

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.bobyoungrsources.com



April 16 -- A Newsletter I Did Not Anticipate Writing

Near the end of February, I wrote, posted, and sent the first mission newsletter for 2020. Who could have predicted how quickly our world would change?

Jan and I spent several days in the Dominican Republic in early March, returning March 12. (I report on the Dominican Republic trip on p. 3 below.)

The week after we returned, our youngest grandchildren visited us during spring break. By the end of spring break, schools had been shut down for the rest of the school year and the global health crisis caused by the coronavirus pandemic had begun, only to accelerate during the last 10 days of March. What the future holds and how long it will take to get back to some kind of normalcy is uncertain. What is certain is that God is God. Our all-wise, all-powerful, benevolent God is in control. He is sovereign.

In addition to reporting on the Dominican Republic mission trip, I want to update you on the doors that have opened as a result of how our world has been changed as we together combat the coronavirus.

Video Production Update

I began work on a new video production project in January, well before the worldwide impact of the coronavirus was known. I recorded 25 professionally produced videos, increasing the number of videos available on my YouTube channel by 50%.

I have temporarily ceased professional production, but new recording software allows me to record excellent-quality videos in my office at home. I am also experimenting with video recording via YouTube streaming and Zoom recordings. During a recent week, there were over 2000 views on my YouTube channel ("Bob Young Ministry and Missions"). The number of videos available on my channel has tripled over the past three months.



Digital Classroom Project Update

The pandemic has presented new challenges in establishing and equipping digital learning classrooms in Latin America. Difficulties in software distribution have made it necessary to put that project on hold. As the initial work on this project began in December 2019, we could hardly have anticipated how timely the digital classroom project would be.

The current limitations on travel have provided an impetus for the development of alternative technologies and new teaching opportunities and methods. Many local churches across Latin America are using "Facebook Live" and "YouTube Live" to stream teaching and worship assemblies to members who live under strict quarantine guidelines and curfews. Some mission churches that I work with in Latin America are using Zoom for their assemblies.

Increased Latin American Teaching Opportunities

With increasing requests for seminars, classes, and sermons, the number of digital teaching sessions has exploded. (With appropriate settings, Zoom has worked well, but I am also exploring other video conferencing programs. There are several excellent alternatives.)

To illustrate how the use of technology has exploded in 2020, every Friday I teach a Bible class with brothers from Ecuador and Chile. During a recent week, I preached in Ecuador on Sunday (*picture, right*), taught a Bible class in Colombia on Tuesday, was with the Bible study group in Ecuador and Chile on Friday, spoke at a men's meeting in Peru on Saturday, and spoke at a meeting of dozens of brothers in the Dominican Republic on Sunday in the pre-launch of their Digital Evangelism Campaign.





In this new season, opportunities to advance the gospel abound. A brother from Ecuador wrote me, “God is opening a great and effective door in this time, we must take advantage of technology to reach more souls, to understand the grace and the sovereignty of God.” You will not be surprised to learn that the church where he attends continues to reach out with the gospel and that souls are being baptized into Christ (*picture, left*).

A church leader in Colombia wrote, “The coronavirus has us inside our houses, but we are evangelizing from our houses because this pandemic has served to cause unbelievers to now seek the Almighty.”

All across Latin America, souls are being won by the preaching and study of God’s word. People want to know! Receptivity is through the roof. Every week, I receive news that the churches are evangelizing and bringing souls to Jesus (*picture right, two baptisms in Bogota*).



Increased English Teaching Opportunities

Over the past dozen years, many have encouraged me to continue my teaching ministry in English. One of my goals for my sabbatical was to discern the best way to do that. During January and February, I set aside specific time to write articles for posting on my website. I also continued work on several books that are in process.

The most effective teaching combines multiple communication tools. Therefore, I have worked diligently on projects that combine written and video teaching. (I hope to add podcasts in the near future.) Here are the current projects.

- **It’s Sunday Again.** Every Sunday I provide both written and video teaching. Short video sermons (about 10 minutes) are coupled with notes that expand the teaching and help students explore Bible concepts more deeply.
- **“bits from bob...”** For most of the years I served in local ministry, I wrote a weekly article under the title, “bits from bob....” Many have encouraged me to resume writing those weekly articles. I am pleased to report that “bits from bob....” is now available in both written and video format every Monday morning.
- **Wednesday WOW.** During my years in ministry, many heard about and enjoyed my “Wednesday WOW.” My method of preparing Wednesday night devotionals was to choose a single word and build a lesson around that word. The result was WOW (“Word Of the Week”). Wednesday WOW is now available each Wednesday morning in both written and video format each week.
- **Mid-Week Bible Class.** Many have asked when I am going to teach a Bible class again. Therefore, I have committed myself to teaching an online Bible class by using the technologies available. I am working on plans for recording the class so the studies will be available in the future.

