

## Commonplace Consciousness

### Description

We have been in Nepal for eight months now and I have realized that those things that were so fascinating back in May have now become commonplace. Here are some examples of unusual sights that I missed photographing: the extension ladder being carried by the passenger on a motorcycle, the family of four climbing onto their scooter, the goat tied up outside the butcher shop bleating “s-a-v-e m-e” in his little goat voice. We still find Nepal to be amazing but we have gotten used to things here to the point of wondering how long it will take to adapt when we get home.



This goat was tied up next door, not at the butcher shop

We have had another week filled with working on various tasks in the office. It is not as interesting as playing tourist, but certainly what we are here for. We have several projects in the development and proposal stage which require a lot of back and forth as we answer questions and find workable options as difficulties arise, which they inevitably do.

With that said, here are a few photos and observations of the week.

We have stopped counting dogs while walking. There are lots and lots, but we don't see many puppies. We do see dogs outside of butcher shops and other little shops and cafés hoping for a handout. We see them sleeping curled up on shop steps, at the side of the road, in the middle of the road and maybe on their favorite sandpile.



These dogs are the third set to follow us this morning. They stayed with us for about a half mile before being distracted by some other dogs. Dogs have never followed us before today and it seemed odd. Then I realized I probably smelled like the bacon I had cooked!

Here is some typical scenery as we walk through neighborhoods. Laundry is hung anywhere that is convenient.





There are little temples and shrines all throughout the neighborhoods. These include small niches with a picture of a god, small to medium sized structures with a figure inside, and sacred banyan trees. Each day we see people carrying offerings to these spots to worship. It may be water in a copper pot, a plate made of leaves containing rice or fruit, or perhaps a garland of marigolds.



This is a garbage cart. The collector blows a whistle to let everyone know to put the trash out. Today is actually the first day I have seen one although I hear the whistle frequently. On the larger streets they have a big truck for collection. I missed getting a picture of the purple haired guy doing the collecting because he stepped behind a wall for a potty break!

As we have become less conscious of those things here that are so different from home it made me think how we can easily miss flashes of inspiration or not recognize miracles if we allow our lives to become too routine and our focus to drift from what matters most. There are amazing things all around us. Miracles happen daily. We just need to take the time to look and we will see the hand of the Lord in

our lives.

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Rick and our friend, Samyog, on his priesthood ordination day

**Date Created**

14 Jan 2024

**Author**

taunyaneff

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