

## ***LATIN AMERICAN LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT***

*Developing Healthy Churches and Church Leaders in Latin America and Beyond*

### ***Mission and Ministry Newsletter***

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#### **Missions, Ministry, and Life**

The past couple of months have been super-filled—both with scheduled activities and with surprises! In this report, you can read about a ministry of teaching, preaching, consulting, writing, and video recording and production when I am stateside. Also, there are reports about mission work in the Dominican Republic, Haiti, and Peru.

Along the way, Jan and I live life—visits to her mother, time with family, an unexpected visit to the hospital for her, her cataract surgeries, our regular doctor's appointments, and my trip to the dermatologist "just to make sure." We seldom mention "life" in these reports, but we are grateful for your prayers

in all three areas—missions, ministry, and life!

Because of the amount of mission news, I am publishing this third quarter report early and I will publish another "extra" report after I return from Colombia and Ecuador.

In this report is a summary of some stateside activities (p. 1); reports on mission trips to the Dominican Republic and Peru (pp. 2-4); news about indigenous church planting efforts (p. 2); a report on expanding mission opportunities (p. 5); updates on writing projects, video production, and website traffic (p. 4-5); and an updated prayer list (p. 5).

#### **Some of the activities in the U.S.**

In the last three months....

- I finished teaching the spring quarter of a Wednesday night adult Bible class at Park Plaza. I taught the book of Hebrews: "Hebrews as Seen through Jewish Eyes"
- I spoke on the summer series at Park Plaza. This year's theme is "prayer" and I was privileged to kick off the series with a study of Jesus' teachings about prayer to his disciples. Unfortunately, due to travels and "life" I have been present for only a few of the other lessons in the series.
- I finished and published video classes in Spanish on Hebrews and the Gospels (report below).
- I finished the third book in the series of Bible Study Guides (report below).
- I finished a book on evangelism in Spanish (see report below).
- Jan and I taught the Cornerstone class at Park Plaza, presenting classes on Communication in the Marital Relationship

***Unexplained activities, regardless of how benevolent, necessary or helpful, will not by themselves expand the kingdom. People do not come running to Jesus because Christians demonstrate love.***

***Evangelism is always intentional—it is not something that "just happens."***

***Getting "on mission" with God's mission requires sharing the Gospel!***

## Indigenous Church Planting

One of the most rewarding parts of this mission work is the opportunity to facilitate indigenous church planting efforts. I see how God is blessing this ministry when I receive reports of new church plants undertaken by the local churches! In **Colombia**, the new church in Puerto Gaitán has had several baptisms and is beginning to take hold with an attendance of 10-15 people each Sunday. This work is done by the Los Angeles congregation in Bogota. In **Ecuador**, the new church in San Lorenzo has just started and has had 9 baptisms recently. Church planting and church development is also being done by local churches in the **Dominican Republic** and in **Chile**. These efforts can be facilitated with a few dollars for travel or facility rental.

I love to receive reports of baptisms in local churches where the indigenous workers are laboring with no North American presence—20, 8, 9, 13, 1... My inbox brings such reports every week! “To God be the glory! Great things He is doing!”

## Dominican Republic (D.R.)

In June and July, I was in Neyba to present seminars and to preach an evangelistic campaign. Neyba is near the border with Haiti. (I was in Neyba last year when elders and deacons were appointed—the eighth congregation in D.R. to have elders.) On this trip, the elders asked me to focus on the work of the church and on evangelism. I shared the campaign preaching with Jacobo, a brother from Peru (*picture right, with one of the elders and Jacobo*).



The annual campaign is a major event. The street is blocked off in front of church building (*picture left*), the street is filled with chairs and benches, overhead lights are strung above the pulpit, the sound system pumps out a cappella music to attract the people, and there are numerous visitors from the community and from area churches. I preached on Thursday and Saturday. The first night I preached, there were 10 responses for Bible studies. The last night there were approximately 50 responses for prayer, greater commitment, renewed passion and involvement. One of the elders said, “I believe this is the spark that will help us move forward.”



The seminars and campaign were attended by several Haitian preachers who preach near the border between D.R. and Haiti (*pictures right, Haitian preachers, Haitians singing in Creole during the campaign*). There is a network of Creole-speaking churches near the border, as many as 200 small churches. Some were formerly denominational churches. The preachers (all bi-vocational with their own employment) are bilingual—Creole and a little Spanish. They had traveled 2-4 hours over difficult roads to be present. They were eager students, wanting to understand Bible teaching; when everyone else took a break, they were ready with questions and always eager to continue, ready to take everything I said home to strengthen



their local churches (*picture left, teaching and preaching*). I heard more Creole in 3 days than I had heard in a lifetime previously. I learned that in Haiti the poor people speak Creole, French is the language of the “elite”—the word that is usually used to describe them in Spanish. There is great receptivity among the poor, at least 1500 new contacts were made after Hurricane Mitch last September.

