

“*ESPERANZA ETERNA*”

Bringing Hope for Eternity to Latin America and Beyond



Mission Newsletter

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The summer months have flown by. The day after Bob returned from a Honduras mission trip with the Main and Oklahoma group in June, he flew to Houston to speak on a conference on Latin American leadership development. The Houston trip was followed almost immediately by a quick trip to Lubbock for the funeral of Tim Maxcey’s mother. Tim serves as an elder and also serves as a board member of Association Amicus.

July activities started with a mini-working-vacation to Michigan which included preaching and teaching opportunities. We spent time with friends in Christ but were also able to encourage mission work and to plan future activities. The return trip from Michigan included a stop in Nashville, Tennessee to take care of some Association Amicus matters and also a few days of spiritual retreat and fellowship where we again had the opportunity to share some of the story of Latin American missions.

The rest of July included family time with the grandkids and family birthday celebrations. Jan worked as fill-in secretary in the church office the first week of August. Also in August, Bob preached twice at Main and Oklahoma including a mission report, and we also visited churches in Fort Gibson and northwest Arkansas as we worked in a couple of days of family time with Bob’s stepmother.



The major focus of this report is Bob’s trip to Colombia for just over a week in early September. (A separate mission trip report with more details is included.) Flying into Cali, we stayed the first night with sister Flormarina and enjoyed time with Alberto and Juancito [pictured above]. The Columbia trip provided an opportunity to preach and teach in four congregations, strengthening the churches and helping in the development of biblical leaders. [Picture below, Sunday morning sermon in Pereira]



We worked indirectly with four additional churches as several preachers traveled by bus (12+ hours) to be with us and to share the Bible classes and studies. Many hours of Bible studies supplemented the public preaching and teaching.

A major focus in my 2012 schedule will be foreign mission trips focused in leadership training. These trips will also give opportunities to present evangelism training and encourage the use of effective evangelism materials.

In 2012, I plan to participate in Latin American Leadership trips similar to the trip to Colombia—right now the schedule calls for four or five such trips. In these efforts, I am working with Roberto Miranda as he has asked that I help analyze and evaluate the

work to make future plans for increasing effectiveness. I will also learn from him as we sharpen the focus of the program. In the last year, he has worked in 144 churches, but there is much more to be done.

In addition I have invitations for four other trips, each of which will provide training for multiple congregations. These combined efforts will bring leadership training, biblical teaching, evangelism training and campaigns, and motivational preaching and teaching to as many as 25-30 congregations. Some of the trips are long with the mission points quite distant (especially to South America, Ecuador, Colombia, Chile and Peru); thus, the average cost of each trip is about \$2000. [Picture right, Sunday Bible class in Pereira]



I am seeking congregations who will fund one or more of the trips in 2012. My plan is to connect each contributing church with a specific trip or trips and to provide personal reports as desired. Of course, all contributors will receive the regular reports and financial accounting. I plan to make personal contacts in coming weeks, but if you or your congregation has an interest in this effort which can help indigenous Latin American churches reach their potential to function as self-governing, self-supporting, and self-duplicating through church planting, please contact me to arrange a time to talk or for me to visit with you or your church.

With this report, I am also including an article which describes the process of congregational development which is being played out again and again across Latin America as strong, biblical leaders are developed in local churches. God has brought us to this place at this time—through mission contacts and networks, training focused on church leadership, and the ability to communicate in Spanish. I hope you can see the potential for this work to develop strong congregations that will plant other congregations, congregations that will become self-governing and self-supporting, eliminating a continuing dependence on US funds.

Thank You for your Prayers and Support

I would love to share our mission story with your congregation. Thank you for your interest, prayers and support. We are excited about being involved in spreading the gospel and strengthening the churches in Latin America. The major cities of Latin America are a fertile field for the gospel. The harvest is plenteous but the workers are few. There is much work to be done in the major cities of Latin America and around the world.

Que Dios le bendiga (may God bless you),

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COLUMBIA MISSION TRIP
SEPTEMBER 2011
By Bob Young
“Latin American Leadership Development”

In early September, I spent just over a week in Colombia with Bro. Roberto Miranda. Roberto works in a leadership development program overseen by the Memorial congregation in Houston. The purpose of this trip was to provide biblical instruction for churches and leaders as part of a continuing effort to mature and develop leaders in the churches and to appoint biblical elders. I saw firsthand that the leaders as well as the members are thirsty for the word of God. Their receptivity, questions and interest made preaching and teaching a joy.

