



January 4, 2012

Dear Friends of World Link,

The Lord reigns! We can step with confidence and enthusiasm into the new year knowing that He holds the future and He holds our hand.

What will God do through you in 2012? He already has an agenda in mind for you! We can find it in Ephesians 2....

Of course we love the glorious words of Ephesians 2:8 proclaiming our salvation, full and free: “By grace have you been saved, through faith — and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God.” But this passage is followed by an equally profound statement, in Ephesians 2:10— which in most cases remains unspoken, even forgotten:

“For we are His handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works which God prepared in advance for us to do”!

In God’s mind, 2012 has a clear agenda. He has a plan, made in advance, for the type of “good works” we’re to accomplish (not *for* our salvation, but *because of* our salvation). **God has in mind a full program for us to engage in with Him in 2012.**

Today, I invite you to step out and boldly take on the challenges God is laying out before us. Through a generous gift today, you can help to plant churches. You can help to train and deploy workers. You can lead lost people to Christ. You can touch a whole community. You can rewrite eternity!

Let me show you how, by taking you “back
in time” just one month....

At Dallas-based partner Criswell College, a pastor-training school where I teach a class on church planting, the leaders felt called by God to reach out to their community; so they did. “Just for obedience’s sake,” they produced a tremendous festival, with fun activities for all age groups.

It was bold and it was very clear in its purpose: they shared the Gospel at every turn and recorded the response of every guest. There was “something for everybody” at this festival; it was a great success. There were many decisions for Christ. There is an eternal impact when an action is taken “just for obedience’s sake.” As dramatic as it may be here and now, the real value, the total results, will only be tallied in eternity....

A woman whom I’ll call Veronica came to the festival at the end of her rope — almost literally: She had tried and failed to commit suicide just days earlier. Something called a “festival” sounded to her like something that might cheer her up. It also helped that everything was free, so she and her children could go even though they had no money.

At the festival, a Criswell professor bumped into Veronica and began to share with her about the Lord and the hope she could have in Christ. As the conversation wound down, they each moved on. Next, it was a bilingual juggler who caught Veronica's attention. He explained how Christ could make all the difference for life and for eternity. The juggler explained clearly how to seize the opportunity to connect with Christ ... to receive life abundant and life eternal.

Veronica melted. She knew this was it! She knew the whole festival was for her. She realized she was the perfect candidate to hear this message — she desperately needed it! She received Christ as her Savior right then and there. She had thought a festival might cheer her up, but man! This was cheer on steroids! She began a whole new life, full of hope!

Elsewhere at the festival, a 17-year-old I'll call Ricardo was desperate, too. He has no father, there was no money in the house, and the outlook was terribly bleak. Things were so bad that his mom had tried to take her own life — it was only Ricardo's intervention that saved her.

But the family was still deep in the danger zone. How could he help his mom? How could he tell her something she didn't already know, to give her enough hope to carry on?

No one seemed to care; no one seemed to really be interested in them. Even the professionals who had dealt with her suicide attempt seemed to offer passing clichés about perspectives on life.

Lost in his thoughts amid the laughter of the festival crowds, Ricardo came across a team of "strong men" presenting various feats. But instead of selling vitamins or minerals, the men began to talk about the "strength of the Lord," a strength you can really rely on.

Instantly, Ricardo knew that he needed this strength. He received Christ on the spot — unaware of what was happening to his mother at the same time...

**At that moment,
she was receiving Christ too.
*His mother was Veronica!***

Today, Veronica and Ricardo are attending the new church-plant at Criswell College!

My friend, our mission field is gargantuan. It's not just overseas, and it's not just here at home. Christ's commission to us is very clear: "You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8). We are to saturate every sphere with the life-giving Gospel!

How did Veronica and Ricardo find Jesus? It began with a single anonymous donor, who in his own words wanted to "touch the community": he sponsored the festival ... "just for obedience's sake"! No one asked him to. No one made him do it. He simply responded to what God spoke to his heart as he read his Bible!

He didn't know how a festival would be produced; he just knew he wanted to do it. He



didn't know how it would be received, but that wasn't the point. Obedience was the point. So he did it! Now the deed is done, and for scores of people who attended, eternity has been changed forever!

