

October 2020

Latin America

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Dear friend:

We are writing as hurricane Sally is slowly leaving Pensacola. It felt like a freight train hitting you straight on, howling angrily, incessantly, taking trees and enormous branches down all around us. We are well, with a new adventure under the belt. Not one we would like to repeat, though.

Some of the world's top scholars will be with us!

We are gearing up for the Iberoamerican Influencers' Summit next January. The plan is to have a videoconference every year featuring some of the world's top Christian scholars and leaders and transmit it in all of Latin America and Spain. So far, we have three yeses, and two pretty close to yes. Here's the yeses, an amazing testimony of God's faithfulness to us:

The first yes was Sean McDowell, a young scholar who is writing impressive books at lightning speed, including, *That the Next Generation May Know*, one of the best books that are available on how to raise our children in these troubled times so they do not abandon the faith. This will be the subject of his conference. You might not have heard of Sean, though you've probably heard about his father, Josh McDowell, a highly regarded apologist. I believe Sean will eventually have a greater influence than his dad has.

The second yes was from Pablo Deiros, an exceptional church historian from Argentina, a brilliant scholar who has published a whole stack of books, including the best history of Christianity in Latin America that is in print. He will deal with the Latin American churches' greatest threats, and how the church needs to respond.

The third speaker is Michael Brown, a Jewish believer in Jesus, also an incredible scholar. I personally am doing my morning devotions using his commentary on the book of Job, an absolute treat! But for the Summit, he will focus on his book, "Can You Be Gay and Christian", where he deals with this complicated subject with two elements that characterize his ministry, and should be the hallmark of all Christians, the truth tempered with deep compassion. You probably know this, but this issue will be one of the greatest threats to the Gospel-preaching church as we know it in the whole world.

Why are we doing this? For a bunch of reasons. To serve the area of the world that God has opened up to us. To expose bunches of leaders to good scholarship (I am praying that we can build this up to have an audience of 30,000, though I yearn for more). To promote INSTE. And because it will be fun. We are already starting to prepare for 2022's summit, with some of the world's top Biblical scholars with the title: "The Bible had it Right After All" (*La Biblia tenia razón*, in Spanish) Please pray for us!

Our man in Cuba

Our national director for Cuba, Yoenny, one of our top national directors, had a hernia treated by doctors in his country who botched it up terribly. So bad, in fact, that they had sewn his intestines to his stomach cavity so that every step he took was agony. In one of the operations, he became clinically dead. These probably were not accidents. We were able to fly him down to El Salvador three years ago and have surgery to fix him up, but as happens in some cases, he needs a second surgery. He has swollen up like a four-month pregnant lady; I fear for him. We need to get him to El Salvador for a second operation!

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The times they are a-changing

I have always interviewed candidates in person for the position of national director, to make sure that he/she was whom the Lord has for the job. I am keenly interested in seeing where they were spiritually, theologically, and in personal wholesomeness. Covid-19 has changed this. Our director for Uruguay, a fellow that has been an exceptional gift from God, has to move and recommended a substitute.

There was no way that I could travel there, so we got our Latin American team together and interviewed him. He got a resounding “yes,” and is being trained right now to take over that responsibility. There’s a picture for you, with the new guy on the bottom right.



Big opportunities come with big challenges

We are moving into a new season in our work, and are excited as can be. This means, however, we have bigger challenges than ever before. One of the biggest is preparing for the opening we expect in Brazil, where we need to translate the 24 Second Level books into the Portuguese language. We have reported before that the Lord has given us a miracle, a perfect candidate to translate these books, a Brazilian missionary in Spain who is finishing his doctorate in theology. And we have a very reasonable price for this kind of work, \$2000 per book, including the translation, artists, and designers. He has already begun work on the first course.

On top of that, we are setting up the Iberoamerican Influencers’ Summit, which will cost \$13,000, including the promotion in 20 countries, professional management for the broadcasting of the event, professional dubbing of the English conferences, mass e-mail management, website creation and management for the summits, offerings for the speakers, and a bunch of other expenses that are essential for something like this.

And we need to get Yoenny, our Cuban national director fixed up! We need to have him fly down to El Salvador for a second surgery, and stay there three months to completely heal (that was one of the mistakes, he only stayed one month after the first operation). The total budget is estimated at \$7000, which is big bucks, but extraordinarily reasonable for a procedure like this.

Please be a part of this!

We would like to invite you to have a part of the open doors we have before us. We know that many are already giving sacrificially to the INSTE work in Latin America, and we deeply appreciate it. We are aiming for \$25,000 to get these three projects going. Please pray about this. If a good part of the folks that receive this newsletter could participate with anything, we could take care of it! Your contribution of any amount will make a difference! Please mark the offering: INSTE Latin American Projects.

Where are we?

We are still in the US, as you can tell from the hurricanes, but I (Johnny), should be back in Honduras by the time you receive this newsletter. There has been a great advance down there, people are now allowed out of their houses once a week, (not twice a month!). The contagion, however, is increasing. In the US I have health insurance, in Honduras, I do not, but I feel it is time to go back. Please do pray for us! And please do pray for all the open doors we have before us!

In Jesus’ love