The elders and the Spanish-speaking church in Neyba help with travel and preaching expenses for some of the Haitian preachers, and now you and I

are also helping support that effort (about \$25/month per preacher). The funding that the elders requested has been provided through the end of the year. God knows the exact number, but this effort is producing hundreds of baptisms with new churches and Christians who need discipling. Through native workers, we can go where North Americans seldom go. Thank you for helping me say “yes” to such needs, thank you for helping make such special projects possible. The gospel is going forth in powerful ways that we often do not know.



I spent my last Sunday in Santo Domingo with the Pantoja church, a new church plant. The church is about a year old—there were 34 children for the Bible class and 30 adults for worship (*picture left*). The church rents a storefront that is about 4x6 meters (12'x20'). They had just completed an evangelism sweep of the neighborhoods around the church building, developing much interest. Natalio, the church planter, has a wonderful gift for reaching out and developing friendships and finding people who want to study the Bible. The church is growing. After I preached, they wanted to know how soon I could come back. The opportunities multiply! God is giving his people multiplied opportunities to share the gospel.

Mission work that is focused on evangelism, planting churches, encouraging and strengthening, developing and maturing is effective. My last day in D.R. gave me an opportunity to debrief, talk with the native preachers, and think about the most pressing needs and how to help the Dominicans meet those needs.

## Perú

In Lima, I taught at the Bible Institute (IBI) and was with the Los Pinos church (*pictures right*). I taught 2 days for 6 hours each day at the institute, then spoke in the evening for the church. I was surprised when a brother from Ecuador showed up for the seminar! He is a “Timothy” as are several of the Peruvians. After my



time in Lima, I spent four days with the church in Trujillo before traveling to Huamachuco to preach, and then to Tungual for the annual regional conference.



In Trujillo, I preached and taught on Sunday, taught in the leaders’ school every morning, and preached a campaign each evening (*picture left*). The campaign made contact with at least 6 new prospects that had not attended previously. There were 23 responses during the campaign, some for Bible studies, some for restoration (reconciliation), but none were yet ready for baptism.

The four-hour drive to Huamachuco winds through mountain passes with elevations of almost 14000 feet (*picture right, brother Teofilo my driver*). As we neared Huamachuco, we stopped to pick up a sheep that a sister was donating to the conference. Getting a sheep into a small pickup bed that already filled with a pallet of blankets cannot be captured in pictures! In Huamachuco, I preached on Wednesday night. On Thursday, we traveled further into the mountains to the conference site at Tungual.







I was asked to focus my teaching and preaching on evangelism, which I was glad to do. I also got to answer a lot of Bible questions and I had several interesting Bible studies between the sessions. Getting 300-350 Christians together at a remote site for a Bible conference presents interesting logistical problems—for food and for lodging (*picture right, cooking breakfast, a temporary shelter*). I did not go with the sheep heart soup for breakfast but I did eat the cuy at noon and enjoyed the Friday night lamb stew. The nights were cold at 10,000 feet—in fact Friday morning brought icy precipitation in the elevations surrounding us (*picture left, overview of river that flows to the Atlantic*). With sunny days, day temperatures in the 50s were at least acceptable, but with a strong wind. There were 10 baptisms (*pictures below, 2 of the 10 baptisms*); I appreciate the soft hearts and spiritual commitment of the Peruvians who live far away from the life we know.



The eight-hour layover in the Lima airport was made more enjoyable by the maracuya cheesecake that topped off the rosa linguini with mushrooms. Airport chapels are a blessing; I enjoyed time to meditate and pray about the trip—teaching at the Bible



institute, strengthening families, helping train future preachers, preaching a campaign, focusing on evangelism, church planting, and church growth.

Sorry to go on and on—I just find it incredible to think about all that God is doing, and that he lets me be involved in it as I see the gospel go forth and the church grow in so many places across Latin America!



### Website: Updated Numbers

I am amazed at what God does through our meager efforts! Earlier this year, an elder asked me about statistics for my website so I went online to Alexa to answer the question. I was surprised at what I found. Measured traffic on the site includes **1303 unique visitors every day; 39,090 unique visitors each month, and 475,595 yearly unique visitors**. Because the counting method does not count repeat visits from the same person on the same day, the actual number of visits to the site is almost certainly higher. Web traffic counters measure an average of two “page views” per visit on the site, meaning that the number of “page views” annually is near one million. One little effort by one person, doing what I can in my spare moments. I am grateful that others are interested, that the Good News is being announced, and that churches and Christians are being encouraged.