I write you today to joyfully challenge you to be obedient to your calling in Christ in 2012 ... to become a “change agent” for eternity!

Of course, I realize that the world often masks the reality of God's provision for us. Fear of the future and fear of uncertainty can paralyze us for the tasks of obedience that God has prepared for us. But we can see how God intends to help us, in the promise of Isaiah 41:13:

“For I am the Lord your God who takes hold of your right hand and says to you, Do not fear; I will help you.”

Even though there are wars and rumors of wars ... even though there may be fears for economies and uncertainty about what lies ahead ... it is a comfort to know — not only will He be with us, but He *is* with us! He will lead us by the hand, and He will help us continually!

Sure, life has a way of intimidating us into thinking that we should build a bunker around ourselves. We could easily become convinced that these are not the times for venturing out far from our security zones. We need the power of the promise of Isaiah! In those days, the people of Israel were surrounded by enemy nations (nothing seems to change!) — and Israel was no super power back then: They were smaller than anyone else.

But God promised that Israel would defeat all those nations — and not by any strength within herself: *“Do not be afraid, you worm Jacob, little Israel, do not fear, for I myself will help you, declares the Lord, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel”* (Isaiah 41:14).

The beauty and comfort of this passage are that even though Israel was weak — as little as a worm — the mighty God promised to be with them in the midst of the fight! He will be their Protector, defeating the enemy nations. We've seen God fulfill this promise over and over down through history. (Think about 1967, when in just six days, all the Arab nations gathered against Israel were defeated!)

**This promise is for
you and me, too!**

Look at the title God uses in delivering the promise. You might expect Him to refer to Himself as YAHWEH Sabaoth— The Lord of the Armies of Heaven. But no. He calls Himself “the Lord your Redeemer.” Why? He's focused on His relationship with those whom He has bought, and at a terribly high price: the blood of the Lamb!

Israel was purchased out of Egypt by the blood of the Passover Lamb ... and you and I were purchased by the blood of THE LAMB!

We are His.

The Lord our Redeemer will protect and defend His property.

No wonder He is with us!

And we must be with Him ... we must stay in step with our Redeemer, our Defender, in this new year. He wants to lead us “by the hand” through these complex times and into the fullness of His agenda for us. Our Redeemer has enlisted us in the Ministry of Reconciliation to redeem many others. This agenda for 2012 has been set from the beginning of time!

The clock is already in motion. The sands of time are flowing. The works are there for us to do ... prepared by The One who is before time and beyond time.

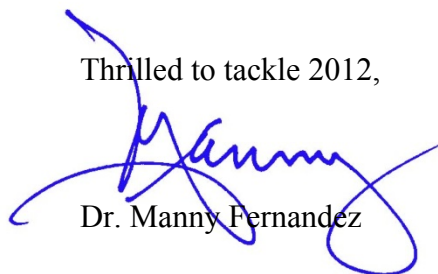
Now ... will we trust Him to provide, as we obey, as we stretch out in faith, to give and to serve?

We have a full portfolio of eternal investments to make this year. We need to plant churches in numerous communities and train and deploy workers in various countries. I need your help right now to get underway with our God-given 2012 agenda:

- In Spain, a scholarship for training and deploying a national worker is \$200 this month, and each month this year.
- In Cuba, a church-plant takes just \$25 each month.
- A church-plant in China requires \$100 per month.
- You can plant a church in Israel with a gift of \$1,000 today, and each month.
- A church in Cuba needs a roof: you could provide it with a gift of \$1,700.

But whatever God’s agenda may be for you, you will be a real blessing, you will make a real impact on eternity, by giving a generous tax-deductible contribution today. Hold on to His hand, step into 2012, and act NOW ... “just for obedience’s sake”! I look forward to hearing from you soon. God bless you!

Thrilled to tackle 2012,



Dr. Manny Fernandez

P.S. Let us pursue God’s 2012 agenda “just for obedience’s sake”! Let us be like that anonymous donor who decided to “touch the community” just because of what he’d been reading in the Bible ... and see what God will do through our faith-filled giving. Thank you in advance for embracing His calling “to do good works which God prepared in advance”!