

Telling the Palestinian story in the U.S. / Anthony Jeer

Seeing humanity on every side of the world, and every side of the wall. In this episode Anthony reflects on his visit to the U.S. Mexico border wall as a Palestinian who lives next to the wall when he is at home Bethlehem. As a Palestinian Christian he has had a unique experience sharing his story in the U.S. this year and is working to help people understand what life has been like for him and his family in Palestine. We ask the question, what does peace and justice look like for Palestine?

Learn more about MCC's work in Palestine/Israel here <https://mcc.org/learn/where/middle-east/palestine-israel/faq/mcc-palestine-israel>

Episode 43

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Hook excerpt from the interview*

“Right when I started seeing the wall when my colleague Saulo was like showing me, Oh hey that's the wall right there. I completely froze. And I honestly started even tearing up a little bit because I just couldn't imagine seeing the privilege that I had in this side of the world on this side of the wall. While in Palestine being completely the opposite. I never had that privilege. And just being able to cross from the U.S. to Mexico and come back with no problems was just wow”

Christy Kauffman

That was Anthony Jeer, talking about his experience visiting the Mexico U.S. border wall as a Palestinian who lives next to the wall in Bethlehem.

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Intro Theme*

Christy Kauffman

Today on the show a conversation with Anthony Jeer, he is a part of MCC's International Volunteer Exchange Program or IVEP, His placement is with MCC's National Peace and Justice Ministries in Washington DC. He is from Palestine and has been traveling around the United States sharing his own story and experiences as a young Palestinian Christian. Me and him recorded this conversation in the MCC Office in DC. In that office being, in a big city there are a few sirens in the background at points, we wanted to mention this as a disclaimer just incase you are listening in a car on your way somewhere.

Interview

Christy Kauffman

Welcome to the show. First I was interested in having you introduce yourself

Anthony Jeer

So hello. Thank you for bringing me here. My name is Anthony Jeer and I'm from Palestine. But originally I was born in Honduras. Right now I'm doing advocacy work with the National Peace and Justice ministries office here in Washington DC. So I'm doing more of like advocacy for Palestine, Latin America, Syria and migration. Most of what I do is go and speak around the United States, into different church congregations, I go to speak to universities, colleges or high schools just about Palestine and relating it back to Latin America as well. I'm part of the MCC's international volunteer exchange program, which is where you bring students or from all around the world, and you put them in the United States for a year.

Christy Kauffman

So there's a few different young adult programs that MCC has your what they call IVEPer international volunteer exchange program. There's also SALT, which would be kind of the opposite of IVEP, which would be young adults coming from the US and going to other places. And then there's also YAMEN, which is people going from other places. That's right. So just to clarify, yeah, so you're an IVEPer here in the US, what are some of the experiences you've gotten to have through that

Anthony Jeer

I've got to have a lot of really cool experiences. For example, in one year that I've been here in the U.S., actually 11 months, I will be visiting 18 states in the United States. So traveling a lot. That's something that I'm always grateful for that I travel everywhere. And it's amazing, including also Puerto Rico and Mexico, which has been such a blessing for me as well to be able to go into those places.

Christy Kauffman

You have a lot of opportunity to speak to quite a range of audiences here. Yeah. Yeah. What are you speaking about when you are going and speaking with these groups?

Anthony Jeer

So mostly, I speak my personal story is living in Palestine living in Honduras? Well, as I was born in Honduras and lived in Palestine for last 10 years, I've had one concept that always comes to mind. And that concept is the lack of human rights and these two different countries. So in Honduras, I grew up with no human rights that the basic child needs from not having the best education. And not even being able to leave the house and walk around in the street because of how dangerous it was. Also, fun fact, in 2012, San Pedro Sula, Honduras the place where I was born and lived there for 10 years, was the most dangerous city in the world in 2012. And the main thing that I wanted to do is to give these people human rights. And that's why I love to speak about, just give them people here in the U.S. or whoever wants to listen, honestly, just to tell them that there's people that don't have the human rights and maybe in the U.S. they do and make them appreciate a little bit more of what life actually is.

