

Seeing Through a Glass Dimly

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There were no mirrors
in San Jose
de San Marcos de la Sierra.

Except, of course, the tiny compact
I balanced on my knees
each morning as I applied my mascara
(an unnecessary,
but delightful daily ritual).

I saw only pieces of myself
in that mirror.

*Two weeks.
No real mirrors.*

So imagine my surprise
on catching a glimpse of myself
in a restaurant mirror
on the way back to San Pedro Sula
at the end of our trip.

I looked healthy.
Happy. Alive.

That's what not looking at
yourself for two weeks will do.

It wasn't until later that I realized:
I had learned to see myself
more clearly in the
expressions of the local children
who marveled, wondered,
and laughed at my Gringa antics.

It is a curious thing to find oneself
in the expression of another.

Look here.
What do you see?



Excitement.



Questioning.



Delight.

Reserve.

Nervousness.



Calm.
Concern.



Friendship.
Timidity.



Curiosity.



Joy.
Abandon.



Distraction. Peace. Wonder.
Mischievousness. Delight.



Surprise.



Belief.



Appeal.
Inquisitiveness.



Intelligence.



Friendship.
Bravery.



Intrigue.



Strength.



Beauty.



Personality.



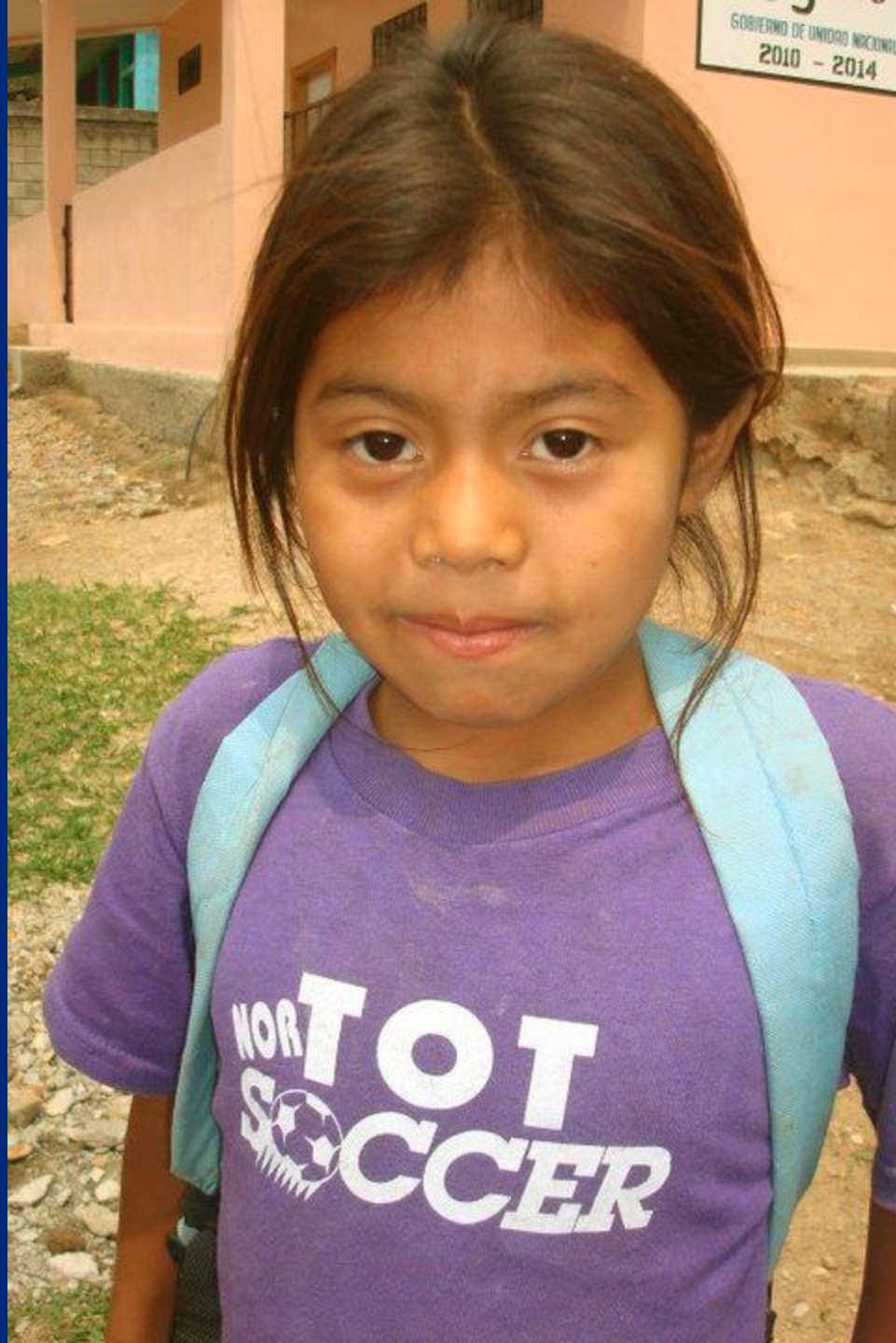
Playfulness.



Curiosity.



Dignity.



