



May 1, 2022

Dear Ministry Partner,

Come back with me to a place I visited in my youth. . . .

I loved visiting my uncle out in the country. He ran the commissariat—basically, the general store—of the United Fruit Company in the east of Guatemala. A train came every so often to unload one or two entire cars full of goods to supply the store and meet the needs of the community.

My sisters and I loved it there with our cousins! We wished our days in that idyllic place would never end!

Then came the day we learned that Robert, the oldest of our cousins, was going to marry the teacher from the local schoolhouse. Their good fortune was almost beyond our imagination. They would live in a brand-new addition built onto the commissariat!

I remember seeing that fabulous structure for the first time. It was so perfectly designed it looked like part of the original construction. This new couple would be settled in the best place in the entire region!

Today, thinking back to those days of my youth, I can't help but recall Jesus' words to His disciples as He prepared them for His departure from earth. Knowing the challenges that the world would present to them, He spoke comfort to them, and to us. . . .

He would go ahead of us, He announced, to prepare a *wedding*—and a *home*.

It was typical in that day to prepare a place in the father's house for a young man who was going to marry. Just like my cousin, the groom would bring his bride to the father's house.

But for you and me, Jesus went further. He told His disciples that He would send an all-powerful Comforter to be with us and guide us. **Yes, He said, we will have tribulation, but we will still find peace in Him.** *This is our expectation and our destiny . . . our true perspective on the future . . . a future that will be ours for eternity.*

Even in the midst of war, of pandemics, of shootings in the cities, all threatening our perspective . . . even as the daily news challenges us to experience fear and anxiety . . . the Lord comforts us with a sense of divine provision. The march of our joint work, and of the growth of the church, is comforting! **God is using the chaos of man's work to show us that we have an anchor in God's Word and God's work!**

The chaos, of course, is real, and it is painful. Our partner Oleg, in UKRAINE, writes of the unceasing attacks:

“Yesterday I came to Kyiv to visit the seminary campus and resolve urgent ministry issues. Now, I'm staying in my house and can hear the hissing whistles of rockets and explosions somewhere in Kyiv. Journalists report that the air defense is shooting down most missiles. Some not. . . .



“Usually, the Russians intensify the shelling every night, so we are waiting for morning. We hope that next day will bring victory and peace for my country! In Jesus, we have the beginning of a new life where Christ is a victor. And His victory is confirmed by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, and we celebrate victory in Him. . . .”

Oleg spent the night in the house he and his wife built brick by brick with their own hands over a period of about three years. Now his country is in shambles and his wife and daughters are in a neighboring country staying at an overcrowded camp. The daughters are begging the father to let them come home. He knows it’s too dangerous in many ways. As I write these words, the invaders are within range of even more cities.

In a horrible development, looters are now robbing their own people and destroying what little they have left. Oleg’s co-pastor Volodymyr lives in Bucha (where we have 6 churches). His house came under attack—but the main damage is from looters. . . .

They smashed the doors, trying to steal whatever they could from the house. They wanted to steal the motorcycle—Volodymyr’s only means of transportation—but couldn’t start the engine. Instead, in frustration, they damaged the vehicle. It will cost about \$1,000 to replace the smashed door and windows, and motorcycle repairs will cost a few hundred dollars.

This is not an isolated incident. We are actually developing a “mini Marshall Plan” to many of our church planters and seminary partners who now find themselves in similar sad situations. This work will surely have to go on for some time—and we pray the Lord will help us carry on faithfully until we see Ukraine’s new day together.

Meanwhile, by God’s grace and the generosity of committed friends like you, our ministry is continuing nonstop elsewhere. In these first four months of the year, I have already flown the equivalent of five times around the world! The point isn’t the miles, of course—it’s about all the amazing ministry going on in so many countries! . . .

- I’ve recently been to the PHILIPPINES—and I went immediately on to BRAZIL, where my son and I took turns teaching church planters in two cities in the northeast of the country (teaching Luke and John in one city, the Pentateuch in the other). And here’s what we saw: Church-planting is booming to the glory of the Savior’s name!
- As I write you this letter, we’re just two days away from launching our ministry program in VENEZUELA. The enthusiasm there is fabulous! As in nation after nation, there is a great bright hope for the work to come. The leaders in Venezuela have been yearning and praying that God would put away the dreadful pandemic and open a new path for resuming life and ministry. Today, finally, it’s “full speed ahead,” and they are REJOICING!

Your support for this ministry has set the stage for this moment. The Venezuelans have longed for this day for 15 years or more. They needed God to give them a solution to the many woes racking the country. You are bringing them the God-given solution.