Christy Kauffman

How are you doing that? Are you telling your own story? What is the story that you're telling?

Anthony Jeer

So most of the stories that I say were from how my great grandparents, they fled Palestine, because of the because of occupation, colonization, they became refugees and had to travel all across the world to go to Honduras. Not only that my dad when he was born in Bethlehem, after

three years, they had to flee again. Well, my grandpa and my parents, my dad, he had to flee from Palestine again, because he just couldn't stay there in 1974. In 1975, it was during the really awful times in Palestine where people just had to leave.

Christy Kauffman

This section of our conversation is hard to follow on listening back because of how much movement there was in his family's lives. His family kept trying to return to Palestine and they kept having to flee as well, this shows some of the continual pull home they felt and the realities of needing to leave over generations that many Palestinian families have experienced.

Anthony Jeer

Another of the stories that I talked about was that how my parents never really explained anything to me when I was growing up in Honduras, they never really explained to me what Palestine was, what the culture traditions, even the language perhaps I never knew anything about it until my dad had the crazy idea to like, Oh, let's take them all back to Palestine, you know. And as a 12 year old kid that had no clue about anything, not even the language, it was really hard for me to adjust in that situation, where I had to go into a full Arabic school for the first year. Without knowing one word of Arabic, I even like to make the joke that it's, I only knew two words, which were Baba and balloon, which are literally translated to dad and balloon when I moved to Palestine. So not only that, but just the only thing that I actually knew from what's happening in Palestine was that Israel sends two rockets. The first rocket was to alert people to leave the building, and the second rocket causing mass destruction. And right when I was 12 years old, sitting at home alone, because my parents had to do something, I was just sitting around in my house, and then I heard that first rocket landed right next to my, right next to the building that we lived in, and the only thing this 12 year old could think of was that he has five minutes to die. Now in psychology, there's like three reactions to the human body after suffering from a traumatic event. And those three are fighting, freezing or fleeing. And I can't even tell you that same moment, I had all three of them, trying to find my way out of fleeing the building. But I was completely frozen to the point where you didn't even know what to do. And those five minutes went up to 10 minutes to 20 minutes up to an hour of me just suffering quietly frozen in my own position, not even knowing what to do. When thankfully for me, that second rocket never came. But I can, I cannot even begin to understand to even think that that rocket always comes in places like Gaza, in the West Bank. And that's the story that I tell people to realize that the person standing in front of you suffered from this. And my story is not significant to every other Palestinian out there, where it's just what people need to hear a little bit just from someone that's standing in front of them, because when are they going to meet a Palestinian? When are they going to hear these stories about Palestinians and how they suffer? Me? I'm just a kid that went from Honduras to Palestine and had that terrible experience that has traumatized me all through my childhood in Palestine. But other than that, how are they going to hear it?

Christy Kauffman

Yeah. And you said you moved to Palestine when you were 12? Do you know the reasons why your family moved at that point?

Anthony Jeer

At that point, it specifically was when my dad was having a lot of problems with gang related problems. With all the things that were happening in Honduras, 2012, as I said Honduras was, San Pedro Sula, Honduras was the most dangerous city in the world. And my dad was getting a lot of, he had to pay like security for gangs and everything so he could keep open his one business that he had in San Pedro. But it was just getting too much to the point where he was like, we have to flee. So the story of migration and seeking asylum just came back another time, which is something that I relate to a lot now, because when I was 12 years old, I never thought

that we're migrating that we're seeking asylum in a way because we're not really seeking asylum like migrants here in the United States. But it was like, you have to find a way to live, which is what impacted me the most right now when I'm speaking and I just didn't understand exactly what was going on when I was 10 years old, 11 years old, leaving from Honduras to Palestine. That's the main reason why we had to flee. We had to leave Honduras, even though my dad grew up in Honduras, all his life. He lived there since he was like three or four years old, all the way through right now. My dad is right now 55 years old, and he's lived three quarters of it in Honduras. And I bet he did not want to leave the place he grew up.

