

# Hawaii: The beauty of the gospel

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After a semester of trying to get our schedules to match up, I finally was able to take John on an adventure to Rainbow Falls.

John is a student whom I've been blessed to grow close to over the last semester. He was not raised in a Christian home. He did not grow up going to church or reading the Bible. He is not a believer. But he is searching.

I finally got the opportunity to spend one-on-one time with John as we experienced the beauty of nature that is Hilo. While we sat on the top of a giant lava rock in the middle of the Wailuku River, looked at all that was around us.

I asked John, "Isn't this beautiful"? He obviously agreed.

We began to talk about how easy it is to miss all the beauty that is around us, because of how busy we allow ourselves to get. We constantly are walking everywhere with our heads down, more worried about what the next step in front of us looks like rather than looking around at where we already are.

## **The purpose in life**

With that in mind, I asked him "What do you think our purpose is in life?" He said it's to take joy in every breath—to make every breath count.

"And what brings you the greatest joy, John?" I asked.

John told me it's when he helps others. That's when he feels he's made his life count.

I began to tell him my joy, my hope and my purpose in Christ. After about an hour of discussion, I asked him: “John, what do you know about Jesus? What do you know about Christianity”?

He began to explain to me how he understood it. He saw it as a moral guideline for living. The Bible is a book of stories that helped us know how to live, he said. And if we live right, God will let us into heaven, he said.

### **‘What do I need to know about Christianity?’**

Then he asked a question I never anticipated; “What do I need to know about Christianity?” He asked it with such interest and concern.

I began to explain to him the beauty of the gospel. Yes, the Bible is a guideline for life, and it does contain morals, but it is so much more than that. John had missed the greatest story—the story of Jesus. God sent his one and only Son to die in our place, so that we could live.

Christ took on our sin so we wouldn’t have to endure the punishment. And the greatest part of it all: We don’t have to earn it. In fact, we can’t earn it. It is given to us freely simply by believing that Christ was crucified and that God raised him from the grave (Romans 10:9). John did not put his faith in Christ that day, but he does want to hear more. I am excited for more opportunities to share with John my last week here in Hilo.

*The author was a graduate student at Wayland Baptist University, serving thorough [Go Now Missions](#) as campus ministry intern with the Baptist Student Ministry at the University of Hawaii at Hilo. He now ministers in an area where his identification would put fellow Christians at risk. So, his name has been removed from this post.*