

August 1, 2016

Dearest Ministry Partner,

Did you have a great Independence Day? I prayed specifically that you would! I asked God to bless you with good family times and for the making of happy memories together.

Every day is Independence Day in Christ! It's greater than our earthly freedom! We have been delivered from a bondage that was our undoing. The people of Israel felt the scourge of their oppressors, literally, for 400 years, and they cried out to the Lord for help. Ever since then, God has been in the independence business . . . setting His people free.

On that first Passover, the blood of the lamb was a symbol of the price that was paid for their freedom. That same Passover Lamb, more than 2000 years ago, secured *our* freedom as well. "It is for freedom that Christ has set us free," Paul declares in Galatians 5:1. "Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery."

In the run-up to the Fourth, I saw news reporters asking people on the street what they love about freedom. The most common type of response: "Freedom is doing whatever I want to do." Our world is becoming libertine; yet we know that basic laws are needed so that doing "whatever we want" doesn't injure others, or deprive them of their own freedom.

Likewise, biblically, freedom doesn't mean doing whatever the flesh wants to do. It doesn't mean infringing on others' rights or lives. Freedom is not intended to break God's law nor God's will.

In the past, before Christ, we could only do wrong. Now we are set free to be all the good things that God wants us to be. Somebody has put it awkwardly clear: "We were 'unable not to sin.'" Now, in Christ, we are able to do what is right.

"So then, brethren, we are under obligation, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh — for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God" (Romans 8:12-14).

We are free from the law and joined to Christ that we might bear fruit for God. This is God's bottom line (Romans 7:4). So in the name of freedom, we go on to serve Him! The fruit is being borne out.

We're seeing it all around the world:

- In **LIBERIA**, where I am soon to visit, we are being presented with a sawmill! (No, that's not a typo!) A company in the Midwest has donated it. It was a happy surprise to hear from Phil, my friend of 20 years, calling to ask if a sawmill could benefit our ministry in that country.

We set out to learn what this operation could mean to the work of God. So far, every light is green! We believe this sawmill can be operated to the glory of God, with transparency and integrity, to subsidize the work of the Lord in that nation. We need prayer to put everything in place. The sawmill was previously engulfed in controversy, even to the extreme of witchdoctors casting spells. But our God is greater! Pray with us for His will to prevail!

I'm excited to report we're launching our next church planting teams there for an additional 180 church plants. I'm also thrilled that we're pursuing diligently the establishment of a formal theological seminary for the region. There's a huge need for conservative evangelical training, and we can provide it!

This is a moment to take 1 Thessalonians 5:17 seriously and "Pray without ceasing"! Prayer is foundational. There is a spiritual realm, with "principalities and powers" (Ephesians 6:12). We can only prevail by the power of prayer.

- **INDIA** is another major item in the summer schedule. I am about two weeks away from our next session of teaching in the north, where persecution of Christians is most pronounced.

Our partner in this work, Moulti, is flying up from a southern state of India to assist in translation and to report on the work in four other states. But I know this already: he is *super-excited* about all that is happening in his country! I also know he's *eager* to add workers so we can pursue an additional 640 church plants—which will get us to 1,000 church plants in India!

When I first met Moulti, it was his life goal to see 1,000 churches planted in his ministry career. Then I shared how God taught us to do accelerated church planting. After we launched the first 360 churches with relatively little effort, he informed me that he has revised his life goal. Now he's believing for 5,000 church plants in his lifetime!

- But Moulti's vision is not limited to India. He's asked if I will consider going with him to **MYANMAR** (formerly known as Burma). **He knows 60 pastors** who would *CATCH FIRE* if we share what I have shared in India.
- And even Myanmar isn't the limit of his passion. **He knows** that if we go also to **MALAYSIA**, our accelerated church planting strategy could "explode."
- Furthermore . . . (because with God, there is always a "furthermore") . . . **NEPAL** is also two hours from where we will be teaching. He wants to know if we could think of extending the work into Nepal!

He reminds me of Radu, our Romanian student, who later became the director for our work in that nation. I remember when he told me years ago with similar urgency, about his country.

