



September 1, 2021

Dear Ministry Partner,

Warm greetings in the Savior! May the Lord grant you and your loved ones a fresh vision of His purpose and His work—and instill in you true enthusiasm and meaning for the new season of ministry before us!

Do I seem to be bubbling over with joy? I am! *I have seen God move mightily this summer!*

I just got back from Spain and Ukraine, and I am greatly blessed by what I saw—and how we were able to make ready for the year of ministry ahead.

- In the Canary Islands, God has given us a *gem* . . . a brilliant new leader for the work there: Samuel is a dear brother who has been a pastor all his career—and is a scholar in every sense of the word. I wish you could meet him in person! Let me introduce this extraordinary man of God. . . .

Samuel has taught two or three times a year at our Madrid campus. He's a favorite of the students because of his love for them and his warm, pastoral interest in their lives. Samuel has a voracious hunger for learning—he reads an average of two books a week!

Yet despite all his growing knowledge, he is a very humble man. There is not an authoritarian bone in his body. He is committed to being a servant for life. His power with students and others is not the power of “authority” but the power of love and friendship. (He's also a great cook and a superb baker!)

He has pastored with wonderful success in northeastern Spain for nearly 20 years. As he felt led to move on, we saw how God clearly guided him to join us, lining up everything perfectly for him to take on this new assignment in the Canaries. Everyone who knows Samuel is rejoicing that God's man for the hour will soon arrive!

It's my great joy to look ahead and see clearly what a phenomenal impact he is going to make in developing student groups in the islands of the Canaries archipelago.

- Meanwhile, at our seminary in Madrid, Spain, we're thrilled to see God moving us toward the acquisition of a new campus.

Our seminary there is 30 years old. It's been a real pilgrimage—beginning in rented offices, then rented space in a church; and then we bought our own building but outgrew it, and unfortunately it wasn't a space where we could build anymore. Since we sold that building, we've operated out of two churches.



*A home of our own was urgently needed—because our Madrid seminary has grown to become an international hub. **This seminary is yours. You helped to establish it.** And its impact has been felt literally around the world.*

The students here are not only Spaniards, as we first expected. The Madrid school has been swamped with Europeans, Latin Americans, Australians and New Zealanders, Africans, and students from the U.S.!—because of the quality of instruction and preparedness for ministry that students receive here.

Some who have previously graduated from U.S. seminaries but then come to classes in Madrid have told us candidly that they never learned or understood certain important lessons of Scripture and ministry until they studied with us at Madrid. They weren't simply flattering us; they were surprised to learn more at Madrid than they had in America! (So was I! Surprised, and grateful!)

Our Madrid seminary has also welcomed a steady stream of students from Catalonia in northeastern Spain. There's a longstanding traditional rivalry between Catalonia and Madrid. It's a provincialist dispute in which I will not engage. But I can't deny this fact: The oldest evangelical seminary is in Catalonia, yet students have chosen to attend our institution.

It's been very gratifying to share with these dear Catalonian brothers and sisters, lovingly and objectively, biblical principles and practices and theological skills. Some have been shocked to discover that the Bible states the apostle Paul wanted to come to Spain, not Catalonia! They even wanted help looking at the original *Greek*—just to make sure we had not mistranslated the true meaning! (Spain? How can it be?)

There have been many, many lessons shared and learned. And I'm happy to report that we are better friends and Christians having learned from one another. Every group and nation represented in our Madrid student body has left richer, and with greater effectiveness in ministry, **thanks to the training and education that you afforded them through your faithful and generous giving!**

But it has been more and more difficult to operate without a campus of our own. Now we are working to remedy the situation . . . hoping to make it the next great achievement in our seminary's journey. The harsh COVID-19 economy is actually bringing the opportunity closer; it appears that soon the Lord will help us make our move.

Over the years, we have concentrated on quality education and on effectiveness in evangelism and church-planting. But education and a campus are not an "either-or" proposition. As we follow the Lord's leading, and as God's people give, we can have both, for His glory, for the sake of the harvest!

- In Ukraine, my initial objective was mundane: meeting a bank deadline for renewing our credentials in the country. But there I saw what God is doing in Ukraine—and it's far from mundane!

