

LATIN AMERICAN LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Developing Healthy Churches and Church Leaders in Latin America and Beyond

Mission and Ministry Newsletter

Bob and Jan Young, 10704 S 89th East Ave, Tulsa, OK 74133

www.bobyounresources.com



Praying that the Church Will Get “On Mission” and Stay “On Mission”

When Jesus observed that the fields are white unto harvest, he urged his followers to pray for harvesters. The church must rediscover the harvest—the church must renew efforts in planting, watering, and reaping. The mission of the church must focus on the harvest. The church must send harvesters. The fields are white. Who will go forth seeking to make disciples?

“Food for Thought.” I recently read a description of a required new members class in a denominational church.

“New members must take 10 weeks of ‘explorer’ classes to understand what this church does, how it seeks to touch the world through preaching and missions, and how members are expected to participate. At the end of the class, new members will be recognized and welcomed publicly. The classes will help new members find (1) reaffirmation of their faith in the God of Scripture who sent His Son to save the world; (2) open hearts to be transformed by the Word of God; (3) new energy to embrace the world with love; (4) a renewed life of prayer; (5) a Christian family committed to service; and (6) a challenge to participate in a church that is committed to a project to develop 10,000 new disciples and 150 new churches around the globe in the next 10 years.”

As I read that description, I was challenged! I fear our dreaming and thinking is too puny—some whose faithfulness we might question seem more in tune with God’s plan for this world than are we.

The church must set goals in ministry and missions. What are we planning to do? What is the goal? What are we praying about? What represents success in God’s plan? About ten years ago, I outlined some goals for my involvement in missions. As I look back over the past and as I anticipate the future, I praise God. Here is a summary of what he has been doing and what I pray he will continue to do.

My goal is to work closely with 25-30 local churches across Latin America, churches that will provide the infrastructure for an extended network of 100-125 churches. The work will focus on evangelism with two goals: helping the churches make at least 2000 new disciples each year, and providing discipleship training to develop the new Christians into faithful disciples. These goals reflect Matthew 28 where Jesus said disciple-making involves baptism and subsequent teaching.

The result will be spiritually mature Christians who are part of stable, effective healthy mission churches that are becoming self-sustaining, self-governing, self-edifying, and self-duplicating.

An important part of the process will be assisting local churches in the development and naming of biblical leaders so that churches are biblically organized.

These churches will become missionary churches and will be involved in church planting, they will support and encourage church planting, resulting in new church plants each year.

The 10-year results will be at least 20,000 new disciples that are actively involved and dozens of new churches.

When we actively and aggressively plant and water, God gives even more increase!

Mission Trip Reports

It is difficult to put into words the things I have seen over the past month—the emotions I have felt, the encouragement received, the joy of seeing churches catch the dream. There is no way to capture the joy of new Christians who have found salvation in Christ, the commitment of those new Christians to tell others, the beauty of having a church family, and how rewarding it is to see churches actively sharing the word and living out the message of Jesus. God is at work, we are only humble servants! All that happens is the result of his power and presence and evidence of his great love to save the world.

Colombia

The first stop on my August trip to Colombia was a visit the church that meets in barrio Los Angeles in Bogotá. From there I flew south and visited five churches in the mountains near the Colombia-Ecuador border.

Los Angeles, Bogotá—Praising God and having favor with the people...



God is at work! Last week I visited a church of around 60 members. Their work has yielded 51 baptisms in 2017. They are apologetic about not being more evangelistic! They have had 25 baptisms in their work with youth in a drug rehabilitation program (the program which is run by a private foundation employs a psychologist and has a good success rate; the church gives Bible lessons and works with the youth and their families in spiritual matters). There were 5 baptisms on the day I visited and preached. *(Picture left, some of the recent baptisms)* The church has also had 14 baptisms in their local evangelism work. They have had 12 baptisms in a new church plant (see below).

The church in barrio Los Angeles is growing in ability and in spirit, caring for one another and reaching out to neighbors and friends, supporting and encouraging other churches and planting new churches. They manifest good works and demonstrate love for all.

Puerto Gaitán—This new church plant, 7 hours east of Bogota, is being done by the Los Angeles church in Bogotá. To this point, a team of brothers from Bogota has traveled to Puerto Gaitán on the weekends to help the infant church. The new church has had 12 baptisms this year; the new Christians are encouraged and are remaining faithful. Beginning next month, the Bogotá church will provide half of the salary for a preacher so there will be a full-time worker in this new church. Colombians planting a church in Colombia! To give them time to grow into the work, this mission work is providing the other half of the salary and rent for a house where they can meet, a total of \$300 per month to help Colombians with a church plant. They are planning a VBS for December to boost the new church plant. This work is possible because of you who help this work financially.

Túquerres—The church has become a beacon in southern Colombia over the past few years with the work of Jairo and his wife Andrea *(picture right)*. Average attendance is now near 40 in Túquerres. I think of Jairo as a present-day “Timothy.” The church is stabilized and growing again, classes are being taught in the national prison, and the work in smaller congregations in the region is being encouraged and advanced. Fortunately, the funds have been made available to slightly increase the support for this excellent evangelist—he was previously working for slightly more than \$4000 per year. Thank you to a dear brother in Texas!



An example of the influence and outreach of Jairo and this church is that he facilitated a Saturday meeting with area church leaders. I spent a Saturday morning explaining church dynamics and suggesting solutions for various problems and situations. Welcome to Ministry 101!