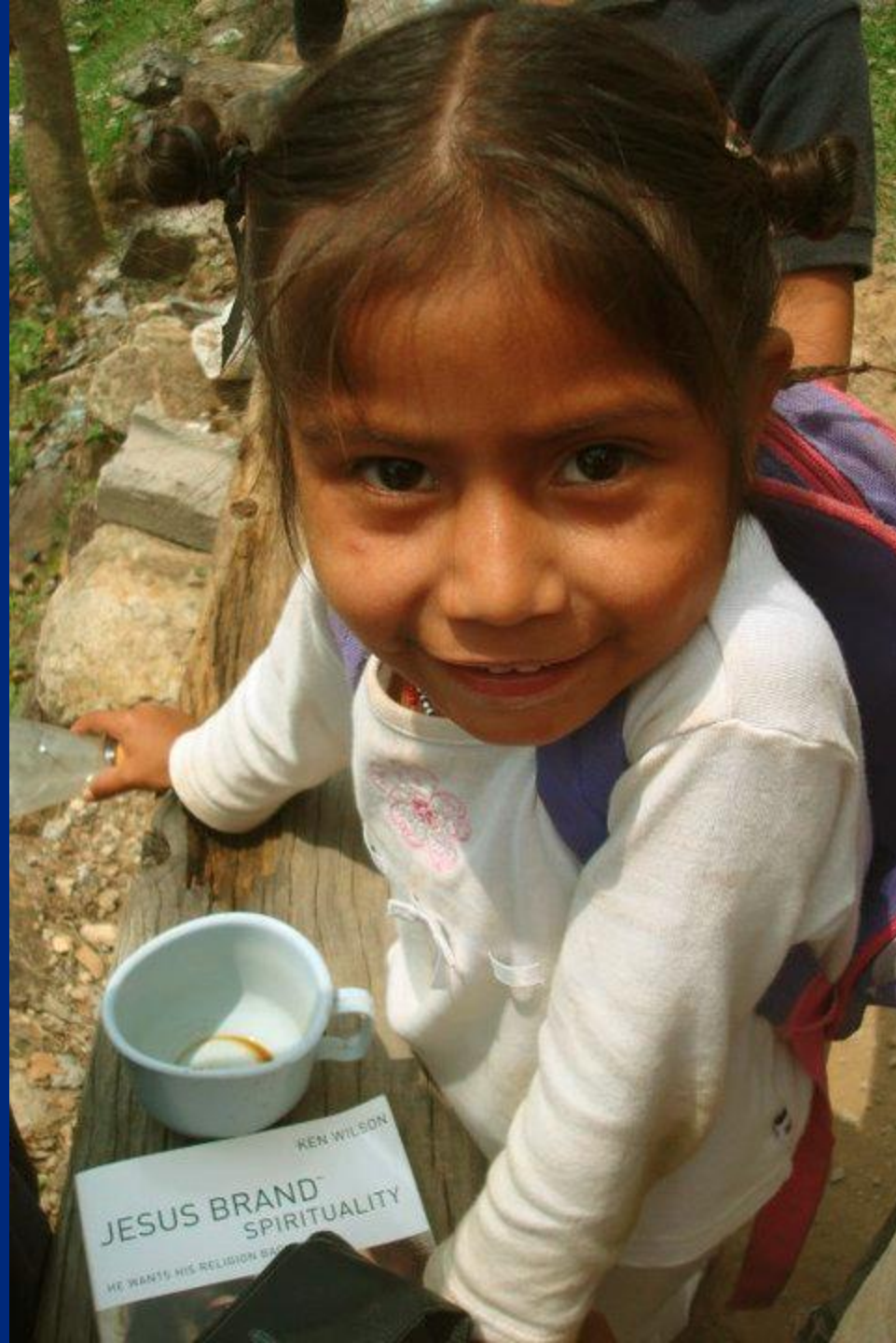
Gumption.



Charm.



Resolve.
Focus.



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HE WANTS HIS RELIGION BACK

A better future.

Honestly,
most of what we look like
can be seen better
in the faces of others.

Do they smile?
We have been kind.

Do they nod in understanding?
We have been clear.

Do they laugh?
We have become friends.

These are our
accomplishments.

And while somewhat altered
by social conformity
(less so in children),
the expressions of others
can also highlight our weaknesses.

Do they frown slightly?
We have not been gracious.

Do they wrinkle their brows in confusion?
We have not been transparent.

Do they shake their heads in frustration?
We have not been partners.

These are our challenges.

Whether accomplishments or
challenges, we encounter
mirrors every day.

We see ourselves through a glass dimly,
most of the time.

Yet every so often,
we see face to face.

The capacity for sight testifies to the Eternal.

The same One who
opens the eyes of the newborn
shuts the eyes of the dying.

The ability to know ourselves and others
testifies to the conversation of life:
the questions,
the answers,
and the silence that says more than
everything else combined.

Honduras,
with its many faces and quiet expressions,
taught me the value of seeing and being seen
– not in a polished piece of glass,
but in the beauty of a shared gaze.

Still I wonder at the vanity of our culture.

Are we content to inspect micro defects
in our compact mirrors?

Or do we truly want to see?

At the beginning and end of each day,
exercising the right to see is a choice.

We can choose to see and live
through a mirror dimly.

Or we can choose to live and
to see face to face.