Christy Kauffman

What was it like for your family to come back to Palestine?

Anthony Jeer

One of the craziest experiences of especially my parents to come back to Palestine. My dad loved it. My dad hasn't been in Palestine, he never really knew that much about it. He knew everything that was happening. He knew the language 100%, but he could not see it in his own eyes, or like, remember as much of Palestine as my mom. The biggest impact for my mom was that my mom left in 1998. And she came back in 2012. By that time, the wall was built. The playground that my mom used to play in was completely destroyed. All these different like things that my mom would remember from her childhood growing up in Palestine. She just didn't have them anymore. They just completely changed. For example, just going from Jordan to Jericho, crossing the bridge because we can't fly out of Palestine. And going and driving around Beit Sahour and Bethlehem and now seeing a wall that was probably one of the mind blowing experiences for my mom, I remember driving right next to her and I could just see her crying, because I can't imagine just like the drastical change that she saw from leaving in 1998. And coming back after the wall was built,

Christy Kauffman

Is there emotions that the wall brings up for you or when you are seeing it?

Anthony Jeer

Well, the thing about the wall is that it makes you not realize it. And I bet people that live in like the border of Mexico in the U.S. also know the same thing or feel the same thing because living next to a wall. I honestly have just thought that it's just there. It's not something that I hate. It's not something even though I really truly hate it, but we never realize how much we do because it's just so constant in our lives. It's like a constant reminder that we are oppressed to the way that it's been normalized. So every single day going to college, my college, the Bethlehem Bible College is five minutes away from the wall. And every single time driving from it. I have to see it, which has just become like, oh, there's a new drawing on the wall. Oh Banksy was here, you know, like those little stuff that you like, that bring up to your mind a lot more than the wall itself. I love to call it beautiful yet hideous wall. Everyone loves to take pictures of it loves to take pictures of the drawings when Banksy came and did his walled off hotel right and right next to the hotel, just an insane idea. And people from all over the world that come to Palestine and they spray paint or the draw, or they put such beautiful and meaningful drawings on this hideous wall.

Christy Kauffman

You went to the Mexico U.S. wall and I was curious about what was that experience like for you?

Anthony Jeer

We started in Tucson, and we were driving from Tucson to Douglas Arizona. And then from there having to cross to Agua Prieta right when I started seeing the wall when my colleague Saulo was like showing me that's the wall right there. I completely froze. And I honestly started even tearing up a little bit because I just couldn't imagine seeing the privilege that I had in this side of the world on this side of the wall. While in Palestine being completely the opposite. I never had that privilege. And just being able to cross from the US to Mexico and come back with no problems was just wow. How is that even possible to go through a wall with such privilege because you're a tourist, or because. Because in Palestine, tourists have way more privileged than I do. People that are not even from there and can live in Israel have more privileged than I do, being from there having a Palestinian passport. So when like crossing the border and talking to migrants hearing their stories, and telling them my story as well. We live in the same wall and different in different places.

Of course there's different reasonings with why people want to move to the U.S. While in Israel, no one wants to go to, no one wants to, like fulfill the Israeli dream, as they call the American dream. . It's we're not sacrificing our lives to go to Israel, we're sacrificing our lives living in our own homes. And just there were some differences between it, but at the same time seeing how well the separates, and bringing in wall theology, that there was always a good side and a bad side to a wall. And in Palestine, I am the bad side. And for the U.S. and Mexico wall, not only Mexico, but Mexico and all Latin America is the bad side, while the U.S. is the good side of the wall, which just makes me think I'm from the other side of the wall, in both places in the world, because being Honduras as well, I'm on the bad side of the wall. Most of the immigrants that come to the United States, a lot of them are from Honduras, and people that just want to fulfill the dream of having a normal life. Something that came up a lot during that visit was what is the concept of the American dream? And is it capitalism? Is it becoming rich and having a lot of money having your own NGO or having your own organization? Well, honestly, the American Dream is just having a little bit more security, or food on your table, or just a place to stay and not be scared for what's going to happen tomorrow. Because that's really what they call the American dream. And after seeing migrants and like telling me their stories, or when I was volunteering at the migrant Resource Center, in Agua Prieta Mexico. I saw two people, a couple from Guatemala. And then they're just walking, like back to Migrant Resource Center to like just have a sip of water, after being returned from the U.S. after being kicked out of the U.S. again deported. Just walked into the migrant Resource Center, took a sip of water something to eat and rested for a little bit, and went to try again, after they've been stranded in the desert for 15 days. That type of resilience. Like I could only see that resilience in Palestine as well. When you're in the dessert for 15 days with barely any water, any food and being cold. That type of resilience that I saw, and for all Latin Americans is the same type of resilience that I see in Palestine.