Cumbal—This church scheduled the inauguration (dedication) of the new church building for the Sunday I could be present (*picture left*). The church is small (about 20), but worked diligently to be recognized by the government, buy the property, and participate in the construction with contributions and work days with area churches. Less than half of the value of the building was provided externally. The building will provide stability and a springboard for more evangelism. They asked for studies over evangelism and how to reach out more effectively.

The noon feast included roasted pig (*picture right*).



Ipiales—This church was not on the original schedule, but after finishing the activities at Cumbal in the early afternoon on Sunday, brother Fidencio asked if we could preach and teach and Ipiales (about 30 miles distant from Cumbal). The church currently meets in a storefront, filling and overflowing the little building each week. The Sunday evening attendance was 35.

Pasto—Visiting the church in Pasto is always encouraging (*picture right*). The church appointed elders in 2013 and has continued to grow. They asked for lessons about evangelism and generosity, since they are outgrowing the present rented space and are seeking to purchase a location suitable for more growth.



Tulcán, Ecuador—Tulcán is just across the border from the southern Colombian cities mentioned above. The church in Tulcán is erecting a building addition—a new auditorium that will seat 300. When finished, the newer part of the building will have three stories with ample space for classes and activities. The church asked for lessons on generosity as they are seeking to employ an evangelist who will be fully supported by the local church. This church is also working toward leadership development. We were privileged to deliver a gift that will finish all the necessary columns and the walls of the first story in the new construction.

This church is also working to develop a foothold in a community about 20 kilometers distant where there are

several members. We met in the home of a brother in Julio Andrade with 35 persons present to hear the gospel. The prayer is that this effort can eventually turn into a church planting opportunity.

I am blessed to work with such churches! I receive more encouragement than I give. I am privileged to work with the development of several “Timothys” in these congregations. On every visit, they are like sponges, absorbing everything possible in Bible studies and evangelism training.

Ecuador

On my recent trip to Ecuador, I visited with the church in Tulcán, near the Colombian border (mentioned above). In Imbabura, I visited the Pilanquí church in Ibarra, and the church in Otavalo. I was able to spend time with the brothers in Pilanquí who are most actively involved in the new church plant in San Lorenzo.

Otavalo—This church recently completed a new building in a new location, right next to a community football field. It was a joy to see the building full on a Friday night (*picture right, inauguration of the building*).



Pilanquí, Ibarra—On my visit to this church, I rejoiced as I listened to the report of elders with a vision. After the earthquakes that rocked the Ecuador coast, this church distributed aid and also received some funds to plant a church in the affected area. The area was not receptive and the church planting results were minimal.

At about the same time, they were contacted by a group of about 20 people from San Lorenzo, a town about 3-4 hours away from Ibarra. The group was tired of various denominational practices. Men from the Pilanquí church began teaching in San Lorenzo and received permission to redirect the church planting funding to the new work. One of the men who was baptized in San Lorenzo decided to give the time necessary to open a new work. This new church has had 13 baptisms this year (*picture right, the new church in San Lorenzo*)



The Pilanquí church is 5 years old, has elders, and has grown to 125'150. They constantly have baptisms, they have eyes open to new church plants, and are helping stabilize smaller congregations around them. They attract people by their caring spirit and good works, they share their resources, giving people the opportunity to be involved in a great big work that is powered by God's spirit (*picture left, part of the Sunday morning crowd at Pilanquí*).



As a result of travel delays, I spent an extra day in Ecuador. God blessed us with another Bible study and another baptism. Glad to stay another day—not only for the additional baptism but also to spend time with Henry, one of my favorite “Timothys.” The Pilanquí church has had 22 baptisms this year, including the local work and the new church plant in San Lorenzo. As we sat around the table in an elder's home, I loved the explanation: "We are not having many baptisms this year because we are focusing on maturing the members."

The Pilanquí church in Ibarra is demonstrating how to do God's work-- fulfilling God's mission by evangelism while being involved in disciple development and compassionate service! (picture right, a midnight baptism)



HOW YOU CAN HELP

Before I include the typical greeting and information, I want to mention three items.

First, in this newsletter you read about a Texas brother who heard about this work, starting sending a little help monthly, and is making a big difference in southern Colombia. My involvement in this work is gratis, so all money received goes to church planting, church growth, evangelism, mentoring, plus travel and works funds.

Second, many of you are aware of the travel delay caused by Hurricane Harvey and the need to write a new return ticket. This increased the cost of the Colombia-Ecuador trip by \$1200, an unbudgeted expense. If you or your church can help with this unexpected travel cost, you will help make possible the continuation of this mission without having to say "no" to future invitations.

Finally, you have read about the Pilanquí church, 5 years old, 120+ members, an incredible number of baptisms every year. They are actively involved in church planting. The local church has purchased property in an excellent location near the bus routes; they have plans for a building that will seat 500, a building that can be used for multiple Sunday assemblies in the future. The local church has raised money for almost all of the foundation and columns—they lack 3 columns at \$400 each. With 8 big pieces of framework iron (also \$400 each), they will be nearing the end of Phase I and they could soon move to the new building. If you or your church could help with \$400 for a column or large beam, please consider this need. Any amount will help!

You can read below about how to help with any of these needs.

Thank you to all who assist with this work. You are helping make possible thousands of baptisms and dozens of new churches. Through our 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 89th 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

918.470.0421 (cell)

bro.bobyounq@yahoo.com



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.

