

October 1, 2012

Dear Ministry Prayer Partner,

May the Lord in His goodness protect and defend you. May He make His face to shine upon you and your loved ones.

Greetings from Chennai, India (formerly Madras)! I would like to start however, *by giving you "a rest of the story" account from Cuba!* I believe you will rejoice to receive this amazing true chapter of **the Lord's strong protection** of His servants in the field....

I was eager to visit a church we had the joy of helping to plant — now one of the fastest-growing churches in the country — but Pastor Felipe met us sadly at the door of the church. He was turning away more than 150 people who wanted to attend the service. They simply could not accommodate any more people — there were already 300 people crammed inside!

But that evening, after the service, Felipe began to share the mighty things that God had been doing....

Rewind to Friday morning:

A man in the neighborhood visits Felipe to complain about the noise and commotion caused by the church meetings. Felipe tries to explain that they are taking measures to minimize any inconvenience to their neighbors. The man is far from satisfied. He suggests that maybe he should start slapping Felipe around, to knock some sense into him!

Felipe's response is calm ... and spiritually calculating: "If you start slapping me around, I guess I'm just going to have to take it. But you need to know that up there, I have a God much bigger than you — and sooner or later, He will deal out to you *much more than you can deal out to me*." The man walks off, making threats as he goes.

Two hours later:

The same man suffers a heart attack! Friends rush him to the hospital. By God's grace, the doctors are able to save his life. Felipe is told what has happened. He immediately sends deacons to visit the man, to comfort him until Felipe can visit personally.

Felipe finally arrives:

But he does not greet the patient in the usual polite way. He picks up the dialogue where they left off before! Our strong 30-year-old pastor friend sees his would-be aggressor in bed, with IVs in his arms, and asks him a simple, direct question: "So what do you want to do now?"

The man replies, with equal simplicity: "I want to receive Jesus and be a Christian."

When I heard this incredible testimony, I felt like hanging a shingle over Cuba that reads: “Caution, God at Work!”

This story reminds me of the rapid growth of the church in the New Testament, where the Holy Spirit was so obviously at work. Ananias and Sapphira thought that life could be handled in a “normal,” spiritually mediocre way. They thought they could gently tip the scales their way and, in a single act, gain the admiration of the people — as well as put away a little fund for their own needs.

When the work of the Lord is this *patently obvious*, it should be evident that we need to engage reverently in whatever ministry He is showing us to do. Think of the cautionary signs around roadwork: “Fines double when workers present.” We need one that reads: “Warning: Stakes are highest when God is present!”

That’s God at work in Cuba ... Now let me fast-forward you to India!

I have been teaching in Chennai, where God ALSO has impressive God-size activities going on! I’ve been teaching apologetics, and the time has been exceptionally good. The Indians have an incredibly humble and sweet disposition. They are also very diligent at absorbing the subject. They devour what I teach them! (And they take every opportunity to pepper me with questions well beyond the subject we are covering!)

I’ve also come to connect with Saroop, a ministry friend who operates micro-businesses — involving dairy cows — to fund ministry in various villages. Saroop uses the cows to help lepers escape their indigent lifestyle and become self-sufficient.

The initiative began as Saroop was speaking to elder leaders in the leper colonies. They listened patiently as Saroop advised them that all he wanted to do was to be a servant to them, to help care for them and their families....

At an appropriate moment, one of the leaders offered him some tea. Saroop accepted. As the leader disappeared to get the tea, Saroop was feeling pretty good, feeling as if he were making progress. Then the leader reappeared; and Saroop saw that he was carrying the glass of hot tea in an awkward way. The man had grabbed the glass by the rim — and had deliberately placed a finger, covered with infected sores, into the tea!

He placed the glass in front of Saroop. Aware that a challenge had been issued, Saroop decided to calmly answer it. He simply drank the tea, right down to its dregs! *Thank you for the tea!*

Saroop will joyfully tell you today that he is serving 52 leper colonies!

My friend, my letter to you today is not limited to one geographical location because **God is not limited to one geographical location**. *God leaves His fingerprints wherever in the world we happen to join Him*. So this “God Report” is about His work — His servants —

and the heroics and victories of His servants wherever we follow Him.