I expected things to be gloomy because of the war and Russia's escalating aggression. The Russian army has set up forces along the entire eastern border of Ukraine; they're gathering strength before unleashing what promises to be a major offensive. Russia is quite sure the U.S. will not do anything to oppose them.

But our ministry in Ukraine is not mundane, and the believers there are not gloomy! They're clearly focused on the Lord and on the task of the Great Commission.

Yes, they're aware that the Russians and Ukraine's pro-Russian administration will probably soon turn the country over to a new Soviet coalition. But our brothers and sisters in Ukraine are finding great comfort, hope, and motivation in building *God's* kingdom—which is the one that will prevail.

I got to see church planters in their element! Our team visited church plants to the north and south of Kyiv (surprising workers as we showed up)—and saw firsthand their wonderful ministry activities as they grow their churches!

- One young couple who started a church in our program has graduated—and built a church building. Their campus spans several acres. The day I visited, I saw 125 children and many adult volunteers conducting a Bible day camp. The kids were having a wonderful time enjoying the great program.

But the vision isn't finished. This team intends to plant four, five, possibly as many as six more churches in surrounding areas!

Another great surprise was to discover a couple in our program that is planting churches by organizing drug rehabilitation centers. They build a “house of prayer” related to each rehab center. Each house of prayer is essentially a small building capable of housing a church of some 100 people.

They have *seven such centers so far*—and they could easily see their way to reproducing dozens more. They were energized when I told them how a friend has established more than 100 “Betel Rehab” centers in Spain and 30 other countries. This connection—with Betel serving as a model—will be hugely valuable to the ministry in Ukraine. They wanted more time, more answers, more opportunity!

It happens everywhere we go—powered by your love and generosity!

Everywhere I turn, I see people engaged in wonderful ministries—whatever the Lord has shown them to do. **They are in “our” program, but *they take their cues directly from the Lord.*** They multiply as He shows them the opportunities. They don't stop to wait for us to approve or to weigh in—they simply go to work on the opportunities that come to their doorstep.

Time and time again I see that we are a tapestry of God's very own design. The tapestry is made up of every one of us. I am in it—the workers in the field are in it—and **you are in it.** We all are responding to Him. We are all aiming to please Him simply by doing our part.

Paul talked about you in 1 Corinthians 3!

- 5 “What then is Apollos? And what is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, even as the Lord gave *opportunity* to each one.
- 6 I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth.
- 7 So then neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but God who causes the growth.
- 8 Now he who plants and he who waters are one; but each will receive his own reward according to his own labor.
- 9 For we are God’s fellow workers. . . .” (1 Cor. 3 NASB)

Ukraine may have a new fate politically, *but the Ukraine of God that will endure to eternity is being built up—and you are playing an integral part in it.*

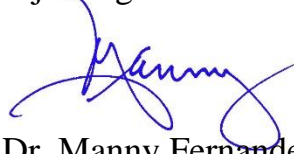
Never let yourself feel that your prayers and gifts are in any way insignificant. You are helping to graduate hundreds—and produce *thousands of churches!* Both ends of the equation are vital: The hidden root is where life is drawn from. The fruit is a marvel to see. *But it is God who causes the growth.*

Paul frames it perfectly in the Spirit: “What is Apollos? What is Paul? . . . We are all *servants!*” Pure and simple and BEAUTIFUL! “God’s fellow workers.” He is the life and the Lord of the harvest. Our joy is to work with Him and with His Son who said, “My Father is working until this day, and thus I work.”

As we look into another wonderful year of life in Him, let us move enthusiastically into the fray! May the Lord be pleased to use us and make us His fellow workers. May we rejoice in the blessing of being part of the equation, as He has called us and appointed us in each place according to His good pleasure.

Please give generously and joyfully again today! Let Him lead you and call out your part in this new season of ministry!

Rejoicing in His service,



Dr. Manny Fernandez

P.S. I wish you could go with me and experience firsthand the happy discovery of all that is being done as you exercise faith, and trust Him who said, “I will build my church.” But I can tell you what you would see: **He is doing it. Please be a part of the adventure today, by giving whatever God has blessed you to be able to give.** Thank you in advance for responding to His leading!