

October 1, 2014

Dearest Ministry Prayer Partners,

As I leave for Liberia—the heart of the Ebola outbreak—I pray this old Sabbath prayer for myself as well as for you:

“May the Lord bless you and keep you. May He protect, and defend, and shield you. May He favor you with happiness and peace!”

By the time you read these words, I’ll be meeting and interviewing 200 candidates—half in Monrovia, the rest in Gbarnga, in Bong County—for the 100 church-planting positions we will fill.

It’s a time of hope and of happy expectations. **The graphic reality of hundreds perishing from Ebola brings the spiritual reality into sharp focus.** This is a terribly needy region of the world. We have a very real opportunity to preach to a very focused and desperate audience. These are people who urgently want to seek the Lord for help and hope!

“How will they go without being sent?” the Scriptures ask. I am going because I am being sent, and we must send these 200 candidates so that they may go. With the leading of the Holy Spirit, we will identify those who should go. We will train them in an intensive church-planting boot camp. Then we will send them in the power of the Spirit.

If there’s a drawback, it’s that I wish we could send all these brave volunteers! But the truth is, we are short on funding even for the first hundred.

Which actually reminds me of the chicken and the pig—in the old fable:

A chicken and a pig are walking down a road.

“Hey, pig,” the chicken says, “I was thinking we should open a restaurant!”

“What should we call it?” the pig replies.

“How about Ham and Eggs?”

The pig thinks for a moment, then says to the chicken, “So you want to be involved, but you want me to be totally committed?”

There’s a difference between having “skin in the game”—doing our “dead-level best”—or just engaging in “token” participation!

People truly *in the arena* aren't bravely giving their all because they don't understand the stakes and the risk. They're courageously "selling out" to the cause because they're aware of the sacrifices required by such a desperate situation.

When I wrote to you a few weeks ago, I shared with you the response of the geese when they were sprayed with water. In contrast to the explosive cackling of the chickens, the geese raised their necks, spread their wings, and started a joyful march in the direction of the water!

Likewise, "first responders" are trained to run to the battle, and to do what the need of the moment demands. Our Liberian friends, our brothers and sisters being sent over the coming days and weeks have "all their bacon on the line." They will go into every corner of their country: North West; North East; South West; and South East. They will start 18 churches in each of the 15 counties of Liberia (270 on the first wave), geographically positioned to reach the entire nation.

Yes, they know the danger—but they know what the Bible says. For some people, the crisis screams "Run and hide"; for these courageous leaders, the crisis commands, "Take the cure for eternal life."

"How beautiful on the mountain are the feet of him who brings good news, who publishes peace, who brings good news of happiness, who publishes salvation." The promise as we go is that He will be with us *always*, come what may. The response of our hearts is this: "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me."

Liberia is, very simply, one of the biggest challenges of my life and of my experience in ministry. But the fact is there are also other fields full of people in need, other challenges and other opportunities.

Spain is next on the calendar. Lord willing, we will be there next to inaugurate the school year and to see both a new class of incoming students and some familiar faces preparing to finish their studies and enter the ministry full-time. We are excited for six graduates who have been granted scholarships to study at Southwestern and take their training to the next level.

These six arrived from Spain in late summer and are already settled, registered, and studying in their new environment. Our vision is to "gift" 20 or more doctorates to Spain, to become a catalyst to change the shallow understanding of the stagnant majority of believers there.

We are deeply grateful to be under way in preparations to purchase the Madrid building. (We're working to secure bank loans because of the deadline set by the local government there; we'll pay off the loans as the Lord provides through friends like you, near and far.)

This is a *thrilling* development—a major step forward toward establishing a training and deploying center for the evangelization of all Europe! Meanwhile, our seminary is already operating several programs in the North and South of Spain, and in the Canaries—areas where most of our students are at work in evangelism.

I just received a letter from the director of the southern program—you can sense Bruno's excitement and see the difference you're making there:

"We have just begun our new year at the seminary. This last weekend was a tremendous blessing . . . Jose Martin was teaching on Soteriology (the doctrine of salvation). It had a high impact. Thank you for letting us be a part of the marvelous ministry of World Link. It is a great blessing to see how God is working in our five churches and among the 48 pastors from all over southern Spain.

"We await your personal teaching on October 18 on Apologetics (the defense of the faith). Thank you once again and may God bless the ministry in all the places where it is at work."

We're also receiving thank-yous from everywhere the work is under way—and the thanks are for *you*. The role you play is the vital root for the eternal fruit. May God continue to guide you to the level of commitment He has planned for you. Your generosity and prayers are making an impact for eternity!

**Just last week we witnessed once again the difference
you're making—in the life and ministry of a graduate
I'll call Juan.**

He was a tough case when he went through our program. To say that he was almost dismissed is to put it mildly. He came from a life of drugs and crime. Two of his brothers died from drugs and drug-related violence. One of his brothers is in jail for decades.

Juan missed jail and death by a very thin margin. He also was not dismissed by the same narrow margin. But his passion and calling are real. He graduated after making up a significant number of assignments.

Then he was hired as national director of an evangelistic and church-planting ministry in the U.K. In the last ten years, he and his team have planted seven thriving churches. He has kept up a great friendship with the mayor of the city where he lives, Ciudad Real. Last week Juan was in England and Ireland for ministry meetings. He has gone far. And he is still going strong!

I hope that you take great satisfaction in his story—because you have played a role in his training. You helped launch him into ministry. His victory is our victory, yours and mine—just as surely as his failure would have been our loss.

But today, the stakes are higher than ever. We have a lot more students preparing for ministry and a number of mission fronts under fire. Still, it's inspiring! I'm excited to have come to this point and to see the potential before us!

Yes, the dangers are very real. We can quickly be in trouble if we take our eyes off the Lord. I pray that we will be faithful always.



And as we “press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 3:14 NKJV), I pray that you will stand with us. March with us. Advance with us, with joy, to fight and win the battles God is calling us to. I need you to be the air power to back up our “beautiful” boots on the ground as we move forward!

Your support today is vital, both spiritually and financially. It is no exaggeration to say that I have never felt the need for prayer as I do now.

Please lift up your countenance, spread your wings with glee, and march with joy. Let us join the Lord’s work with enthusiasm. More than just being “involved,” let us be deeply, wholly committed to the victories He guarantees for us!

Let me hear with your generous contribution for a resounding victory in Liberia, in Cuba, in Spain, in Ukraine and beyond! Thank you! God bless you!

Joyfully in Christ,

Dr. Manny Fernandez

P.S. I told you last month my heart is soaring! It still is! I believe by faith that God is doing incredible things through us together. But to fulfill our potential for changing the world, *we need you to give as generously as possible right now*. Please get back to me right away. Thank you again!