Christy Kauffman

Yeah, it's interesting the parallels that you saw with that, and part of that is you can relate you were in Honduras, and you were in Palestine. So you've been on that side of the wall. I'm curious, even more like what are the different emotions that you felt on the U.S. side of the wall?

Anthony Jeer

I'm privileged. That's what I like ... being in Tucson. And, of course, there's a lot of like, also people that speak Spanish in Tucson that I was speaking to, the main thing that was impacted by was that in this place in the world, they actually have a voice to speak. When in Palestine I don't.

Christy Kauffman

and you've been using it.

Anthony Jeer

I know I've been using it. Yes.

Christy Kauffman

Yeah. Is it often that people draw parallels between the U.S. Mexico border and Israel Palestine?

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Anthony Jeer

Yes, actually, I've read a lot of articles about people who have gone to both writing parallels like comparing and contrasting, what are the things that are exactly the same, for example, just having to live right next to a wall. It's different in both scenarios about as I said, people want to live the American dream. But if you try to even get near to the wall, sometimes you really soldiers tell you leave. One time me my friends were standing just at the wall, just watching everything and taking videos, because we're doing a journalism project. From a journalism course, I was taking in Palestine. And we're taking videos of the wall. And then an Israeli soldier that was standing on the tower. He was like, get out. What we're literally just standing next to the wall in our side. And he's still telling us to leave.

Christy Kauffman

Yeah, that's really interesting. And I think it's helpful comparison for someone used to the U.S. context might be more familiar with the U.S. Mexico border wall. And Israel-Palestine seems so far away to many people here that to find the parallels might be helpful in that way, even to gain empathy in this context, currently. What do you have like any sort of message or thought for people on the quote unquote, good side of the wall? The people who can freely move.

Anthony Jeer

I would say, a lot of people that I've been talking to they're like, we can't let everyone in. You know, just that. That comes from privilege. Because who am I to neglect the entry of someone that wants to seek, seek security? Migrants are the people who work in this country I work all the jobs that like people in the U.S. don't want to, when these people are just trying to make a life, living for their children to have a better future than them. We really see privilege and people that are like, "No, it's good that there's a wall because we have to be protected from them." What are we going to protect it from? That's showing what privilege really is in this alley. I know not everyone in the U.S. have the same exact person. And a lot of people suffer from many different things. But same time in this subject, there is privilege that is clearly seen from someone from Palestine, being able to go from Tucson, Arizona, go down to Agua Prieta Mexico in Mexico and come back with no problems. Because that was the first time I ever experienced privilege.

Christy Kauffman

Was it nice?

Anthony Jeer

It was nice. I'm not gonna lie. It's pretty nice. Exactly.

Christy Kauffman

And so it's hard for those who have always had it, to understand

Anthony Jeer

what it's like to live without it.

Christy Kauffman

Yeah, exactly. What is the context that you can give about Palestine-Israel, for the listeners that are in their infancy of understanding why, why is this such a big deal? Why is this a conflict that's happening?