The current plan: **I will begin a new class on Monday, April 27, meeting every weekday (Monday to Friday) at 3:00 PM for two weeks.** Announcements will be posted on my website and on social media (or you can write me for details). I am preparing a study of the Gospel of Mark with a focus on discipleship.

The Sabbatical Has Ended!

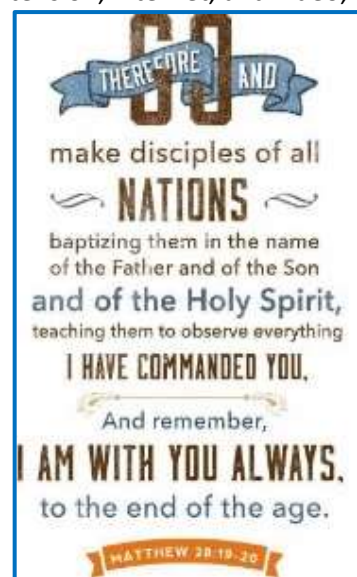
As I returned from Dominican Republic, with an onslaught of requests for teaching by extension, internet, and video, I immediately began to work to fulfill the requests. The sabbatical was only about half as long as originally planned, but I am grateful to have had the opportunity to refresh and renew. I covet your prayers for physical health and strength as God open doors to advance the gospel.

Updated Schedule

The National Church Leaders Conference in Peru (May, 2020) will be in digital format, using available technology. I will not have to travel, but I will be blessed to spend time with the brothers and sisters in Peru, studying the word of God and sharing ideas about how we can more effectively reach out with the gospel.

I believe it will also be necessary to cancel my summer trip to Peru, but the trips to Ecuador and Colombia (September) and Honduras (December) are still penciled in on my calendar.

A digital seminar has been scheduled to replace my trip July trip to Tennessee, but the fall trip to Illinois and Michigan (September-October) is still on the schedule. Again, I am waiting to see what develops before making final decisions.



In 2021, international trips to the Dominican Republic, Ecuador and Colombia are already scheduled. In the fall of 2021, Jan and I are considering the possibility of making another trip to the Holy Land. If you would be interested in traveling with us, mark your calendar for fall 2021. Details will be planned early in early 2021--contact me if interested.



Dominican Republic Mission Trip Report, March 5-12

The plans for this trip including giving a Bible and evangelism seminar for the preachers who are working in the eight new church plants, to encourage the church at Neyba, visiting one of the new church plants at a Sunday afternoon area-wide worship, and visiting the brothers and sisters in Santo Domingo. It is a joy to have Jan traveling with me on my mission trips (*picture, left*). She is a blessing to me and to those we work with.

Thursday. Travel day includes a 6AM flight out of Tulsa (thank you to **Pete and Mandi Shaw** for very early morning transportation), a connection through Atlanta to arrive in Santo Domingo about 2 PM. The trip from the airport to Neyba takes almost six hours – we arrived just before 9 PM. Over a late supper, plans for the week were confirmed, capping a 20-hour travel day.

Friday-Saturday. The seminar was scheduled for Friday and Saturday. The seminar sessions are always followed by lots of questions. On Friday night, we attended a cell group (*picture, right*). There were about 30 people at the backyard Bible study. I was told that within about a year, the cell group will become a new church plant. On Saturday night, Jan spoke to a women’s meeting. (I was the only translator available, so unfortunately, we do not have a picture.)



Sunday. Sunday morning, we attended the Vista del Lago church plant in Neyba (*picture, left*) before we left for La Descubierta.

Interesting note: La Descubierta means “the undiscovered place.” Tradition says the city got its name because it was a location that Columbus never discovered.

The Sunday area-wide gathering of the Haitian (Creole-speaking) churches was attended by about 250 (*picture, right*). After the preaching, 10 precious souls were baptized into Christ. The picture (*left*) shows **Manuel Aquino**, one of three elders in Neyba, baptizing one of the new believers. The eight Haitian churches that have been established over the past two years have a total attendance of 500-600, with approximately 350 baptized believers.



