

**MEET A MEMBER
OF THE
INTERNATIONAL BAPTIST CHURCH AT DUMAGUETE**

Nelson C. Duran Jr.



Several years ago as a young college student, Nelson received the news that his Aunt Gloria was dying. Nelson came to Dumaguete immediately to see his aunt for the last time. He was unaware that his cousins were saved, baptized, and serving God faithfully in Manila. While visiting his aunt, a husband of one of his cousins spoke to Nelson about the Bible. Because of that conversation, Nelson began to question his faith and religion. Heartbroken by the death of his aunt, a cousin, Jarijha Joy Estellado, encouraged Nelson to attend the International Baptist Church at Dumaguete. During his first visit to International Baptist Church, Levi Espada shared the Gospel with Nelson and another visiting cousin, Christian. Nelson and Christian both trusted Christ as their Saviour that Sunday morning and followed the Lord in believer's baptism on May 12, 2013.

Nelson shares in his testimony: "The day of my salvation was a great turning point in my life. That very afternoon I went and bought a Bible, filled with excitement to read God's Word. On my return to Mindanao, my classmates were shocked at the sight of the Bible in my hand. They made fun of me. They tempted me to go out and have fun with them again to indulge in old habits, but I refused them as I held on to II Corinthians 5:17, *'Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.'* Praise the Lord! I resisted the temptation! I tried to share the Gospel with my friends, but I didn't know how. It broke my heart when they laughed at me, and I became a fool in their eyes."

Nelson began to seek a Baptist church to attend. He visited a Southern Baptist church that used a different version of the Bible. "I knew the fact that the KJV was the real and true Bible," Nelson explains. "Because they used the NIV, I never went back to that church. Then I visited a Four Square church, and I had a lot of questions of why they spoke in an unknown tongue. I never went to that church again either. Because there was no church in Mindanao, I would call my cousin while she was at the Bible Baptist Church in Manila. She would sit with her phone at the Bible Baptist Church, and I would listen to Pastor Solpico preach, holding my phone in Mindanao 500 miles away. In that way I attended the Sunday morning and Sunday evening services for several months. I continued to read my Bible and prayed for God to provide the right church."

After a short time, Nelson transferred to another college on the island of Cebu. As time passed, Nelson met two college students, Bro. Ryan and Bro. Ezekiel. They talked about soul winning, and he began to be interested in sharing his faith. Nelson asked them a lot of questions about presenting the Gospel. He did not have time to join them in their soul winning because of his studies. A day before his board examination, Nelson felt that he should pray, so he found a quiet and solemn place at the church to ask God for the victory to pass the examination. On the day of the examination, Nelson brought his Bible with him. He read through the promises of Isaiah 41:10, Jeremiah 33:3, and James 1:5. After taking the exam, Nelson went back to the church and thanked God for His blessing, even though he did not know the outcome of

the exam. Having prayed continually throughout the exam and not being confident of the answers, Nelson had told God, "I am not as good as others, but I have You, God."

During the days after the exam, Nelson was able to go soul winning and learn how to present the Gospel. The day after the exam, Nelson started to share the Gospel with his boardmates. He asked God to give him a mouth to boldly speak. "I led my first soul to Christ that day!" Nelson recalls with joy, "The classmate was so glad about receiving the Gospel that he set a time for me to go and share the Gospel with his friends. So I was able to share the Gospel with three more students. I cannot explain my joy at that moment! Later that day we received the results of the examination. I felt that God had given me a reward, as in the same day that I had led my first converts to Christ, I also learned I had passed my engineering examination!"

The time came for Nelson to return to our island, the Visayas. He said goodbye to Pastor Jesalva and Pastor Lumagbas and to all his friends at the Bible Baptist Church in Cebu. When Nelson returned to the Visayas, God provided him with an engineering job. "I gave God my first salary," he shares. "I trusted God to provide my daily needs."

Nelson was assigned to his first job in Mabinay about 50 miles from Dumaguete. While he was there, he looked for a church with no success. Nelson shares, "I was not satisfied with my Christian life. I wanted to do more. I wanted to share the Gospel, but my work kept me busy from Monday through Saturday. Dumaguete was too far away to travel to on Sundays." A month more of praying to God resulted in a phone call that they were hiring an engineer in the city of Dumaguete. "I inquired as to what the requirements were for the job, and finally, after a long and tedious process, I had an interview. After some more days, I received the word that I had been hired! Praise the Lord!"

"God has been so good to me. Because of this, I have given myself to be a soul winner and to serve God where He wants me to. I am so thankful for Pastor DeMerville and the staff of International Baptist Church at Dumaguete. They have taught me the right path for my Christian life. Even though I have many persecutions in the Christian life, I have a peace and unspeakable joy with God and the people at my church. I love my church and am so happy to serve in His church!"

Nelson Duran currently serves at the International Baptist Church as an usher and is a member of the adult choir. He helps to lead many to Christ during the altar calls. Nelson is also a faithful soul winner, usually attending both the Thursday evening and Saturday morning meetings. Often Nelson will break away from his job as a road-construction supervisor to come soul winning on Saturday mornings. One particular Saturday, his work was not able to let him leave for soul winning. At church later that afternoon, he explained to me, "I wasn't able to get away from work for the soul-winning meeting, but I still saw 8 souls saved on the job!"

Nelson has been a great influence to his family, church, and friends as he gives himself to serving the Lord at International Baptist Church. Serving the Lord with men who have such a big heart for God, such as Nelson Duran, is one of the many blessings of the mission field.

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stan lawrenson

Serving the Lord with gladness,

The Lawrenson Family

Stan and Kim

Elisabeth, Zechariah,

Bethany, Josiah, Chloe Anna,

Stephen, and Luke

SOME PHOTOS OF THE MINISTRY OF THE INTERNATIONAL BAPTIST CHURCH AT DUMAGUETE



Robert Sanchez was glad to receive Jesus Christ as his Saviour!

Jev Espada was able to lead the grandchildren to Christ after I led Jama Mayoc, the grandmother, to Christ!



Charlie Euranga has grown in his ability to witness to groups. He was able to lead a mother and three children to Christ.

Pastor DeMoville taught at the annual Couples' Banquet.





Bro. Christiansen celebrated his birthday with his wife!



Bro. Jason Garganian watches the casket before the memorial service.



Bro. Christiansen chats with Pastor DeMerville after his wife's memorial service.



Bro. Christiansen clarifies details with the funeral home to get his wife back to the States.



Bro. Christiansen is met at the airport by the Bible college students when he returns to Dumaguete City from taking care of paperwork at the U.S. Embassy in Manila.



The Manlucot family greet our church members and visitors in the front lobby!



Elmer Rusiana, doing what he does best, leading more groups to Jesus Christ!.



Elmer is one of the new members of the orchestra!



Sheena Calugcugan shows her true colors as the "roaring lion" at Vacation Bible School!