



I pray you're doing well and rejoicing in the goodness of the Lord as another year of school and ministry begins. I'm rejoicing! *This letter brings GOOD NEWS!*

September 1, 2013

Dearest Ministry Prayer Partner!

Back to school!

It's that time of year.

As we prepare for another season of training and ministry, there's excitement in the air ... I'm REJOICING as I write you this letter, because of what I'm seeing all around me: Harvest! Multiplication of ministry! Dedicated young leaders eagerly plunging in to studies and to ministry! And supernatural ROI — return on investment!

This school year promises to be our most exciting — our most productive — ever.

It could have been different. I could have had the unhappy task of writing you a sad letter full of confusion and complications. It was only a few months ago that the government of Spain shocked us by making impossible demands on our school in Madrid....

In order to gain official accreditation, we would have to fully comply with the university system's policy on sexual behavior. We could not express the biblical view on homosexuality. We would also be required to train homosexuals, as well as people of other religious beliefs — even atheists.

We would have welcomed the challenge of academic compliance with the state university system ... but compliance on these non-academic matters of secular policy was out of the question.

So we turned down accreditation for our school in Spain. It was a sad day, deeply disturbing. Spain has a terrible dearth of well-trained ministers. In fact, the number of those holding earned degrees can literally be counted on one hand. *What could God have in mind for His work in Spain?*

Well, **God answered!** Almost before we could “get our bearings,” our friends at Criswell College made us an amazing offer: *full Presidential scholarships* for our students who wanted to pursue the next level of training in the U.S.! Tremendous!

Since that day, it's been an adventure — events unfolding rapidly at every turn! And now, barely a week from today as I write you, graduates will start showing up for this thrilling new school year!...

Francisco and Diana — This bright young man attended our seminary in Madrid; his wife finished our evening program. They've developed a growing ministry in various cities of Spain as well as places as far away as India and as sophisticated as Finland and England.

The president of Criswell College, meeting Francisco and Diana for the first time, immediately knew he wanted them to get their Master's degrees at Criswell. He arranged a Presidential scholarship — and as you read these words, we're helping this promising young couple make preparations to move from Madrid to attend Criswell!

This graduate degree program will enable Francisco and Diana to be even more powerfully effective in making disciples for years to come. This is Francisco's heartbeat: to make more disciples. He already has plans for after completion of his Master's degree: he wants to return to Madrid and join us in *multiplying disciples*.

This is not just the product of his own imagination. This is not just an idea he picked up as he traveled the world in ministry, from Brazil to Europe, from India to the U.S. *This is the calling of God.* Francisco looked into the Word and discovered that the most strategic thing he could do would be to **leverage his life**— multiplying his personal impact on the world — by making more disciples.

He has grown to see the genius of what Jesus sent us to do: "Go to all the world and make disciples, teaching them to obey all that I command you" (Matthew 28). This "Master plan" demonstrates a classical strategy: We can multiply exponentially— and reach out to staggering numbers of people!

Danny and Carol — They've also received a Presidential scholarship. They've distinguished themselves with very high academic achievement as well as a frontline church-planting ministry. Their dream? To go back to their native province in Spain and launch a Gospel movement that will revive the whole region!

See how beautifully the "Master plan" works? Danny and Carol will replicate themselves in the lives of countless thousands of others. I have only one life to live, but as I dedicate my life to making disciples — as I *leverage* my life for the cause of Christ — the power of the Gospel multiplies into hundreds and thousands of lives that will have an eternal legacy!

Our Basque ministry director — This young man is stellar. Married with two children, he is immersed in growing the largest and fastest-growing church in the San Sebastian and North of Spain region. His many overlapping time commitments made it impossible for him to take years off for graduate school in the U.S. But thankfully the grad school at Criswell's sister institution has a full online program! Our Basque director has already completed the first course!

I want you to understand how tremendous all of this is for our ministry in Spain and beyond. To have Spaniards and other ministers serving in Spain with recognized international degrees will be a dream come true. And the three couples I've introduced to you are only the first among more than a dozen who are already on their way!

I thank God — and I thank you — because every one of these couples, like the many other students we've worked with, are lives in whom **you invested first**. You prayed. You gave. You enabled us to welcome them, to train them, to dream with them, to equip them to go out into the world and *make disciples*.

