

Special Mission and Ministry Report
Frequently Asked Questions--FAQ
By Bob Young

What is the nature of your ministry? What do you do?

The primary focus of my ministry and mission effort is helping grow healthy churches—spiritually and numerically. A major challenge in the mission field is to strengthen Christians and local churches, to help churches develop in healthy ways, to develop teachers and leaders, and to encourage the development of missionary churches. Related to this challenge is the challenge of strengthening families and encouraging and facilitating evangelism.

I chair the board of directors of Asociación Amicus, the Honduran non-profit corporation that oversees Baxter Institute; I also serve as board chair for Baxter Foundation in the U.S. I am director of Spanish evangelism for “En Pos de la Verdad.” I maintain a website that provides ministry and mission resources. While my primary work is with churches throughout Latin America, I also work with Hispanic churches in the United States and present seminars and preach and teach in English-speaking churches.

What methods do you use? How do you do it?

The primary method involves traveling to various countries and regions of Latin America and presenting area-wide seminars. I also work with individual congregations. On average, I make 8-10 international trips each year. Materials are also published and made available online and in printed form.

In 2013, I preached and taught over 200 hours and worked with over 2000 members and leaders from at least 130 Latin American congregations, in about 45 locations across Latin America. This is in addition to teaching and preaching appointments in the U.S.

Why is this ministry important?

In most of the places I go, there is no North American presence. Sometimes there was previously a North American mission presence, but it has been withdrawn. Often the result is that there are small, struggling congregations that need encouragement to develop into healthy churches. Members need encouragement to grow spiritually and churches need encouragement to keep growing. Families need to be strengthened and leaders need to be developed. There is always a need for greater understanding of the word and greater love and unity. Only with this kind of effort can missionary churches be developed that will plant other churches.

A second reason this effort is important is that there are so few workers involved in meeting this need.

Where do you go? How do you decide where to go?

The answer to the first question is “almost everywhere.” In 2013, I presented seminars, preached and taught in Guatemala, Honduras, Panama, Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru,

Chile, and Uruguay. I also work with Hispanic churches in the U.S. and present leadership, church development, and mission seminars for English-speaking churches in the U.S.

I have developed the current group of receiving churches from several sources. First, across almost 20 years of travel and mission connections in Latin America, I have developed numerous friends and personal contacts. My involvement at Baxter Institute provides another source of contacts as I seek to strengthen the works of Baxter graduates and surrounding churches. I assist with EVO, a vocational training program overseen by the Memorial church in Houston, Texas. Finally, simply going and being present in Latin America is a constant source of new invitations.

My goal is to return to the same regions and congregations at least annually to continue to monitor and strengthen the work. Some monitoring and reporting occurs by email and phone, but there is no substitute for being on the ground to evaluate progress, needs, and to develop future plans.

What are the results?

The preaching and teaching (more than I ever did in local church ministry) develop stronger, more involved, more committed members. When problems are resolved and new vision and new energy are developed, the result is stronger churches. Local churches have more teachers. I receive weekly reports of increased baptisms. Three congregations have named elders in recent months; several others are nearly ready to establish elders.

In 2013, I assisted with the installation service of one new elder and was privileged to share in 11 baptisms. (There are many more baptisms in the churches where I work, but these are the result of many workers. For example, in the church in Barinas, Venezuela where I spent four days in July 2013 working the evangelists and teaching and preaching, there were 122 baptisms in 2013. In the congregations where I work there were over 2000 baptisms in 2013.) Finally, new churches are being planted by mission churches without the support of North American congregations.