
Friday, September 09, 2011

¡Hola de sus amigos en Guatemala! (Hello from your friends in Guatemala!)

Over the past few days we have written to you about many subjects. In one newsletter we presented information about the team that visited us in July, while in another we gave you an update on our WEI teams that followed. Just recently you received a newsletter solely dedicated to the work of the preacher's school called **Instituto Teológico Latinoamericano (ITL)**. At this time, we would like to take you on a journey away from Linda Vista and give you an update on a brand new journey that involves the Lord (of course), ITL, its recent graduates, and YOU. Please continue to read.

The work in Guatemala City is a tough one. Sadly, we are faced with much division, with many congregations that are not holding true to the Word of God, and with brothers who present themselves as "Pastors" in a non-biblical sense. This has made the work much more difficult because a lot of the members have fallen prey to various schemes that Satan, working through some brethren, has presented. This creates a challenge for tender, new ministers and their wives, who are entering the full-time field for the first time. So we, the staff of ITL, decided it was best not to send our 1st graduating class directly into a "den of wolves." We offered them to go as a team to start a brand new work in the city of **San Cristobal**, in the department of **Alta Verapaz**, about four hours from Guatemala City. When we presented the idea, there was not a single congregation of the Lord's people in this heavily populated city. The reality is that in this department of the country, with a population of over one million people, there were only two congregations, with one of them being very weak and about to close its doors. We believed that planting a new work would afford our graduates a better opportunity to serve and to use their talents effectively, rather than spending a lot of time fighting the one man and his followers that have caused so much trouble for ITL and for the staff personally. Four of the students, **Abner Ramos, Francisco Ramos** (and his wife, **Erminia**), and **Wilder** and **Ingrid Ordoñez** accepted this challenge. The other two students, **Edras** and **Aries Tista**, decided to pursue another opportunity to labor elsewhere with an already established work.

The **San Cristobal team** is a pilot project of ITL; we provide moral, educational, evangelistic and financial help. All the help is indefinite, except the financial commitment. The financial support is not indefinite because a goal from the beginning is for these brethren to raise a work that will eventually be self-sustaining. We knew that from the time we "thought of the offer" that it meant we would have to raise additional funds for the new church plant. However, we believed the challenge of raising additional support was not as great as the good that this group of well trained graduates could do. Additionally, this group would have the opportunity to work closely



with **Darvin Alvarez**, the evangelist who works with the **Coban** congregation only about 30 minutes away. Coban is a church plant of the **Linda Vista** congregation. This proximity gives our students easy access to a reliable and faithful resource.



After a couple of weeks to recuperate from ITL ☺, the graduates started working in San Cristobal. Shortly after their initial assemblies, their first additional members came from a family that had previously worshipped in Coban. Because this family had to travel so much to get to the church in Coban, usually from one to two hours by foot, Darvin recommended that they consider moving their membership to this new work, which was a lot closer to their home. Respecting Darvin's recommendation and

seeing the new work as an opportunity to serve God more effectively, **Felix Cahuec**, his wife, **Erlinda**, and their four children placed their membership with the church in San Cristobal.

The ITL graduates have worked hard at planting the seed. After several weeks of their working hard and studying with various people, **God gave the increase** through that of new spiritual births. Over the past couple of weeks, the new church plant has seen **two precious souls** added to the Kingdom. Needless to say, this has given a spark to these brethren who are there daily spreading the Good News. The first convert of this new work is **Jose Armando Cal Caal**. He is 26 years old. Jose is a friend of Brother Felix. The team met him when they were doing visitation in the local hospital. After having a couple studies with him, Jose decided that he wanted to give his life to the Lord. He was baptized on **August 27** at 5:37 p.m. in the baptistry of the Coban congregation. At that time the Lord washed away his sins and added him to His church. Please keep him in your prayers, as well as his wife who is not yet a Christian.



The second addition to the San Cristobal family is **Jorge Leonardo Cahuec Moran**. He is a single young man and is 20 years old. Abner met Jorge at a food stand and befriended him. He told Jorge that he was a preacher and desired to share with him the Gospel. While Abner and Jorge talked and studied over the course of several weeks, Jorge shared his story with Abner. Jorge, when only 10 years old, ran away from home and began to work in a fair. It was not until he was 19 that he returned home, asking his parents to forgive him. His parents were overjoyed because they thought he was dead, and now were able to see him again. Abner took advantage of this personal story and said that he had another story that sounded very similar to his—it was, of course, the parable of the “prodigal son.” Abner emphasized that what Jorge had done was the right thing, but that there was another step he was



yet lacking. Just as he came home asking his physical parents for forgiveness, Jorge now needed to return to his heavenly Father asking for His forgiveness. Abner further said that God

would eagerly grant it to him. Jorge was eager to hear how to accomplish this, so Abner shared with him God's plan of salvation. As a result, Jorge was baptized on a Friday morning, **September 2**, in the Coban congregation's baptistry.

We are encouraged by the faithfulness to God's word that these graduates are showing and their perseverance in a tough field. We are confident that these brethren will have further good news to report in the future. Hopefully, you are as excited as we are about this new work and the possibilities it is presenting. We hope that you can see yourself helping to keep it going. Recently, we heard from a congregation in the US who will possibly come on board in January, 2012, to help almost fully support one of the families. You, too, can do the same! We still need support for the other two families. Will you prayerfully consider becoming a part of this work? At the bottom of this message you will see where you can send your one time or monthly gift to help. Please remember that everyone supporting a little helps to take care of the whole.

As always, there is much more that can be said about how the Lord is using His people to make a difference in a religious, but truth-famished country. We ask you to pray for us here as we work in various ways to "Teach the CENTRAL MESSAGE in CENTRAL AMERICA!"



We love you and pray God's abundance upon you.

Por la Cruz (Because of the Cross)

Hawatthia "Hi" Jones Byron E. Benitez

Please send all funds to our overseeing congregation, marked "Mission: Guatemala" to the following address:

**Kingsley Terrace Church
Attn: Dwaine Himes/Mission: Guatemala
2031 E. 30th Street
Indianapolis, IN 46218**