Through your prayers and giving, you leveraged your own life, so that they may leverage theirs.

So here we are again at the beginning of another sowing and reaping "cycle." They are coming to us, even as you read these words, not only in Spain but all around the world! Another class is due to graduate in nine months. And it won't be only "class work." Between now and then, ministry will be continuous.

I write you today to ask you to specifically and personally be part of this whole adventure once again. We need your help. We need you to be here with us, to join in the service of the Lord. The stakes are high. *This is a "Shechem moment"...*

Shechem is where Joshua, a dying man, called God's people together at the end of the book of Joshua, to review the blessings, the victories, and the faithfulness of God to His people. The choice of Shechem as the location is hugely significant, because this is the very same place where Abraham received the promises of God centuries before. It was right here at Shechem that God said to Abraham, "To you and to your descendants I will give this land" (Genesis 12:7). It was here at Shechem that Abraham built an altar to the Lord, to commemorate the event.

Then, some 700 years later, God takes up the discourse again, through Joshua. He appeals to the people to "choose whom they will serve" — not on the basis of a mere 50-year record, but on the basis of the *700-year relationship!* These folks were not here at Shechem when He promised descendants and land to Abraham. They are here as the promised descendants — on the land God fought to give to them in fulfillment of the promise. The enemies have been conquered and the land is in God's people's hands!

Based on the delivery on this profound promise, they are being confronted with the decision to serve the Promise-Keeping God, to take a new lease on a new land. As God brings up the subject, there is a tacit statement that the people have not served the Lord without the intrusion of foreign gods and foreign people. Now God presents them with a clear opportunity to serve Him with a clear focus and a clear purpose.

The word "serve" shows up more than a dozen times in this short passage. "Service" here has to do with a life of wholehearted devotion and a commitment to live for the fulfillment of God's will. But in the busy-ness of our daily routines, we often find ourselves almost in survival mode. It seems like it takes all our effort "just to live." Everything seems important and necessary.

I remember a college counselor who sat with me to take stock of where my time and resources were being spent. I couldn't believe that he even wanted to know how many hours I was sleeping! He wanted to know and count and account for EVERYTHING!

But by the time he was done researching and fine-tuning my life and my resources, he had actually found for me time and resources for all the “important things.” He even found one hour a week for me to watch my favorite TV show!

As I looked at this new, proposed life-schedule, however, my youthful reaction to him was not too bright: “I don’t live like that.” “Exactly,” he replied. “That’s why we’re having this talk.”

The challenge I bring you today, at the beginning of this new ministry year, is the same challenge the counselor brought to me: to focus your resources on what’s truly important.

It’s the same challenge Joshua brought to God’s people: Will you “serve the Lord”?

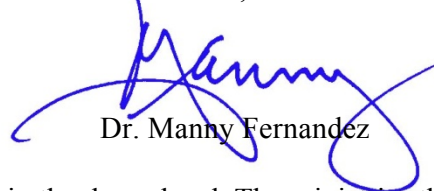
Will you leverage your life and your resources for the God-given priority of *making disciples*?

The students are streaming in — first-year students, experienced church-planters, and everybody in-between. They are following God’s call. They want to make their lives count for eternity. Every time I see their hopeful faces, and their enthusiasm, I want to be there for them. I am grateful to be someone God has called to help give them the best possible chance of leveraging their lives for God.

I believe God has called you to this work as well. We need you again today, to help us train them and deploy them. Along the way, we need to house them and feed them. They are signing on with their whole lives aimed at eternity. Will you also, aiming at eternity, afford them this training? Will you also serve the Promise-Keeping God with your life and resources as they are aiming to do?

Please help us to launch and sustain this ministry year with a wholehearted commitment, which God will use to leverage all of our lives for eternal gains. Let us hear from you today with your heartfelt response to the Promise-Keeping God. Thank you! God bless you!

In His train,



Dr. Manny Fernandez

P.S. I believe we will see great things in the days ahead. The ministries that you make possible through your generous response today will multiply thousands of times over in the lives touched and transformed through the “Master plan”! Thank you again for being part of the adventure!