Anthony Jeer

The thing about a lot of times when people ask me as well, can you tell us more about Palestine? I know it's a really complicated, or complex situation, they asked me and I'm like, No, it's not really not really complex, not complicated at all. We've seen it all throughout history. I mean, colonization, occupation has been in history ever since the Europeans colonized all Latin America, and gave them like the Spanish language and rob them from all their natural resources that they had. We saw the same thing here in the United States with Native Americans and pushed into reservations. We saw the same thing in 1890s in Puerto Rico, that's just all colonization over and over happening over again, Spain and Morocco, Morocco, and Western Sahara, just all these things about colonization that come to mind yet, when we speak of Palestine, it's like, no, it's so complicated. It's honestly not complicated people, when they asked me that it is I'm like, no it's easy. It's really understandable. It's not only colonization, but also put South African apartheid all into it. And that's what Palestine is. It's just a way of segregation of one group of people to the other, just because they're from a different ethnicity, although they already lived in the same land that they already did. So that's made of the context that people of I wish people here in the U.S. would understand.

Christy Kauffman

What are some of the interesting or different perspectives that you have heard, being in the US context now and being a Palestinian telling you story, What are the interesting things that you've come across in conversations?

Anthony Jeer

I've come across about a lot, a lot of people who are pro Zionist, pro Israelis, for sure. The context of even not liking me for my appearance as well. I've spoken to a lot of people that just how they have viewed the Bible, have they read the Bible, or throughout their life has been in a pro-Israeli way, as in like, this is the land that Abraham promised that God promised Abraham in the Bible in the book of Genesis. Why do you think this is your land, for example, like, people have been telling me all these type of things, and then just say, it's a complicated subject, I just want peace for the Middle East. And I don't want to pick sides. But then at the same time, what peace are you trying to achieve by not picking sides? Because if you don't give justice to the oppressed, the oppressor gets more power to keep oppressing. So the concept of peace that people think of here in the U.S. is irrelevant, because what is he trying to achieve, are trying to give justice for the people who have suffered for it was the 75th anniversary of the Nakba just a couple of weeks ago, 75 years living in occupation, all those people in those 75 years, justice? but I still call it peace, just because you don't want to pick sides. Because you're afraid of someone saying that you're wrong. You're afraid of people telling you oh you may be anti-semitic if you choose Palestine over Israel, being an occupier state, who is an apartheid state as well, who has killed 1,000s of Palestinians, made 700,000 Palestinian refugees just in 1948. Without even counting the multiple Palestinians who left all throughout the years, over 75 years since the Nakba was started. How are you going to call that peace?

Christy Kauffman

Was that surprising to you to hear from different people not wanting to take sides? Is that surprising to you? Or was it something you expected?

Anthony Jeer

That was the most thing I expected coming here. And I knew going to the U.S. I know The United States and Israel have a huge connection and \$3.7 billion a year, like annually just for military aid in Israel. So I knew that I was going, I knew what I was putting myself into, by sharing Palestinian story. I didn't have like a lack of knowledge of being like totally shocked, of someone being like, oh, no, it's called Israel not Palestine, for example. Or even when people mentioned Israel before Palestine or when they call Bethlehem and Gaza Strip as the West Bank and Gaza Strip. And don't call that Palestine even though that's all that it is. I came here with the purpose of trying to change at least some people's lives by explaining to them that not that their narrative is wrong, but to read the Bible in different context, to see occupation and colonization. I'm just here to saying not only my beliefs, but I can speak for every Palestinian this is what we just want justice. As all the world wants peace, we also want peace, but we cannot have it if we don't have justice first.

Christy Kauffman

What does peace and justice look like for Palestine? Do you think?