It is an enormous privilege to be on the team with all these people. It is also a privilege that God means for you and us to share together. “All these,” He says— speaking about the great heroes of the faith — “having gained approval through their faith, did not receive what was promised, because God had provided *something better for us*, so that apart from us they would not ***be made perfect***” (Hebrews 11:39,40).

What does this mean? It means *as we enter into the work of faith, we are being made perfect*.

Just as we do not outsource our obedience and our service, we do not outsource our joy and rewards for that obedience and blessing. *God wants you and me to be part and parcel of the work, as legitimate sons and daughters with these brothers and sisters in the field.*

Sure, you are hundreds or even thousands of miles away from the developments I’ve described ... but ***you have had a personal part in them!***...

At the compound where we’re staying, from which I’m writing you this letter, two of us are teaching. Fernando Dantas, the other teacher, is our very own graduate from our Madrid Seminary in Spain. This is a student whom we trained and who just graduated a couple of years ago!

Your support of the ministry over the last few years has helped to train him— and has now led him to a bigger platform in Asia: from Madrid to Madras! In fact, this graduate Fernando is the one who has been after me, for more than three years, to get involved in ministry in India! **You planted, we watered, and Fernando is reaping a harvest of souls ... to your credit.**

This is without a doubt what the Lord had in mind as the fulfillment of the Great Commission. He wants us to take the things that we heard from Him, in the presence of many witnesses, and entrust them to faithful men — who will also be qualified to teach others, just as Paul admonished us in 2 Timothy 2:2.

We are doing it — you and I, and Fernando, and our many trained graduates and church planters ... our entire ministry family ... together!

And we continue in the flow of God’s work, as we continue to meet the incoming classes, each new year, and faithfully train them, deploying them to serve the Lord.

And now for the next adventure....

As I write this letter to you, I am only hours away from another flight — to Spain, to launch the new ministry year there: We’ll restart our extension in the Canary Islands, and begin the ministry in the Madrid area as well.

We will need new housing and start-up expenses for all the necessary supplies. My preaching class alone has 20 or more students. The incoming class is expected to be larger than ever.

So we need your help, as a special friend ... one who has a heart for the Great Commission and the work that God has entrusted to us together. Your generosity today will help us to meet the challenges and seize the opportunities which the Lord brings to us, His children ... that they may be “made perfect” as we share with them, and that we may also share in the victories that together will be ours!

Preparing for a new year of ministry, of training, of spiritual warfare — and yes, victories — I feel a little like Joshua, as God told him (and I paraphrase): “I am going to be sending a lot of kings and armies your way. Be ready, be strong and very courageous, I will be with you!”

The rest is history. Joshua found himself in a “boring” chapter, counting a long list of conquered kings: “The king of Jericho, one; the king of Ai, one; the king of Jerusalem, one; the king of Hebron, one....” God had enabled Joshua to conquer 31 kings bigger and stronger than he was!

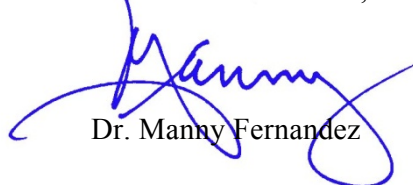
This I claim for your ministry and mine, today, together.

May the Lord glorify Himself in the victories He will bring in the year ahead.
May we respond like our counterparts in Cuba and India and elsewhere.
May we cheerfully join Him as He rallies all of us for yet another year of victories.

We, together with them, will be made perfect!

Please help us by giving generously ... to launch another Fernando. To launch the Canary Islands extension. To launch Pastor Felipe’s ten new church-planting pastors. To accomplish whatever God-size activity the Lord has in mind! Let us hear from you today!

Sold out to serve Him,



Dr. Manny Fernandez

P.S. Caution! God at work! Warning: Stakes are highest when God is present! *I am smiling as I send this letter off to you! **It is a joyful adventure that the Lord has called us into together!*** “Let us rejoice and be glad in it.” I look forward to hearing from you and receiving your generous contribution to the proven-powerful outreaches that God has seen fit to raise up through our united efforts!