- In CUBA, too, your compassion is being felt. The Cuban people have been absolutely devastated by the pandemic. They knew only two simple terrifying options in the time of COVID: die or survive. On our first trip to teach and meet with our workers, we were gripped with sadness to discover how much the country has been suffering.

The few people who went on that trip took extra baggage full of clothing and other aid, and some—overwhelmed to witness the depth of the need—even left their own clothing with the people they met. Soon we'll return with a group of 15; this time, we'll carry two or even three suitcases each. The government, recognizing the dire need, is allowing humanitarian aid to be brought in free of customs charges.

The impact is not simply in the physical realm; **the people there receiving the aid are beautifully open to the Gospel!** And we are making the most of it by expanding our work: *saturating* new areas with the preaching of the Gospel, *accelerating* church-planting, and *training* leaders so they can minister to their people with full effectiveness!

Throughout the pandemic, with your strong support, we've continued to feed people and minister in other practical ways. Just hours ago I spoke with our field director for Cuba, and he is tremendously encouraged. His country is now open, and groups are making plans to come in and meet even more of the desperate needs of the people.

As we have already observed, *Christ-like compassion does not go unnoticed*. The people are seeing that their only hope—the *real* help—comes through a genuine relationship with God. They are finding that God is not bound by any government policy or religious program or cultural dictate. The presence of the Lord is REAL to them, and it is life-changing!

- Sandwiched in between Venezuela and Cuba will be a big, joyous graduation in MADRID—something we haven't experienced since COVID shut Spain down two years ago. We'll celebrate nearly 100 graduates—a HUGE number for a seminary in Europe!

It will be all the more gratifying because we've seen the number of students in other institutions driven to *zero*. The size of our own student body was indeed reduced by the pandemic, but we've worked hard to keep teaching and training, and I am grateful to report to you not only that, we are now preparing for great growth in the year ahead.

The mood in the seminary is happy and hopeful! As our student body returns to “normal” levels, we'll once again press toward acquiring the new building for housing the seminary.

Through it all . . . through COVID and even through invasion . . . we see not only that God is at work today—we see also that God has always been at work. It was 22 years ago that we first engaged in ministry in Ukraine. Many today are amazed that we were so “farsighted.” In fact, we weren't farsighted; we simply went where we saw a need and where God opened a door.

Back then, Ukraine seemed so far away, and some questioned the wisdom of going there. Today, they share our joy—admiration for the strength and the resiliency of the Ukrainian people under such horrific assault, but also gratitude that God planted us there, and that friends like you answered the call and made this ministry possible.

God is the One who sees what is to be, and calls it by its proper name. We have simply been following Him as He leads, as friends like you empower the work through your prayers and your gifts. As always, we have merely been following by faith what the Bible states. We know our God is more than enough for anything we could face or run into. I'm just so glad you believed with us, and answered the call, and followed the Lord into Ukraine!

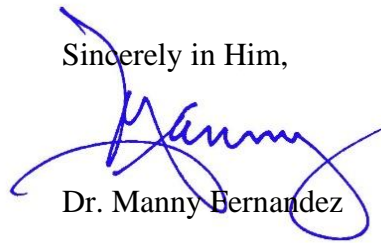
And not only Ukraine. He has called us to such a great number of countries, each time challenging us to respond by faith. The result has been, and continues to be, a grand adventure!

I often imagine how glad we will be someday in heaven, that we believed in Him, that we followed, and that we served. I thank God that partners like you have adopted the attitude of Paul the missionary: “For this reason I also suffer these things, but I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed and I am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day” (2 Timothy 1:13 NASB).

The moment we step into eternity and join in the celebration, we will be so glad for holding on to the faith, and for having passed it on to so many! It reminds me of the welcome in Psalm 126: We will be like those who are dreaming. “Then our mouth will be filled with laughter and our tongue with joyful shouting;” It will be said by those who greet us, “‘The Lord has done great things for them.’ The Lord will have done great things for us.” We will be so glad!

Thank you for your faith. Thank you for your obedience of faith. “Please do not grow tired of doing good,” Galatians 6:9 states, “for in due time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up!” I invite you to give generously today, joining with the Father and the Son in the GREAT work they are calling us to do together!

Sincerely in Him,



Dr. Manny Hernandez

P.S. How will God use the gift you give today? I don't know. I only know this: *He will use the gift you give today!* Lives will be touched and transformed by the power of His love, thanks to the way you open your heart and participate in His work through your generous giving. God bless you richly!