Jan speaks the language of “smiles and hugs,” even when she does not speak the local language. She quickly found a group of friends who clustered around her (*picture, right*).

Monday. Monday, the morning was spent visiting members, visiting prospects, setting up evangelistic Bible studies, and planning for 2021. Then we said goodbye to Neyba, hardly believing that we had been there for five days. As always, there is much more to be told – people encouraged, new Bible studies, a weekly radio program, the gospel sounding forth as it flows into every corner, home, and life in our world!



Tuesday. We had scheduled a day of R&R before our return to Santo Domingo. Taking a personal day is not normal for me – but I made an exception. Spending a day by the sea was relaxing, and Jan and I had a wonderful opportunity to talk, share, and pray as we enjoyed the beauty of God’s nature (*pictures, left*).

Wednesday. We returned to Santo Domingo in time for me to do a short promotional video for the Digital Evangelistic Campaign. I taught the evening Bible class at the Las Palmas church (*picture, right*). We were blessed to stay in the home of **Roberto Almonte** and his wife Carmen.

Thursday. An afternoon flight out of Santo Domingo meant that the morning could be spent in reviewing plans for continuing the mission among the national churches. Much of the conversation revolved around the upcoming Digital Evangelistic Campaign.

In summary, every time I have the blessing of seeing transformed lives, I am reminded that God is gracious. Together we are learning to walk with him, sharing struggles, talking about what Jesus wants, how we can please him, how to advance his purpose in this world. People want to know the source of genuine transformation. Indeed, the harvest is bountiful. God is always faithful. God gives the increase.

Personal Note: On my reentry to the US in Atlanta, I was able to renew my Global Entry for another five years, thus avoiding a trip to DFW airport for an appointment that was scheduled for March 24. With the pandemic, the DFW appointment would not have happened. The biblical principle is true: “And we know that to those who love God, to those called according to his purpose, everything works together for good” (Rom. 8:28, *my translation*).



HOW YOU CAN HELP

Financial update. I believe two opportunities will come as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. First, there will be an increased opportunity to help poor Christians in other parts of the world as they struggle with basic needs, much as Paul worked on behalf of the poor saints in Jerusalem. This work will be done through national Christians, as I am already doing in Venezuela. Second, doors will continue to open and opportunities will arise to facilitate new works. I am grateful for the donors who have continued to give in this time of uncertainty. The needs will increase. Thankfully, with the decreased travel costs, there will be funds available in the travel-work account to help with special projects.

Thank you for your interest in this mission work. Through my host congregation (Main and Oklahoma, McAlester, OK), you can make tax-deductible gifts (checks payable to “Church of Christ,” memo line “Latin American Leadership Development” [LALD]). **ALL CONTRIBUTIONS SHOULD BE MAILED TO MY ADDRESS** (10704 S 89th East Ave, Tulsa, OK 74133) since the elders ask that I take care of all deposits, acknowledgements, and accounting.

Thank you for your support, love, involvement and prayers. This work would not be possible without your partnership.

Dios les bendiga (God bless you),

Bob and Jan Young

918.470.0421 (cell)

bro.bobyoun@yaho.com



[I share again a favorite picture from when Jan and I were in Ecuador.]

On the left side of the picture, Imbabura Volcano (15190 feet) towers a mile and a half above Ibarra, Ecuador (7300 feet). Night is falling, a reminder that the night is coming when no one can work. Nightfall is also a reminder that the entire world is in darkness, lost without Jesus.

Only God’s grace can change the direction of a person’s life. Will you pray for the churches in Latin America that they can effectively share the glorious gospel of the Son of God who is the light of the world.

In Latin America, multitudes are receptive to the gospel of Jesus Christ. Christians hunger and thirst for the word of God and want encouragement and training in evangelism, discipleship, healthy church development and effective church leadership. Thank you for helping us make that happen as we seek to fulfill God’s purpose in this world – to save as many as possible! [photo credit: Bob Young]



Latin America Leadership Development is part of a network of Christians working together to take the gospel to Latin America. Through evangelism, discipleship, and leadership training, spiritually healthy and mature Christians and churches are developed, capable of reproducing themselves. A primary focus of the work is training those who will train others (2 Tim. 2:2), recognizing that the most effective kingdom workers are those national Christians who understand culture and language and are capable of developing friendships and relationships to bring the gospel to their own nations.