### Video production update

As I talk to Christians in other countries, I am more and more convinced of the value of recorded teaching. The video project requires a lot of time, but I believe the results will surpass my dreams and expectations. In recent months, I have completed two recording projects for a men’s retreat in the Dominican Republic (Spanish), two projects for congregational teaching and television in South America (Spanish), seven videos over the book of Hebrews (English), a study of “Principles for Strong Marriages” based on Genesis 2-4 (English), a series over the book of Hebrews (Spanish), and a series over the Gospels (Spanish). All of these are available on YouTube: search for “Bob Young Ministry and Missions.” The next major project is recording an evangelism workshop in Spanish with all of the lessons in the “En Pos de la Verdad” series fully explained.

## Writing projects update

Here is something I have learned: writing and publishing books involves lots of meetings, lots of work in writing, lots of work in editing and proofing, and lots of time in meetings with the publisher working on templates, format, and a host of other details. I am grateful that I have some time stateside to continue writing and producing studies and materials.

The first two volumes in the New Testament Bible Study guides have now been published and are available on Amazon or from the publisher (*Hebrews* and *Paul's Early Letters*). The third volume, *Pastoral Letters*, is currently at the publishers. I have the fourth volume, *Prison Letters*, approved and ready for the publisher when it can be scheduled. These four volumes cover eleven books of the New Testament. I am working on *General Letters*, anticipating publication in 2018.

I have finished a book focused on evangelism (Spanish, about 100 pages) and it is also at the publishers. It should be available in September.

## Pray for this work—pray for the churches in Latin America

Here is a condensed list of 2017 international travels. Your prayers make a difference.

- Guatemala: Zone 11 church in Guatemala City, leadership; Chichicastenango; Santa Clara; Sololá
- Honduras: the church in Colonia Pastor Zelaya; churches around San Pedro Sula; Baxter Institute
- El Salvador-Honduras: churches near the border; Frontier Bible Institute; the church plant in El Rosario
- Dominican Republic: the church in Neyba, new elders and deacons, evangelism seminar, campaign
- DR/Haiti border, Creole preachers, helping support some of them
- Dominican Republic: teaching and preaching in Santiago area churches
- Peru: Bible Institute; Trujillo; evangelism in the churches around Huamachuco
- Colombia: Los Angeles-Bogota, leadership; the church plant in Puerto Gaitán; churches in southern Colombia
- Ecuador, churches in northern Ecuador
- Dominican Republic: seminars; evangelistic campaign in Santo Domingo area
- Peru: Bible Institute; Los Pinos; pray for me as I prepare for the international conference of leaders and preachers in Latin America, in Cusco, Peru
- Honduras-Baxter: 2017 graduating class at Baxter Institute; Marriage and Family Program, the work at Baxter clinic
- Chile: churches in Chile, evangelism, church health, leadership [postponed from November 2017, now scheduled for early 2018]



## Refocusing

The work of *Latin American Leadership Development* seeks to help Spanish-speaking Christian and churches in every place—South America, Central America, the Caribbean region, and the US. The continued expansion of the resources and studies available by Internet, written materials, and the increased production of video resources is meeting a need. These additional resources—along with the identifying, training, and mentoring younger workers across Latin America—is helping expand the work. Walking through open doors means seeing the opportunities God provides and using every resource available to answer the call.

An increased emphasis on evangelism training is reflected in new projects that include equipping every member of the church to share the gospel, emphasizing campaigns and crusades, providing basic and easy-to-use evangelism materials, and providing training resources for local churches.

## HOW YOU CAN HELP

Thank you to all who assist this work. Through the host congregation (Main and Oklahoma, McAlester, OK), we accept tax-deductible gifts (checks payable to “Church of Christ,” memo line indicating “Latin American Missions” or the specific project being funded).

**ALL CONTRIBUTIONS SHOULD BE MAILED TO MY ADDRESS** (10704 S 89<sup>th</sup> East Ave, Tulsa, OK 74133), so I can handle deposits, acknowledgements, and accounting. If funds are for a specific need or project, please include that information with your gift.

*Que Dios lo bendiga (may God bless you),*

**Bob and Jan Young**

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*Overview of Santiago, Chile. In the photo, this city of 7 million souls seems to extend forever into the distance toward the Andes. In the great cities of Latin America people are receptive to the gospel of Jesus Christ and Christians hunger and thirst for the word of God and encouragement and training in evangelism, healthy church development and effective church leadership.*