Anthony Jeer

That's a really complex question, actually easy question. But justice would be, I don't want to give a solution I, but I feel like people who have been robbed of their lives should receive. People who have families who have lost children. A little kid who grew up without his father should get the justice for the inhumane acts that Israel has done. For example, Shireen Abu Akleh was just murdered last year, about a year ago, and there is still no justice for her whatsoever, being an United States American citizen and Palestinian herself. The journalist, she was killed, she was murdered and by an Israeli soldier while she was wearing her press vest and her press helmet, and at the same time, even to today, that you being a United States citizen, the U.S. were like we were going to do an investigation and they never did. Because there is no justice in apartheid. We live in this type of segregation. You will never see justice in a way where even someone who has connections with another country or a really powerful country just like the United States, yet still, her death just came and no one did anything for it and even to right now we're still talking to congressmen and representatives. We just yesterday had hill visits speaking about the two bills the Betty McCollum bill that is no way to treat a child campaign and the Shireen Abu Akleh, the Shireen Abu Akleh act, which is just give justice for her started an investigation. But the Israeli soldier, the inhuman Israeli soldier that de-humanized her, put them in prison, because he's right now walking around as a hero, being "I am the one that kills Shireen Abu Akleh. I killed the voice of Palestinians all over the world." And that's why he's proud of me just walking around as a hero with no consequence whatsoever. Give justice to these people. And then we'll speak about peace. A lot of people have been writing books that I've been reading about a one state solution a two state solutions. But what I like to tell them is, where's the justice in it? Because a lot of the times they're just like, oh, we just have to forgive and forget. Are we really going to think that Jesus really wanted this to happen? People that also support Israel and see and see that Israel is the fulfillment of prophecy, and Palestinians are just an obstacle to fulfilling God's prophecy? Do you really think God wanted, Jesus wanted apartheid? If Jesus live today, right now, do you think he wanted this to happen? And he wrote this specifically for Palestine? I feel like if we think that we read the Bible in a way where we justify Israel's act like crime acts and hates and all their acts of terrorism that has happened in Gaza and Palestine, and still say, and we justify him for that, for the Bible, that I think the Bible is just irrelevant. The Bible just a piece of paper that someone wrote years years ago, and has no meaning to it or situation right now.

Christy Kauffman

And you went to Bethlehem Bible College? Yes. How did that shape how you think about your your context?

Anthony Jeer

I feel like there's Oh, God has always planned something for everyone's life. And I feel like going to the Bethlehem Bible college after high school was one of God's plan for my life. My mind was just blown out of all the things of how can you can really read the Bible in your own context instead of just whatever your pastor or whatever your priest or your father used to say that this is how it's supposed to be. And the way that you can read it and dive in between the texts, and see who wrote it, what why was it written? To what context to what people? And then when you see that, and then you realize that the Bible is not only for whatever I've been hearing, all my life. Imagine if Jesus, as we know, Jesus was born in Bethlehem. He lived in Nazareth, and he died in Jerusalem. How about if he was born today? Bethlehem is completely separated with a wall, he would need permission. Nazareth is a place where I have never seen in my life, because how would I ever go there? If I never have permission, I can just I can even begin to realize like, wow, like, if Jesus was born today, then life would be completely different Christian, the concept of Christianity will be completely different. Even though Jesus himself was born in occupation.

Christy Kauffman

Yeah, I wanted to ask you if you had Israeli peacemakers, or scholars that have a good understanding of the injustices you respect in that way that you could share?

Anthony Jeer

I don't know scholars themselves as much. One of my teachers at the Bethlehem Bible College Selim Munayer, he has his organization, him and his sons, they have this organization, their organization that brings Palestinians and Israelis together to speak their differences. And that's something I really respect that as putting aside occupation, putting aside that we cannot travel to Jerusalem, putting aside all the sources of hatred that we've seen, and Israeli war crimes that we've seen, we can still see humanity between people. Because right now people ask me, then what do you want to do with all the people that live in Israel? Huh? Do you want to kick them out? I'm like, No, I don't blame the kid who was born today in Tel Aviv. That was born in that side of the wall, I don't blame the 18 year old kid that knows nothing but kill Palestinians because he thinks we're terrorists. And he goes to the IDF. I cannot blame the U.S. kid that is somewhat Jewish and has the Law of Return to go to Israel, after being sick of his life here in the U.S. going to Israel serving the IDF thinking Palestinians as terrorists and having more privileged than I do. I don't blame them. And as Jesus said, in when he was on the cross, God forgive them because they don't know what they're doing. And that's the same thing that we Palestinians see it as. Other people just think that we just want hatred, or we just have hatred upon them. We know there's humanity. We know there's lives, and there's value to them living in there, and people are working for peace people to understand truly what's happening. They understand the work for peace. The organization here in the U.S. in the US Jewish Voice for Peace, that made that have been working for Palestine have been working for Palestinian rights, conservative, religious Jews that always hold the Palestinian flag in protest that I see all over the U.S. That's the people that I truly respect because they understand what occupation is. And you understand that even though they were born in Israel, it doesn't mean that they can't see humanity on the other side of the wall. I'm not going to say that all Israelis have not suffered with, with occupation. I'm not going to say that people in Israel did not die. I'm not going to say people in Palestine did not die. I wouldn't say anything wrong about the things that I have experienced living in Palestine for the last 10 years. But at the same time, wherever we see humanity, that's when change starts to happen. When people at least in Palestine starts to see

