

New life, living water

August 19, 2010

To end our time in Venezuela, our church partnered with a church in a neighboring town to hold a baptism at the foot of a waterfall on top of a mountain.

From the base of the mountain I could hear the roar of the rushing water that flowed steadily over rocks and ended in a small pool where the baptisms were conducted.

As we walked up the mountain and reached the peak, I was struck at the beauty around me. I was surrounded by the Andes Mountains, each covered with trees and plants — all lush and green and bursting with life. The color green has been said to represent renewal and eternal life.

As I thought about this and watched the pastor baptize each person, I was awed at the beauty of God. Baptism is a public demonstration of the personal decision to follow Christ and to give one's life to him. In 2 Corinthians 5:17, the Scripture says, "Therefore, if anyone is Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, behold the new has come!" The green hue of the mountain was a physical representation of what God is doing in the hearts of each of the people who were baptized that day. He is renewing them, giving them eternal life with him.

The pool in which they were baptized also was symbolic. That pool of water had a source - the waterfall, just as we as Christians have a source of strength, hope, and joy - the Living Water, the Lord Jesus Christ. The baptism service was a breathtaking way to conclude an incredible summer in Venezuela.