I drove to Tulsa on Sunday evening and on Labor Day left Tulsa on an early morning flight, arriving in Cali, Colombia just before 10 PM that night. I met Roberto Miranda and his wife Jane in Miami and we traveled together on the last leg of the trip. This trip included visiting churches and preaching in four cities: Cali (population, 2.2 million), Tulua (175,000), Pereira (390,000), and Armenia (280,000). Both Roberto and I preached each night for seven nights with our days spent in Bible studies with leaders, new Christians, and prospective Christians. Following is a brief, but more detailed account of some of the highlights of the trip.

After a short night of rest in Cali, the leaders from the Cali-Metropolitan congregation arrived at the house where we were staying at 7 AM to share breakfast and Bible study. Those from the church included three couples and four individuals. We began studying almost immediately, eating while we studied, and continued for the entire morning. When the study concluded about five hours later (around noon), Roberto, Jane and I left almost immediately for Tulua where we shared a late lunch around 3 PM in the home of the local preacher. (Our guide and driver for this trip was Alberto Castaneda, preacher and elder for the Pereira church.) At Tulua, we spent the rest of the afternoon in Bible study and conversation, and after a short dinner break, we were ready for services at 7 PM with both of us scheduled to preach and teach. This is the schedule we maintained throughout the trip. (Incidentally, the normal schedule of meetings for the church in Tulua is Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday nights, plus the Sunday schedule. I am constantly amazed by the commitment and desire of our Latin American brethren.) After we finished the evening activities at Tulua, we drove to Pereira, our base of operations during the trip. Although we concluded in Tulua about 9 PM, it was hard to get away as the people clung to us, reminding me of the experience of Paul in Acts 20.

Wednesday morning we shared a Bible study with a sister from Spain and then drove to Salento for lunch and a little shopping. We drove on to Armenia for evening services, arriving in time for conversation and dinner with some of the local members and area preachers before we were scheduled to preach. After the preaching concluded, and after extended conversation and fellowship, we drove back to Pereira late that night. [Picture, right, getting ready to preach in Pereira]



On Thursday morning, four Christians from southern Colombia arrived—Jose Tomas and his wife Gladys (from Pasto), Jairo (from Tuquerres), and Johnny (from Tulcan in northern Ecuador). While our new guests rested from the 12+ hour bus ride, we took care of various details in the city and visited the Internet café. We had an afternoon Bible study with some new Christians and several non-Christians (there were about 12 present) and then hurried to the church building for the evening preaching—again with two sermons with both Roberto and I preaching and teaching. To be with the church in Pereira was special. This church

appointed elders late last year and has two additional preaching points with new congregations being planted in nearby cities (La Virginia and Cartago).

Friday morning, I led a Bible study of Titus at 6 AM. We studied until breakfast at 8 AM. During the study Tadeo, a preacher from Bogota, arrived. After breakfast we left to visit a family that lives up in the mountains and to study the Bible with them [picture right, this porch serves as their living room; I am seated midway on the right leading the study]. We ate lunch there [they harvested fresh yucca for the noon meal, picture, left]. We returned in late afternoon to the church building for evening activities and two more sermons.



Saturday morning we went to a housing project where the Pereira church feeds about 75 children breakfast every Saturday [picture, right, the "kitchen" where breakfast is prepared]. We spent a little time at Alberto's house, and then went to the home of another family in the church for a late lunch. After lunch, we continued the Bible study of Titus until it was time to go to the building for 4 PM services on Saturday. After five consecutive nights of two sermons every night, I was impressed by the excellent crowds and great interest that continued without diminishing.



On Sunday morning I preached on God's plan for the church from Ephesians, after which we shared lunch with the entire church. There were about 160 adults present plus children. Sunday afternoon, we returned to Cali (about a 3 hour drive) in order to be present and to preach at the 6 PM service.

On Monday we shared the noon meal with a group of church leaders and then studied at the building during the afternoon until 6 PM. After a brief refreshment break at the home of a family that lives nearby, we again shared the standard format of two sermons for the evening.

With this schedule, we had seven full days of teaching and preaching, with two sermons each night plus the Sunday morning worship at Pereira. We visited four different congregations, strengthening the members and training future leaders. In addition, we spent about 17 hours during those days in Bible study with church leaders along with some home Bible studies as mentioned above. We had the delight of witnessing one baptism (on Saturday night in Pereira).

Tuesday noon found us on the flight from Cali to Miami, but flight scheduling required an overnight in Miami before returning home late Wednesday evening. The Miami stopover also allowed us time to evaluate the trip and to develop some future plans.

The 2012 schedule calls for 8-10 trips to Latin America for the purpose of providing leadership training and strengthening churches so they can develop and appoint biblical leaders. The receptivity of the churches and leaders to the biblical instruction provided was encouraging. The effort to mature and develop leaders is essential for the growth and development of the local churches. We give thanks to God for the opportunity to be involved in his great work!