

Sunday: Contemplating “Us”
By Bob Young
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I have resumed international mission travels. I am thinking about the contrasts between the churches in the U.S. and the churches in Latin America. I share a few miscellaneous reflections.

Before the pandemic, it was common to be in Latin America almost as many Sundays as I was in the U.S. The differences were often striking! One Sunday in Venezuela, we had an hour of Bible class, a brief break, and over two hours of worship, including a lengthy sermon preached by a Colombian brother. Such would hardly ever occur in the typical congregation in the U.S.

I believe we can worship and serve God acceptably without lengthy assemblies, but the contrast makes me wonder if we have developed a form of Christianity that relegates our spiritual walk to the corners of our life with only brief appearances center stage. With 44 men present for a 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturday leadership seminar (in a congregation of about 180), I cannot help but wonder if such could occur in the U.S. (Then we men sat around and visited an hour until the rest of the congregation arrived for two hours of Bible study Saturday night!)

Many things typically fill our Sundays — worship, fellowship, spiritual growth, service.... Let me add to the list of worthwhile activities: contemplation. What would happen if we were to spend a little time in meditation, contemplating us, beginning in the heart and asking what it would mean if we were to whole-heartedly live out our Christian commitment 24/7? Such could prove profitable. Perhaps such contemplation could change the course of our Christian life.