

**LATIN AMERICAN LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT—
RESPONDING TO THE CHANGING SHAPE OF MISSIONS**

By Bob Young

One of the goals of Latin American Leadership Development is to think about how mission work can best be done in the changing world in which we live. The old model of sending a missionary into a foreign culture is less and less common. When cultural barriers are crossed, that is, when people from one culture go into another culture to serve in missions, usually teams are sent and the focus is on church planting.

How we do mission work is changing because of the changing nature of our world, the changing needs of the churches, and changes in our understanding of missions.

Mission is a process of sowing eternity in this world (Eccl. 3:10).

Consider the changing shape of missions.

- Mission work is moving from a focus on the sponsoring church to a focus on the local mission church
- Mission work is learning to balance and integrate evangelism and healthy church development
- Mission work is thinking less about sending outsiders and more about empowering insiders with appropriate training and development

LALD missions seeks to answer these needs

- Mission trips are regular, returning to local churches to assist with local church development (only to places where invited)
- Mission trips focus on the needs of local churches—church development, teacher and leader training, strengthening and edifying the local church. The model for the work is Acts 14:21-23.
- A focus is maintained on effective evangelism
- Churches are encouraged toward healthy church development
- Churches are encouraged and helped in establishing biblical leadership
- Churches are encouraged and trained in becoming missionary churches

The work is done through seminars, teaching and preaching, meetings with leaders, family workshops and retreats.