



January 1, 2021

Dear Ministry Partner,

I bring you good news: We can have a happy 2021!

Dr. Henry Brandt, a great pioneer of Christian counseling, taught that we can choose how we will respond to any situation. He was echoing the apostle Paul who offered in Romans 8 a litany of sufferings—but then concluded that in all of this, *we are greatly victorious* through Him who loved us!

If we have the “God perspective” on our circumstances, we can be joyful—come what may—in this new year! **Welcome to it!** May the Lord grant you overwhelming victories in the year ahead!

However. . .

**There will be many voices vying for our attention this year.  
What will we hear? Which messages will we respond to?**

*I hope you will give me the next two minutes to suggest a new year strategy for you. . . .*

Let me begin by telling you about Unai Arretxe. I’ve already introduced him in times past—a graduate of our seminary from long ago and for years now, a tremendously effective minister to the Basque people. . . .

Unai himself is a Basque (whose name means “Shepherd from the Stone House”) from the Basque city of Donostia (or San Sebastián in Spanish) on the north coast of Spain, only a few miles from the French border.

When Unai was a little boy, his mother became a believer and began taking Unai and his three brothers to church. *God grew a leader.* When he was a young man, his hair came down to the middle of his back—and he was into playing multiple musical instruments and break-dancing (a craze in those days)—yet all hugely successful tactics of evangelism in his hometown.

He understood the Basque heart, the Basque mindset, the Basque way of life more completely than any outsider ever could.

Today, in pursuit of a greater vision, with a heartfelt desire to accomplish evangelism and church-planting on a larger scale—Unai has asked to join World Link in an official capacity and to work through our platform.

*This is truly a breakthrough. To effectively reach the Basque people, it will be a phenomenal advantage to have a true Basque as a member of our team!* The potential for greater impact for the Lord has jumped into high gear!

But Unai will need to be ***sent***. Romans 10:15 demands an answer . . . to paraphrase: “How will they go unless they are sent?” *Sending* means *equipping and supporting* the one who is sent.

**Down through the years we have seen firsthand the power of God’s “sending” plan—as committed Christian friends like you have ***sent*** workers into the field. . . .**

- Alexandra, a graduate of our program in Spain, serves with our seminary in Madrid; yet she has also facilitated the planting of three churches around Madrid, while maintaining a ministry to orphans in her native country of Ecuador! *How were her amazing ministries born? Alexandra’s heart cried, “**Send me!**” Someone like you gave to send her.*
- Ruslan Khmyz, a graduate of Kiev Theological Seminary, has served with us for 20 years in Ukraine. He has directed our church-planting work in partnership with the seminary and now serves as seminary president. Igor, one of our program’s top church-planters, now steps up as church planting director! *Did these leaders move into ministry under their own power? No. Their hearts cried, “**Send me!**” Someone like you **sent** them.*
- Roberto Chenk, our Brazilian coordinator, is a bold witness to the truth. His address to missionary agency leaders began with this frank statement: “Brazilian missions has failed.” I expected those leaders to wince, or recoil, or dissent. But they simply nodded in agreement.

Roberto proceeded to declare that if World Link Ministries succeeded in planting 600 churches and nothing more, we would have achieved the greatest results anyone in Brazil had ever imagined. Today, two years later, after opening five training venues across Brazil, we have more than 600 church plants underway!

(The glory is the Lord’s. He is the one who said, “I will build my church.” We simply have the privilege of being invited to be part of His team, joining with the Father, the Son and the Spirit.)

As you read these words, Roberto is leading the network of kindred hearts and spirits joyfully engaged in our train-and-deploy strategy throughout that gigantic country.

***How did it all begin? It began with a heart’s cry: “Send me!” And someone like you with a vision for God’s work, with a heart for evangelism and church-planting, engaged in the crucial ministry of sending.***

- When I first met Chandra, along with his wife and three children, they were hard at work in a vast country in South Asia—a place so hostile to Christianity, I can’t even reveal its name for security purposes.

