

LATIN AMERICAN LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Developing Healthy Churches and Church Leaders in Latin America and Beyond

Mission and Ministry Newsletter

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Busy during the "Off Season"

Because of my commitment to teach a Wednesday evening adult Bible class at my home church (Park Plaza in Tulsa) in March, April, and May, I usually think of these spring months as a season with fewer activities and commitments. I limit international travel and use the time to write and prepare materials.

This year, the time has been anything but "off," primarily due to increasing U.S. invitations and commitments. I spent about two weeks at the end of May in Peru, where I accepted an invitation to speak and teach on the annual national conference. Since I cannot change the date of the event, I have to go when the Peru churches decide. To use the cost of the airfare better, I always try to schedule other mission activities at the same time.

In this report you will find details of these things along with a couple of other important matters.

U.S. Activities

One advantage of teaching a Wednesday Bible class is that it leaves weekends available to work with U.S. churches. Some of these activities during the last couple of months include:

- Missions sermon and report at the Fort Gibson (OK) church
- Seminar at Park Plaza Iglesia de Cristo, with Pedro Sanchez (elder from Santiago, Chile, picture right)
- Seminars for Nashville (TN) area Iglesias de Cristo—the Second Coming; the book of Revelation
- Teach and preach at Crieve Hall Iglesia de Cristo in Nashville (local preacher Jacobo Chalco, picture below right)
- Preach at the Rolla (MO) church while the church is between preachers. The Rolla church has recently hired a preacher to work with them and my visit with them later this month will be the last in the series. My international mission commitments do not give me much time to share in interim ministry activities, so spending time with the Rolla church periodically has been special for Jan and me.

I have also enjoyed the opportunity to spend time with the Wednesday morning Park Plaza men's small group, have participated in various mission meetings and gatherings, and attended a training workshop to improve the web presence of various mission efforts. I also accepted the responsibility to help with the EVO mission page, and continued to work on new materials and studies for the resource pages I maintain.



**Nuestro
Hermano de
Chile,
Pedro
Sanchez
El próximo**

Viernes 1,
Sabado 2,
De Abril
Park Plza



Other Updates

Due to the generosity of a donor, a micro-grant was given to a preacher in Nicaragua to help him and his family to establish their own business. The preacher had lost his U.S. support. With this grant, he will be able to continue working with the local church while being self-supporting. Such efforts cost very little, but are significant steps forward in the continued advance of the church in Latin America.

You probably heard of the earthquakes in Ecuador. Through the generosity of a family, significant relief help was provided for earthquake relief efforts of the church in Ecuador.

Peru

The trip to Peru during the last half of May was especially important. First, a number of activities were planned so that the time was filled and used well—spending time teaching at IBI (the Bible Institute in Lima); participating in the national conference of church leaders and preachers; teaching, preaching, leadership training, and an evangelistic campaign with the Trujillo church; preaching at the church in Virú; and presenting a seminar along with other teaching and preaching with the nine churches in and around Huamachuco.

Lima—International Bible Institute. At IBI I spent a day with the students studying principles of missions and evangelism. Some of the students were away on a campaign, but I immensely enjoyed the time with the students who were present. This is a 2-year residential program with several Baxter graduates involved as teachers. Efforts such as the Bible Institute represent the maturing of the churches as they accept the responsibility to evangelize their own nation. On Wednesday evening I preached at the church where the Institute is housed.

National Conference, in Lima at Lucyana congregation. The national conference was focused on studies from the Pastoral Epistles. The studies during the day are complemented with evangelistic preaching each evening. In addition to teaching several sessions, I was privileged to preach on the last night of the evangelistic campaign. It was a special blessing to connect with Pablo Rivera, a blind preacher from Monterrey, Mexico who reads the Spanish Bible in Braille, and with several Baxter grads (picture right, some of the speakers at the conference).



In October 2017, the Ibero-Americano Encuentro will be in Cusco, Peru, and as a result of contacts during the conference; I have been invited to participate in this annual conference which moves from country to country in Latin America.

In Lima, I had an interesting conversation with my taxi driver. He was a good student of the Bible and had lots of questions. We exchanged contact information so we can maintain contact and he promised to come hear me teach and preach the next time I am in Lima.



Trujillo and Virú. On Saturday after the conference, I took the bus to Trujillo. It was a beautiful day and the Peru coastline is in many places magnificent, but the 9-hour bus ride made for a long day. I was in Trujillo Sunday through Wednesday noon. On Sunday morning I taught and preached, each weekday morning I taught a leadership class for 3 hours, and in the evenings we shared an evangelistic campaign. There were over 50 responses to the invitation with many recommitments and restorations, and numerous new contacts and new Bible studies (picture left, some of the Sunday morning responses). This church has recently been able



to obtain their own building and is in the process of helping members mature as local leaders. The mission team members are all Baxter graduates and have worked together in Trujillo for 14 years. Pedro is originally from Trujillo, Hermenegildo is a Peruvian from Curahuasi, and Fernando is Nicaraguan. They have worked hard to establish a healthy church with “growth groups” in various parts of the city in anticipation of establishing additional congregations (picture left, members of the Trujillo mission team).