He found out that we had gone to Ukraine and the work was exploding. Radu said, “**I know**” that if you come to my country, we can have greater results than you are seeing in Ukraine. He emphasized, “**I know** this!” So we went. He was right. We can see the results!

So I ask you today . . .

Will you come with us to India? We are just two steps from having 1,000 church plants! I know that if you come with us in spirit, we can get this accomplished!

Will you come with us to Myanmar? The 60 pastors can see 300 church plants get off the ground. **I know this!**

Will you come to Nepal with us? On our first phase there, we can go for 500 church plants!

History proves what God can do. One man went to Ukraine with one church—we went together 10 years ago. Between that one man and that one church, today we have 1,000 churches in Ukraine. Those 1,000 churches have planted or are planting 2,000 daughter-churches each.

This Ukrainian brother is intense. He sees this as an eternal investment, as the legacy of his life. He inspires me to ask, “What will be my life legacy? What will be yours?”

Maybe you can’t do as much right now as he has done. But what can you do? The widow who put one mite in the offering plate gave more than all the others—because she gave all she had. Her sacrificial giving was commended by the Lord. He delights in sacrifices that are born in the depths of our heart!

Please know that the Lord is still in the business of doing miracles with our loaves and fishes. He is bigger than anything we could ever think of. He wants us to do our sincere effort in the best way we can. He will come out to meet us.

True story: A church gave each member a \$20 gift as a “talent.” They were to exercise good stewardship and multiply these resources for the Lord’s work. After a month, the people came to church bringing their \$20 and more . . . along with their testimonies of how they had invested and multiplied their “talents” to benefit the missions program of the church.

One woman used her \$20 to register for a golf tournament, and won more than \$1,000! Another bought ingredients, made pies, and sold them at her school. With the winnings, she made more pies, and sold them too. She kept this up for the whole month—and ended up with hundreds of dollars! There were all kinds of testimonies . . . amazing stories of what people do when they develop a passion for multiplying resources for the Lord!

Maybe as you read these few examples, you have even bigger and better ideas yourself. In any case, this is the heart of what Jesus taught in the parable of the talents. What is at the heart of the mystery of the Kingdom of Heaven? The common thread, among those who were commended and rewarded, was faithfulness.

Those of us with two talents are only responsible to be faithful with two talents. Those of us with five are to be faithful with the five. Those of us with one are to be faithful with one. Fear has no place in the equation!

This is the season for celebrating freedom. But sadly, many still struggle with bondage. Perhaps the most common is the bondage of fear.

“If I give, will I have enough left to satisfy my own desires?”

“If I give, will it really make a difference?”

“If I give, will God really bless?”

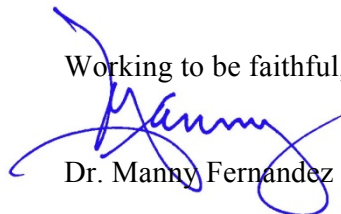
These are fear questions. And fear was the failure of the one-talent man in Jesus’ parable. “Fear not,” Jesus says repeatedly throughout the Scriptures, yet so many of us remain trapped in the bondage of fear!

Today, we have a choice: fear . . . or faithfulness. Let’s choose faithfulness. Let’s set aside fear. The bottom-line goal is ultimately to hear from the Lord of the Harvest, “Well done, thou good and faithful servant!”

Today, I challenge your faithfulness. As our brothers and sisters overseas have so often said, ***I know if you come, we will be able to do much more! Help it happen.*** Come with us in spirit. Let this summer’s harvest be great, by God’s grace and power and ***because of your faithfulness!***

I hope to hear from you soon. Be as generous as possible. Thank you in advance! God bless you!

Working to be faithful,



Dr. Manny Fernandez

P.S. Perhaps you will never set foot in Liberia or India. Maybe you will never visit Myanmar, or see Nepal firsthand, or travel to Malaysia or Ukraine or Cuba or Spain or anyplace else God has called us.

But *you can go in spirit.* You can be integrally, intimately, personally involved in the work. Your investment today will be multiplied countless times over in the ministries you make possible and in the ministries that those ministries raise up, generation after generation!

All because of your generosity! Thank you again!