



*May the Lord bless you and keep you, as Isaiah 26:3 declares . . .
May he make the light of his countenance shine upon you and give you perfect peace!*

September 1, 2017

Dearest Ministry Partners,

I hope you're not tired of success!
I am still thrilled by it!
The news I'm bringing you today is thrilling!

Two projects—two great leaps forward!

My heart was brimming with expectation as we drew near to these outreaches—I knew the potential was great—but there was no way to know exactly what God would do. ***Now, we know!***

1. The much-expected CUBA trip turned out to be one of the very best trips in our entire history!

Pedro, our Field Director, organized evangelistic meetings that brought many “seekers” into large venues. We literally covered the length and breadth of the island, logging more than 1,200 miles! By the time it was all over, we had welcomed more than 2,000 people into our meetings and led 478 people to the Lord—99 were baptized!

An American group from San Jose was amazingly “blended” by the Lord into a wonderfully effective Cuban team. But please understand, none of us looked like a professional evangelist! God used the joy of all the participants—however “unrefined” it might be—as the attraction and appeal to the message. The people were thrilled to hear the simple praise, the heartfelt testimonies, and the clear invitation to join the family of God.

And the group members were overwhelmed by the response of the Cubans! Some told me that they had been on mission trips to “build a wall” or “put up a roof,” but this was wonderful! One described the experience as “extremely rich.”

I visited the Americans’ home church in California, where a number of folks offered testimonies about missionary trips they’d participated in over the summer. Some in our Cuba group almost sounded apologetic reporting “an evangelistic trip”—no wall-building, no roofing! It jolted me to realize that in our secularized society, material accomplishments are often regarded as more important than spiritual!



What does God's Word say?

- "Without faith it is impossible to please God."
- "He who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a Rewarder of those who seek Him."
- "Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. . . ."
- "By faith the men of old gained approval!"

2. A week later, we were in the **DOMINICAN REPUBLIC**, teaching with our longtime friend and partner, David Seifert. His years of experience teaching through the book of Romans was greatly appreciated by the people.

On the closing day, I covered Chapters 12 through 16. Then we took time for testimonies and feedback. One woman gave a remarkable account:

"I had always measured the height of my Christian experience from an event that took place when a group of us ladies were together with our kids. One of the children had something terribly wrong with him and he died! We all began to pray frantically, and desperately, we cried out to God. Then the boy's life came back to him!

We were all comforted that day and it was our highest Christian experience. But this last week, the study of the book of Romans was like God talking to us in a face-to-face dialogue. It was like He was introducing Himself and telling us what He was thinking! I understood my past sin and what He had to do to make it right. I understood my position before Him now and what He wants me to do with the rest of my life!"

Another person spoke up:

"I have been to a Bible Institute for four years. I got a certificate on Bible and theology. But two days ago, I received Jesus as my Savior and the guarantee that I am saved forever! I had always been suspicious of losing my salvation. I felt I needed my constant best efforts to be good enough to be allowed into heaven. I understand why it was free and how I can know it will hold."

What joy in these testimonies, and many others like them! I love the faith they express in the Word of God as a foundation for life. Not even a "great experience" can supersede the value of the Word of God! Jesus Himself says that "man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God."

The Dominicans didn't just want a powerful week in the study of God's Word; they wanted to go *beyond*. They wanted "the whole experience!" I began to realize this as I lunched with a group of pastors who represented 200 churches. They had heard of our "train and



deploy” strategy in various countries. They wanted to know what we would do about deployment. I asked how many churches they would like to see planted? 400? 600? or 1,000?

In any country where we work, we typically see churches mobilizing two to five key workers from each church, workers dedicated to multiplying the number of churches in their regions. So a group of 200 churches can grow 400 churches if they can mobilize only two workers each—or up to 1,000 churches with five workers each.

Then came the test. Let me explain what I mean. . . .

The Dominicans are prosperous by Caribbean standards. They make Cuba look like a country in abject poverty, ravaged by storms. The D.R. has plenty of food and businesses. But when I shared with them the numbers—planting so many churches with so few workers—they somehow suddenly decided they were a Third World country! In the face of the challenge to multiply, they became painfully shackled by their insufficiency.

But in that moment, the Lord prompted me to respond in perhaps an unusual way. He had arranged a **surprise visitor** in that meeting! Here’s how it happened. . . .

