journal:

*Saturday, July 11 – Countless people visited us today, including the crippled monk from across the river. He came and stayed a long while with us. He listened to the MP3 recording and looked at the picture book. Then, when it was only Aaron, Andrew (another member of our team), him and me, the spiritual battle raged. I could feel it all around us as we prayed. The monk came with his beads on, and no prayer wheel. But as the battle intensified, he removed his beads to start chanting. Aaron sang and then the monk did, too, to combat his words. All three of us laid hands on him and prayed. I had God-bumps and at the same time could feel the presence of darkness. But I could sense victory. So much happened. Seeds planted. Warfare engaged. We have angered the devil. Protect us, Father. We ask You to claim Your victory!*

The places we go to deliver the Good News are havens for the enemy. In *Mountain Rain*, the must-read biography of pioneer missionary James Fraser, Fraser’s daughter Eileen Fraser Crossman writes: “The prince of this world does not easily cede his territory to the people of God. The mountains had been the stronghold of Satan for countless centuries. They were not to be lightly invaded.”

But the Victor sends us to these places to reclaim His people. Our mission is to free the prisoners of this spiritual war.

We met scores of them in a place that goes unnamed on any human map. We’ll be revisiting these new friends in April 2010, eager to encourage and prayerfully disciple new believers.

It is our prayer that one day we will be brothers and sisters in Christ and together our destination will be a place where the roads are made of gold. †

Gary Fallesen is the founding president of Climbing For Christ.

## Opportunities to go

### Evangelic Expeditions scheduled in 2010:

- Kilimanjaro (January)
- Philippines (February)
- Mission: Possible IV (March)
- Mission: Possible 5 (April)
- Nepal (May)
- Indonesia (June)
- Ararat (July)
- Haiti (December)

To learn more about these missions, visit [www.ClimbingForChrist.org](http://www.ClimbingForChrist.org) and click on “Evangelic Expeditions.”

## View online

Check out our video, story and photos “Sky Burial: Dancing with Death,” a Tibetan Buddhist ceremony rarely seen by Westerners, but witnessed by a Climbing For Christ team in July 2009. Please visit <http://www.climbingforchrist.org/Default.aspx?tabid=2805>



A View

# Roads not traveled – until now

By Gary Fallesen

The end of the road in eastern Tibet.

*“Two roads diverged in a wood, and I –  
I took the one less traveled by,  
And that has made all the difference.”*  
– **Robert Frost**, The Road Not Taken

I still have no idea where we were. I have a map showing the area we visited, but it is in a language I do not speak.

There is no road on the map where we went. Just a thin blue line representing the river that ran by our tent.

To get there it took us 1½ days of air travel and two days of ground travel, the last few hours on a four-wheel-drive road normally reserved for motorbikes and maybe police trucks. We reached the end of this “road” and set out on foot, walking where no missionary before us had likely trod.

**12** Climbing For Christ’s mission is to go where others cannot or will not. But it is still a cause for pause when

you reach the end of a so-called road and find yourself a stranger in a strange land, visiting cultures that are foreign to your own, and eating food you might not recognize as food.

The world grows smaller all the time, but an estimated 40 percent of the people living on this planet (2.74 of the 6.7 billion) still are unreached. The Joshua Project, a research initiative, claims 6,641 of the world’s 16,351 people groups have not been reached with the Good News of Jesus Christ. The term “unreached” means there are no Christ followers in a people group.

“Therefore go and make disciples of all the nations,” Jesus instructed in Matthew 28:19.

We have been sent to the ends of the earth. Literally. So we travel airways and roadways as far as they’ll take us, and then we go a bit farther.

Continued on page 11



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