But 70 students had gathered for our ministry training. Chandra and his wife cheerfully worked on multiple fronts—housing, feeding, counseling and shepherding students. (Chandra’s wife and her sister led the cooking team, the best food I had ever tasted—three times a day for the entire week!)

Three years later, Chandra established a partnership with two other leaders and invited us to provide training. Their goal was to establish 150 churches each, a total of 450—in the midst of hostile territory!

***It began with someone like you, sending.***

- In central Cuba, two of our most dynamic team leaders are a husband-and-wife team, Hanoi and Daimi. Hanoi's father loved music; his mother loved evangelism—so Hanoi and his brother love music and do lots of evangelism!

Daimi, meanwhile, is the best singer I've heard in Cuba in the last 20 years. She's barely five feet tall, but she sings with powerful passion. The couple has traveled all over Cuba conducting evangelistic events for our teams for the last 20 years.

I could fill pages with examples of the great things God does when you send. I feel like the author of the Book of Hebrews, perhaps running out of ink!—yet energized by the vision of God's mighty work:

“And what more shall I say? For time will fail me if I tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets,

“who by faith conquered kingdoms, performed *acts of righteousness*, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions,

“quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, from weakness were made strong, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight” (Hebrews 11:32-34).

**But it all begins with sending.**

*“How will they go unless they are sent?”*

It's a very, very old question. All the way back in Isaiah 6:8, God is asking, “Who will go for us?” The prophet Isaiah steps up: “Here am I,” he answers. **“Send me.”**

These are sweet words to God's ears—not because He needs help, but because He longs for us to be in His family, sharing in the blessings of relationship with Him! Jesus understood this. “My Father is at His work until this very day,” He said in John 5:17, “and thus I work.” He was engaged in the Father's business as a loving Son.

*We are at our best when we enter into our fold as beloved family members, entering fully into the Father's work!*

- Many wrongly think of “sending” as a weak link in the equation of God's work. Those who work on the front lines, out in the field, may seem to be the heroes. But God Himself is a “sender”! He sent His Son into the world. The Christmas that we just celebrated crystallizes the message that loving leads to sending:

“In this is love,” 1 John 4:10 explains: “not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son.”

Sending is not somehow less important than other functions of love. Sending is the critical first step of love!

Indeed, God has made sending a priority for the past 2,020 years!

And just as the COVID-19 vaccine is the object of a gargantuan, lifesaving mobilization effort, the Gospel must be sent out continually.

Workers are crying from the depths of their hearts, “**Send me!**” The only question is will we hear them in the midst of all the noise of our world today? *Will we answer their cry?*

**I urge you to begin this new year with a renewed commitment to your critically important role in God’s work: the sending role. Please give generously today.**

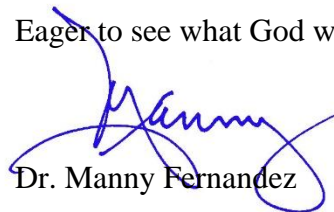
Let this be your New Year’s resolution, your personal ministry strategy for the new year. Join with the company of great heroes of Hebrews 11.

“Brethren, join in following my example,” as Paul wrote in Philippians 3:17, “and observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us.” Do your part in the sending of the life-giving Gospel.

Let’s stay in step with the Father in the work of reconciliation . . . and with the Son who will be with us always until the end of the age . . . and with the Spirit who came to lead us and to come alongside us, to encourage us and coach us moment by moment.

Let us make the most of 2021, for Jesus’ sake. I look forward to hearing from you and receiving **your generous sending gift** to launch this new year! God bless you!

Eager to see what God will do,



Dr. Manny Fernandez

P.S. Our culture’s commercial approach to Christmas teaches us this, if nothing else: Without a sender, no package gets delivered. Let your love for God, and your love for a lost world, spring into action through your personal ministry of sending. Thank you again!