



# Students Serve in Nazareth

## DBU Team Assists with Local Children's Camp

**I**t is rare that someone from Dallas, Texas, is able to say not only that they walked where Jesus walked, but that they also ministered where Jesus ministered. But that was the case for a team of 13 students and staff from Dallas Baptist University who had the opportunity to travel to the hometown of Jesus and spend a week working with children at the Nazareth Baptist School in Israel. In addition to their work with the school, the team also had a chance to tour Bethlehem and Jerusalem throughout the 12-day trip.

This unique mission trip came about as a result of a visit to DBU by the general

director of the Nazareth Baptist School, Botrus Mansour, last summer. During his time on campus, he met with Dr. Gary Cook, DBU president, and they decided to put together a mission trip for DBU students to experience service in Israel.

Led by Chris Holloway, director of global missions at DBU, and Jon Dooley, director of camp-sport ministry, the group helped the Nazareth Baptist School with a children's camp, providing help with crafts and recreation for the 5-12 year olds. From making balloon animals to face painting, the DBU team enjoyed investing in the lives of the young campers.

"Working with the kids was a blast," said Caleb Smith. "It was neat to see that the kids love to play, laugh, and have fun."

In addition to their work with the children, the mission team painted classrooms and helped with repairs around the school's campus. They also were able to spend three days of the trip in host homes, learning more about the culture and people of Nazareth.

"I was really impressed with the Arab Christians," said Holloway. "Their dedication to sharing the Gospel in Nazareth, under difficult circumstances, was encouraging and challenging to witness."

Walking in the cities and villages where Jesus walked more than 2,000 years ago proved to be an unforgettable experience for the DBU students. One day, they went to The Nazareth

Village, which is an area set up as if it were 1st Century A.D. Observing how life was lived during this time period gave the students an unforgettable picture of Biblical times.

Seeing a winnowing fork separate the wheat from the chaff gave a literal picture to the story John the Baptist shared in Luke 3:17, "His winnowing fork is in his hand to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

One person the group will never forget was their guide, Naeem. A man of great humility with a servant's heart, Naeem poured himself into the DBU group and stayed with them every step of the way. Each day he would meet the group and help take care of all of their needs, some days accompanied by one of his two young sons. The DBU team loved getting to know Naeem and his family and getting a glimpse into the Israeli man's life.

"He poured into us each day and then went home and poured into his family," Holloway reflected. "Watching his servant leadership was so humbling and honoring."

Throughout the week, the students not only learned how to minister across a vast cultural divide, but they also gained new insight into the vast amount of religious diversity and struggles that exist in Israel.

"Being in a population that was surrounded by Christians, Jews, and Muslims and realizing the lost in Israel, it definitely gave me a great appreciation for God revealing Himself to us," said Holloway. "We have the opportunity to know Christ, not because of our location, but because of His power."