Her name is Norma. I’ve told you about her before—a Cuban woman who only needed a flashlight to plant nine churches! She is also the reason I was in the Dominican Republic that week—she had been ministering there and invited me to come teach the people she’d been working with in the country.

As the Dominican leaders sputtered and stalled, I began talking to them about the currency of obedience, which is the richness of the Cuban church. I began narrating the story of a helpless worker in Cuba who had to hitchhike 60 miles round-trip every day as she strove to plant nine churches. . . .

I told the audience how the woman was forced one day to jump into a cargo truck full of construction workers—how they set out to assault her—but how she triumphantly preached the Gospel to them—and how the power of God subdued them!

I told them about Mr. Harrison from the Coca-Cola Company bringing his entire family to meet her and offering to give her a car or motorcycle to help her plant churches more efficiently.

And of course, I told them how Norma had asked for only a flashlight—the only equipment she regarded as necessary for planting her nine churches!

The Dominicans sat stunned. I asked how many of them owned a flashlight. They all raised their hands. Then I looked at her and cried, “Look Norma! The Dominican Republic is safe! They all have flashlights!”



I turned back to the Dominicans and revealed the surprising truth: “Ladies and gentlemen, the Cuban worker who planted those nine churches with nothing but a Bible and a flashlight is here with us right now!”

I asked Norma to stand, and she did so . . . her head bowed, tears streaming down her face. The audience roared, and gave her a five-minute-long standing ovation.

In that moment, *the faith factor became powerfully evident*. Here was another hero of faith like those of Hebrews 11! By faith, believing that God exists, and that He is the Rewarder of those who seek Him, Norma stood. She planted her churches with a Bible and a flashlight. She couldn’t drive a car. She wasn’t allowed by the government to have a motorcycle!

Young David felt awkward fighting Goliath with the armor of a king because he had not “tested” it. But his sling—and more importantly, the company of his God—were tested and true. **Here’s what faith says: “With God, we can!”**

All who have believed the faith-in-God formula have been triumphant. They have tested the formula and found victory! Norma believed that with God she could plant the churches. She believed God for victory in Costa Rica, in Nicaragua, and now in the Dominican Republic.

What are you willing to believe God for? None of us was saved to be a spectator. God in Christ reconciled mankind, and now He has committed to us the work of reconciliation. David’s secret weapon was simple: “The battle is the Lord’s!” (1 Samuel 17:47). Our orders are simple too: We just march like God told us to. All of the heroes of Hebrews 11, and the countless numbers since then, have known the same secret: “The battle is the Lord’s.”

The work didn’t end in Hebrews 11. “All these having gained approval through their faith did not receive what was promised” (11:39). God’s plan was that they would not be “made perfect” apart from you and me. God wanted it to be a TOTAL team effort and a TOTAL team victory!

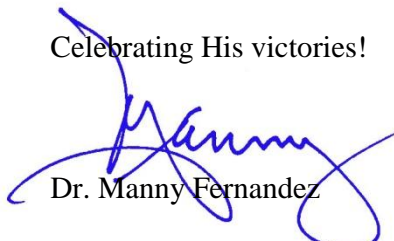
So the 21st century team is on! And the secret is the same: “The battle is the Lord’s!” The American church has performed brilliantly in the 20th century. Now we find ourselves in the 21st. God is not tired and He has not changed. He wants us to make our best effort, just as in the 20th century. Today in 2017—and at every opportunity—we must respond in faith, believing that God is there, and that He is the Rewarder of those who seek Him.

Fall is around the corner, the new year begins. Will there be Thanksgiving? Will there be Christmas? Yes! God will have a soul harvest sponsored by Christmas, the sacrifice of Christ. We as His ambassadors are to bear fruit as He has enabled us AND as we have faith! The battle is the Lord’s—and with our stance for faith and with our great God, **victory is inevitable!**



Please join the fray! We have challenges in India, in Ukraine, in Cuba, and in Spain. Here is what I am specifically asking you to do: 1) rally your faith, 2) take aim, and, 3) jump in! **Make a big splash for the sake of the harvest! Let me hear from you with your response of faith! Be generous! Be bold! Thank you in advance! God bless you!**

Celebrating His victories!



Dr. Manny Fernandez

P.S. I need you and every friend to be absolutely as generous as possible today. We have enormous challenges ahead. But the battle is the Lord's! As we give and pray and work, we know He will give us the victory. What can you do today? Do it! Thank you again!