humanity in one another, and stop the hatred of occupation. That's when I think that there will come a solution. But until that day, then I don't think anything's going to happen anytime soon.

Christy Kauffman

So what is your hope for the land that is called Palestine or Israel or the West Bank?

Anthony Jeer

For all three religions to live in relative peace inside this country that's made for not only these three religions, but for everyone in the world, the concept of the promised land being only for Jews is something that I don't like because the Promised Land is not only Jerusalem, and it's not only made for people who follow Judaism. It's made for everyone in the world. And honestly thinking that this promised land is only for Israel, I find that really selfish

Christy Kauffman

So what do you miss about your home

Anthony Jeer

Right now? I miss my parents for sure. I miss my family, my friends. Just the smell of Arabic coffee in the street when you walk around. Miss my teachers that I used to hang out with my college just the all those beautiful things that I have in Palestine. Palestine is a beautiful country. It's unfortunate that many cannot travel to it, but same time I do miss it because I grew up there for last 10 years. My family, my friends, my siblings are all there. And I cannot wait to see them. But same time, I know that it's a difficult place for them also to live.

Christy Kauffman

So what is your hope that people who hear your story walk away with?

Anthony Jeer

The hope is to see that people need human rights. And as a person who grew up without them, and when people see me in talking to them, and I tell them that I grew up without human rights in both countries that I love. We have to do something about it, because everyone is human. And in the end, everyone is human. It's not like someone because life shouldn't be determined how good or how bad of a life shouldn't be determined the way you were in the place you were born.

And just showing humanity towards all the world and feel with people that have a different people that you've never probably seen, or you've never really met, when you have that connection. And when people understand that there is life outside the United States or life outside their own country, their own city, that's when people begin to understand there is humanity, and that everyone should be treated equally. We have seen racism, segregation all over the world, even in the US. And after we see that there is humanity in every side of the wall, in every ethnicity in every gender and every sexuality, that we're going to see that there can be peace. And my hope is for people here to just have a different context of what's happening in Palestine, that there is Palestinian Christians, that there is 500,000 Palestinians right now in Chile, 300,000 in Honduras, 150,000 in Colombia 100,000 in Salvador because of the Palestinian diaspora, people that left Palestine ever since 1948. And before and after that, to go to Palestine to go to and do to go to all these countries.

Christy Kauffman

So to see each other's humanity,

Anthony Jeer

See each other's humanity. Start and end point endpoint.

Christy Kauffman

That's your endpoint. That's that's a pretty good one. Well, thank you so much for talking with me today, Anthony.

Anthony Jeer

Aww, thank you Christy, I really appreciate it.

Transition Music*Christy Kauffman**

This episode of Relief, Development and Podcast was produced on the Traditional land of the Algonquin, Lenape, Nanticoke, Piscataway, Shawnee and Susquehannock people groups.

It was recorded and produced by me, Christy Kauffman, and the head producer is Emily Loewen.

Thank you to Anthony Jeer for sharing his story today. We hope you can take his advice and find a way to see each others humanity.

A lot is happening in the world right now. This is a difficult time for many. May you experience God's provision and protection as we work together to share God's love and compassion for all in the name of Christ.

Thanks and take good care.

***Outro**