



September 1, 2018

Dearest Ministry Partners,

May the Lord bless you at the beginning of a new season. May the journey ahead, a new year of work and service, bring a confidence that with Jesus, we are marching from victory to victory!

**Now travel with me down the Amazon . . . into the
rainforest . . . to a place so remote, you can only get there
in a tiny “air-taxi” plane, landing in a rough clearing. . . .**

Now find two tributaries known as the Purus and the Madeira Rivers . . . a region of some 400 tribes . . . tribes so obscure, the Brazilians just call them the “Ribeirinhos,” the “river people.” Here you’ll find the Jamamadi Indians, one of the smallest of the tribes.

Now find two villages that make up a tiny “town” . . . and find a young man who grew up there . . . a young man who somehow, by God’s grace, has heard the good news.

When you find him, what do you expect him to ask you?

I met such a man, a little more than a week ago, during my time in Brazil. At a clearing in the rainforest, in a place called Labrea, he showed up eager to hear what we were teaching from God’s Word. And this is what he asked me:

“What do you make of Melchizedek in Genesis 18?”

Maybe—just maybe—maybe once or twice in the course of a year or two—I might hear such a question from a seminary student in a big city, perhaps in Europe! But in this out-of-the-way place nobody’s ever heard of? *I was floored!*

But this earnest young man was dead serious. He actually wanted to know whether Melchizedek was simply a pagan Canaanite king, or the preincarnate Christ!

God was gently reminding me that we are dealing with people made in the image of God. Their dignity and their God-awareness are alive and well. *God was telling us not to hold back. To teach at full power. To introduce students—regardless of our preconceived notions—to the full counsel of God!*



Some 60 people had registered for this course in Brazil. I was there to teach “Bible Study Methods.” This course is intended as a precursor to sermon preparation—but it was obvious that God had preceded us! He had sent great servants before us. His Spirit had been at work in the people of the rainforest for a very long time. Forget “precursors”! Get on with it!

The beautiful young man who asked about Melchizedek during one of the teaching sessions wasn’t even satisfied with the brief answer he received from the Book of Hebrews. He waved his hand eagerly as if to say, “Give me more.”

I talked with the young man during breaks in the teaching. He was working on reconciling the idea that Abraham, the highest patriarch, and Aaron were paying a tithe and being blessed by the “greater.” How exactly was Melchizedek “greater?” he wanted to know. I hesitated—because he was supposedly so “primitive”—but he was so passionate, I decided to go ahead:

Melchizedek, I said, was “a Christophany”—an appearance of the preincarnate Christ.

The young man beamed! This was the only option that made sense to him!

Wow! A lot of folks in our churches in the U.S. probably don’t know such terminology! But this fellow had thought it through. He was intense about knowing God’s Word, and sharing God’s Word fully and accurately.

This encounter challenged me deeply. I realized in that moment: We are preparing church planters to be pastors and teachers—and they need us to teach them at a high-quality level. Not just Sunday school, but seminary grade!

I remember learning in seminary about the nature of man according to the Bible: that mankind, even in his fallen state, is very highly valued by God—why? Because mankind bears and is the image of God. Which means, we should never underestimate any human!

You and I, in this ministry, are not reaching out to *primates*, but to God-like creatures. God so values them (and us) that He did not spare His own Son! He gave *Jesus Himself* in order to seek and to save humans!



Which also leads us to realize that the ministry of reconciliation is absolutely worth it to God. So it should also be absolutely worth it to us. (The people of the rainforest—and every other people group on earth—are just as worthy of rescue as the boys who were trapped in a cave in Thailand!)

But now, come with me out of the rainforest to a big, modern city . . . to a conference room . . . to a meeting of Christian leaders. Here we'll find a gathering of Brazilian ministry leaders meeting to discuss the urgency of our strategy in Brazil.

God had something more for me here. I was astounded to hear these words come out of one man's mouth:

"Brazilian missions have failed."

For a moment I thought I had heard him wrong. But no. He actually went on:

"We have not done a work that is ongoing, nor has it multiplied," he said. "If we are able to do just the 600 church plants that World Link is proposing, we will have achieved the greatest undertaking that anyone in Brazil has ever seen."

I felt both shock and inspiration. I was shocked, first of all, because I have thought of Brazil as a missionary-sending nation. But, as the leader who made the statement explained to me later, much of the work there is individual . . . very small in its scope . . . limited in both its attempts and its accomplishments.

Others may disagree, but there was no disagreement in that room that day. The other leaders meeting with us were in grim agreement. But they were not giving up. **They pledged to do everything within their power to join with us, to speed up the work**, to achieve the levels that our accelerated church-planting calls for.

And I do foresee acceleration! In one region of Brazil, for example, fewer than one-sixth of the workers are planting churches. And each of these workers is planting only one church each.

By God's grace and with your support, we'll change this. I can't help but think of the words of the great business management consultant, Peter Drucker. "Work expands to fill the time available for its completion," he said.



Yes! A task expands or contracts according to the time available. If you have hours available for straightening the house, you'll take hours to do it. But if you get a call that guests are in town and about to stop by, you can do it in a fraction of an hour!

I shared this principle with the Brazilian leaders. If our responsibility is to achieve one church plant in one week, I told them, we'll pour ourselves into the task! (I also told them about a Cuban church planter who cut grass for six hours each day and planted four churches in four different towns on a part-time basis!)

The Brazilian leaders responded beautifully. They determined that they must inspire their workers to "multitask" for the sake of the lost! To accelerate the pace! To get busier for Jesus!

So must we!

Brazil is certainly a mission field that needs to be reached—and if this were the only reason for acceleration, it would be reason enough. But **the epidemic of sin and despair is everywhere. This is why the Great Commission is massive.** The Brazil ministry effort—and the India effort, and the Cuba effort, and so on—are great . . . but the need is greater.

And **our God is greater.**

When confronted with the need of a multitude—thousands of people—the disciples knew for a fact that they did not have the resources to feed them. The logistics were impossible. There were no supply lines; there were no financial resources. Their inventory proved what they were saying.

So Jesus asked Philip, "Where are we to buy bread so that these may eat?" Philip logically advised Him that even if there were a place where to buy, there were not enough funds. But Jesus was only saying this to test him; He knew what he was intending to do (John 6:6).

Likewise, you and I know for a fact that none of us has the resources to do all that is needed.

But we have a beautiful gift: We have the option of believing in the One who is able to MULTIPLY our resources.



This is what I challenge you to do today: Believe in the One who can multiply the gift you give.

THE HERO of the story of the loaves and the fishes is the little guy who figured that he might just have to sacrifice his lunch that day.

His sacrificial giving was answered by the universal principle that *we cannot outgive God*.

By faith I would ask you to pass this same test. Give sacrificially. Give what you can.

Our God is the one who uses childlike faith!

Please let me hear your response of faith. God will multiply your loaves and your fishes! *God will use you to speak into the rainforest . . . into the city . . . into every venue where people need the Lord!*

For the worldwide harvest,

Dr. Manny Fernandez

P.S. I am giving my life to this cause. Happily. And hundreds of workers are laboring daily in the harvest. Joyfully. But more are needed, and those who are serving urgently need our support. So I “beseech you by the mercies of God” to do as much as you can today, to share in the harvest with them. Thank you in advance! God bless you for your sacrifice of loaves and fishes, a gift that our Lord can and will multiply!