On Sunday evening I took the bus about 30 minutes to the congregation in Virú where I preached and enjoyed time with the members. This church is much more indigenous and rural than

Trujillo, but is growing. There were about 70 present and the building was packed, with no place to set up more chairs. They are in the process of working to double the size of the building—mostly with their own efforts and resources. I am greatly encouraged when I get to visit and motivate such churches to see the possibilities and continue on faithfully within the resources that God provides without constantly being dependent on external help. Getting back to Trujillo from Virú on Sunday night is a little tricky since the buses mostly stop running. With patience (waiting about 45 minutes), we finally caught a combi (mini-bus) and arrived back to Trujillo a little before 11 P.M.

Invitation to church in Curahuasi. The team and the church members are anxious for me to return to Trujillo for another visit, and Hermenegildo graciously extended an invitation also to visit his home church in Curahuasi. The church is relatively strong considering the overall state of the churches in Peru, and it will be a special opportunity to visit for the first time to help with the continuing strengthening of the church. Curahuasi is not far from Cusco so that will be a very likely possibility during my time in Peru in October 2017.

Huamachuco. After teaching the leadership studies (and a time of questions and answers) in Trujillo on Wednesday I transferred to Huamachuco, arriving in time to teach the evening class. Huamachuco is in the mountains! We peaked at 4200 meters (almost 14000 feet) and 7 degrees Celsius before descending into Huamachuco. When we looked over at Huascaran South (6768 meters, over 22000 feet) it really did not seem that we were all that high!

There were probably about 60 present for the evening (picture right)—quite impressive in a church that usually numbers about 80 on Sunday mornings. On Thursday I gave a seminar on evangelism and basic Biblical teachings, including about 3 hours of questions and answers in the afternoon. When we concluded at 5 PM, I was TIRED! but we continued with more informal conversations about ministry and evangelism. Many of the participants had to travel home a distance so no evening activity was planned. I have to admit that I was glad.



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On Friday I traveled about 3 hours one-way to preach in a mountain church (picture left). The roads are narrow and hazardous. The trip meant going over three mountains. The problem is that the only way to do that is to switchback up one side a mountain, then switchback down the other side. In the valleys between the mountains one can go to the next mountain and repeat the process. We arrived with no problem, and from the mountain top where the church is located, my driver showed me the village very near where we had started. I could “see” three hours! Couldn’t have been more than 10 miles as the crow



flies! This church has an attendance of about 40 on Sundays; 30 were present for a special service on Friday night. Only four families in this community are not Christians who regularly attend the church.

After I preached on Friday night, we spent the night and were ready for the return trip on Saturday, arriving in time to preach at the regularly scheduled Saturday evening service. The Sunday schedule was very much like many churches in the U.S.—Bible class, AM worship, and PM worship.

Early Monday morning I began the return trip home—back to Trujillo by car, by plane to Lima, and a midnight flight from Lima to the US, arriving home about 30 hours after I started home.

TOURISM

Welcome to rugged, beautiful Peru! Pictured above is a river that eventually flows into the Amazon and the Atlantic (since I was on the eastern side of the Andean continental divide).

I do not normally spend much time during my mission travels on tourist activities, but at Trujillo we spent part of one afternoon exploring the ancient Moche civilization with the temple of the sun and the temple of the moon. This pre-Incan civilization is dated immediately after the time of Christ (approximately 100-700 A.D.) and practiced ritual human sacrifice (picture right, altar for human sacrifices). In Trujillo, I also enjoyed lunch by the ocean (picture right). In Huamachuco Sunday afternoon gave me a time to visit the Marcahuamachuco, another pre-Incan civilization that lived on the top of a mountain (3700 meters high, over 12000 feet). Seeing the ruins requires walking the two-mile circuit in the thin air. The entire mountaintop was encircled by a wall, much of which still exists. Peruvians who live near these ancient ruins are fond of reminding that these pre-date Machu Picchu (picture below left).



YOU CAN RECEIVE INFORMATION MORE REGULARLY

I try to be diligent in providing these reports at least quarterly. In reality, these reports tell only part of the story. If you would like to see more and read more, I encourage you to find me in Facebook (bro.bobyong) where I regularly write and report on mission concepts and opportunities. I am also blogging more regularly (www.bobyongresources.com/blog) and you can find numerous blogs under the “missions”

category. Finally, mission-oriented information and various articles are available on my website (www.bobyongresources.com).

YOU MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Thank you for helping with funding for special needs.

Thank you for your prayers.

Thank you for helping with the work and travel fund that makes this ministry possible and also helps with funding for special evangelism and outreach projects in Latin America.

Through the host congregation (Main and Oklahoma in McAlester, Oklahoma), we can accept tax-deductible gifts (checks made payable to “Church of Christ” with the memo line indicating “Latin American Leadership” or the specific project being funded).

Please note that **ALL CONTRIBUTIONS SHOULD BE MAILED TO MY TULSA ADDRESS** (10704 S 89th East Ave, Tulsa, OK 74133), as I am responsible for handling deposits, gift acknowledgements, and accounting. If funds are for a specific need or project, please include that information with your gift.

Que Dios le bendiga (may God bless you),

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[Photo: downtown San Pedro Sula, Honduras. In the great cities of Latin America many people are receptive to the gospel of Jesus Christ and Christians hunger and thirst for the word of God and encouragement toward healthy church development and effective leadership]

