

Go With the Flow

Description

One of the things we are learning here is to go with the flow. It would seem that no plan is ever a sure thing and that opportunities appear out of nowhere. On Monday we had a relatively simple day planned that included going over to the Mission Home and to Central Market. Once at the office Josh got a call that we had an opportunity to meet with the ex-deputy mayor of Delhi. The time was set for 4:30 but it would take an hour or more to get there. Meanwhile we were invited to lunch to celebrate a fellow missionary's birthday. Just when we figured out how we could do both the meeting was changed to the following day. I was glad to be able to have a more relaxing lunch and get to know people better. Following lunch we went to Central Market where Elder Jones was to pick up a suit he was having made. Unfortunately it had some adjustments that needed to be made and he had to return later in the week.

Central Market was fascinating. It was a giant bazaar. There were buildings around the perimeter with small shops that had goods spilling out onto the street area. The streets in the center were full of shops that were in permanent booths and then there were street vendors with goods in carts, on poles or laid out on the ground. There were all kinds of clothes, fabric, trims, jewelry, purses, shoes, foods and more. There were crowds of people and the ground was uneven and dirty which made it hard to walk while looking at all the stuff to buy.



Central Market

On Tuesday we were able to go to the appointment postponed from Monday. The Uber dropped us off on a street that had few buildings and was not an area that any tourist would ever go. As I got out of the car I had to step over a dangling electrical wire. People were giving us puzzled looks and I felt very out of place. Deepanshu (our interpreter) called the man who set up the appointment and we learned we were in the general area. We walked down the road until it turned into a wide uneven path and

headed toward a wall. Outside this wall were some piles of garbage, a cow plowing through the garbage looking for food, a litter of puppies in the garbage and various stray dogs as well as a man painting the wall yellow. As we waited to figure out where we should go next another cow came through the stile in the wall. Several people had gone to the other side and we decided we should go that way. It was nicer on the inside than I expected, but when we turned a corner there was another dump area, about 8 cows and a woman making poop patties from a pile of cow manure. She had them all lined up very neatly on the ground and on top of a low wall to dry. When dry they would be sold for fuel. (Think pioneers and buffalo chips.)



Poop Patties drying on the wall

Just as we were taking all of this in some children dashed out and shook Rick's hand. They were as intrigued with us as we were with them. Some teenaged kids were in the park and stopped their game to wave and say "hi". As we continued down the road everyone we passed wondered about us. We returned many "namaste" greetings and eventually came to an area of the community that was a little nicer. We were directed down an alley to the community leader's office. It was a room in a block wall type building at the end of this alley way. In my mind I thought we were going to an office, in an office building, in an urban area of town. That there would be a foyer, a receptionist and windows. Here's a picture of the office.



Jawan and Josh Jones and Deepanshu

The people are very hospitable and always offer at least something to drink. We weren't keen on drinking the water since one of the projects we were talking about was water purification. He offered soda and we accepted but then I felt bad because he had to send someone to the store to buy it. He also offered us some snacks. We have been very careful about what we eat here but didn't want to offend so enjoyed the offerings. The meeting progressed and after discussing possible project options for his community he connected us with an MP (member of parliament). We headed over to that office, which was more like what I had been expecting, and spoke with his personal assistant. It was rather late when we got home. But at least we had drinks and snacks!

Saturday we went sightseeing to Swaminarayan Akshardham, which is a Hindu temple and cultural center on 100 acres in Delhi. It is an architectural wonder carved in pink sandstone and Carrara

marble. They don't allow photography on the grounds so the first picture is from a book and the second was outside the complex.



Akshardham Mandir



We spent about four hours marveling at the intricacies of the carving and the beauty of the philosophies.

So this week we had to adapt and scramble as we navigated the use of Uber on our own, adjusted plans to accommodate sudden appointments and changed appointments not only with government leaders but also for our Japanese encephalitis vaccine. Today I marveled that I am halfway around the world adapting to a different culture and environment and felt so thankful for the constancy of God's love for me and the blessing of having His plan to guide my life.

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