



October 1, 2021

Ministry Partner,

Warm greetings to you and your loved ones! May the Lord give you a special season of refreshment as we head into the last trimester of the year . . . and may the joy of this year's harvest be a great encouragement to you and yours.

This is a happy season, as the world begins to dare to move beyond COVID, venturing out to press on with life. In the wake of the pandemic, all manner of needs and opportunities call out to our ministry!

But in some places, life beyond COVID still seems beyond reach. . . .

I've just been to Brazil, and I'm going back there next month. Even for me, with my incessant travel schedule, this is not normal! But it's necessary—because of the opportunities brewing in that field!

As I arrived in the city of Teresina to teach a course on the Gospels, I found a nation still lurching through the grim extremes of the pandemic. Death is everywhere now, and the country is bracing for the Delta variant—which is expected to hit full force by December.

One denomination alone has lost 380 pastors just in the southeast corner of the country. It's hard to fathom such devastation—nearly 400 churches *suddenly without pastors*.

- **Yet God is at work.**
Eager students received the teaching beautifully.

And to see the work underway was a joy. In places where we understood there to be a church, we often found multiple churches.

I thought one worker was pastoring a church—but found that he has planted, and is overseeing, 11 churches!

Your generous support for the ministry is being multiplied far beyond what we even realize!

After Teresina, I flew south to Natal, a city founded and developed by Americans (perhaps because of the miles and miles of beaches). Ministry in this region is going strong. Targino—a former bank president, now a pastor—is developing a large and growing church.

The people of the church are happy for such great local ministry, but they're also painfully aware of vast areas across the region where *there is no Gospel witness*. They've identified 22 cities where churches urgently need to be planted. First step: train church planters.



There's no question about their passion! As I write you this letter, I've been interrupted three times by Targino calling and texting!

"I am keeping you informed about the march of the plans for our training of church planters here," he says. "We are very animated and hopeful about what God has in mind to do through World Link here in our state in Brazil. May God bless it all!"

And Targino's church is only one among several brimming with enthusiasm and high hopes, joining together to target 22 cities and saturate their entire state with the Gospel. In just a few days, we'll begin training ardent young men and women from these churches to become effective church planters.

If we had only launched new works in Teresina and Natal, we could have rejoiced. But Teresina and Natal, as it turned out, were only the beginning of what God had in store.

He has now set in motion new outreaches up and down the entire eastern seaboard!

**It began years ago with a Brazilian gentleman
who came to faith late in life. . . .**

He always wished he had found Christ years earlier so he could have given his entire life to evangelism. But he was gratified to see his son Rubens go into full-time ministry, and his grandson RJ as well. (RJ has become one of our highly effective church planters!) The godly grandpa often joined Rubens and RJ in their ministry outreaches and always cheered them on.

Meanwhile, even though he had no seminary training, the elderly gentleman devoted himself to sharing the Gospel everywhere he went. As Rubens proudly described it to me, as his father approached the end of his earthly journey, he relentlessly confronted younger Christians about the silence of their witness.

"I have led 36 people to the Lord in my life," he often declared. "They are going to heaven with me. How many have *you* led to the Lord?"

Again and again, he called believers to step up to their responsibility as witnesses of the Gospel.

And then, a beautiful example of God's divine timing: While I was there in Brazil, hearing from Rubens about his father's bombastic witness, his father—at the age of 92—stepped into glory.

Certainly Rubens is carrying forward his father's legacy of exuberant evangelism. In recent years, he has been partnering with a Swiss missions organization to direct a camp ministry. Rubens has made the camp an evangelism powerhouse!

However—I am astonished to report—the Swiss missions group is uncomfortable with bold evangelism; they've come to regard Rubens as too "aggressive." The camp should be a staid, sophisticated conference center in their view, with a more "moderate" leader.

Rubens just smiles. He knows that Jesus said, “Go out into the highways and along the hedges, and *compel* them to come in.” He stopped short of making people do something against their will, but *persuasion* was definitely in order!

So this highly experienced leader, so passionate about evangelism, will leave the Swiss mission camp behind—and guide our ministry along the entire eastern seaboard!

This is God’s perfect timing. I’ve known Rubens for three years, when I met him on my first trip to Brazil. I was traveling with an experienced senior pastor; he and I were both profoundly impressed with Rubens’ personality, gifts, and vision. Of all the Brazilian leaders we met, “Rubens was the shining star,” the pastor said.

By the time I arrived in the city this time, our field coordinator was already talking with Rubens—with a deep conviction that an amazing synergy could occur between our mission and Rubens’ gifts to bolster the Brazilian work that the Lord has called us to do!

When I met with Rubens and our team, it was clear that the Holy Spirit had arranged events. We experienced a tremendous “meeting of the minds,” and a coming together of lives and ministries.

We matched hearts and minds in the *Great Vision* department.

We matched hearts and minds in the *Great Strategy* department.

We only needed the *Great Capacity* to pull it off—in other words, funding.

Within days Rubens delivered a full proposed budget for the launching and sustainability of the program. I confess I was bracing myself for something overwhelming. But then I was surprised, and blessed, with how little he requested! He has the heart of a servant—and asked only the salary of a servant. May the Lord help us to treat him right!

Hearing that Rubens was joining our team, my senior pastor friend—the one who called Rubens “the shining star”—immediately pledged one-tenth of his salary! I believe God will provide us another nine like this pastor.

Most of all, I believe God has great things in store for our work in Brazil. We are signing on to serve the Lord and pursue His purposes more diligently than ever. I believe we will see many more people coming to Christ.

Rubens is already hard at work. He has prepared materials for training the new church-planting force. He plans to visit personally with each one on their own turf, to encourage and coach them most effectively. *His church-planting realm is more than 1,200 miles long!* But he is undaunted. He feels he’s been given a new lease on life. He is the incarnation of Philippians 1:21: “For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.”

All the while, your support for the ministry is bearing fruit around the world. Just last night we met virtually with workers in both India and the African nation of Sierra Leone. . . .

It is so energizing to see leaders willing to risk their lives for the Gospel—and witness major breakthroughs as God honors their courage. It's exciting to suddenly become so aware of other worlds, where people are living heroic lives in order to keep on living Christian lives!

An American attendee made this statement as the conference concluded: “In light of all that is going on here”—politically, in the U.S.—“this is such a breath of fresh air!” I agree wholeheartedly. Many Christians in America today feel that the “real action” in the kingdom is *political* action. Yes, we need to be aware of how politics impacts our faith, and we need to vote in line with biblical principles.

But as I'm sure Rubens' father would tell us: *We must not neglect evangelism.*

In contrast with the many issues vying for our attention in these complex times, Jesus made the priority of the Christian life very clear and very simple. “But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness,” He stated in Matthew 6:33, “and all these things will be added to you.”

In these confusing and chaotic days, it's easy to feel that everything is up in the air. Vitriolic political language is the norm. Many seem to have lost their decency. Fundamental truths are being challenged. It's hard to know what will survive the battle for the soul of our country.

Yet “Jesus Christ *is* the same yesterday and today and forever. Do not be carried away by varied and strange teachings; for it is good for the heart to be strengthened by grace.” (Hebrews 13:8-9 NASB)

We must focus our attention on His purpose and maintain our faithfulness in His service. We must join the Lord in His work as we see that the time is drawing near. Please let me hear from you, and please give generously. Keep praying and focus on the kingdom work that is guaranteed to prevail!

His truth is marching on!

Rejoicing in His service,



Dr. Manny Fernandez

P.S. The main thing is that the main thing always **remains** the main thing! Thank you for partnering with us in ministry.