

July 2, 2008

Dear Friend,

Here's my prayer for you today:

May the presence of the Lord in your life DWARF everything else! May circumstances lose out to the glory of the Lord!

I owe you some information—because you are a vital part of the astonishing ministry breakthroughs I've been witnessing firsthand all around the world.

Now that I'm home, let me give you a whirlwind report.

This first report comes from Spain where—thanks to you—I was teaching students how to preach. It's a fantastic experience to take someone who primarily has been a “reader” of God's Word and then train him to be a communicator of it.

We've been at this training for 17 years, so we've had the joy of seeing innumerable examples of such transformation—even watching men reach the point of being employed as preachers in the Lord's work.

It's so rewarding to look into every corner of a nation and see our graduates leading with excellence, enjoying the leadership role which God has given them! Your support has enabled it!

And there was a wonderful side benefit while we were in Spain: We witnessed the conversion of an older couple who had offered their property for the Lord's work. What a beautiful occasion. Their thoughts were on eternity. They wanted to leave a legacy of ongoing kindness to people. What a kind gift!

But we needed to make sure they understood Ephesians 2:8–10—that salvation is by faith, apart from works. The works simply follow God's work of grace—which happens first in the life of the believer.

And then—after comprehending the grace of God —Tato and his wife each joyfully received Jesus Christ as their personal Savior. Praise God! Then their kind gift became a mark of God's goodness to them.

We also got to visit with some of our graduates and students in their church-plants.

I wish you could have met Samir . . .

Samir is a wonderful blessing in action. This brilliant student came to us from Morocco. He is perhaps the most brilliant theological mind in the history of our Madrid school. He's amazingly capable of taking a basic theological concept and coming to a number of accurate conclusions and applications.

Samir is only in his second year, yet he already leads a church he started with a couple other students.

I had the privilege of preaching there on my first Sunday in Madrid—attendance was already 50 to 60 people, and they're on fire for the Gospel!

Then we met Unai and his wife, Rebekah—they're planting churches among the Basque people. (Unai and Rebekah are expecting a baby boy due in just a couple months. They'll give him a Basque name with three "r's"—Isaak Arrretxe. The eager mom and dad were pleased to discover that Isaak in the original Hebrew means "laughter." How appropriate, in view of the way God is changing their struggle into laughter!)

Unai started the work last year with the help of a summer team from Johnson Ferry Baptist Church in Marietta, Georgia.

This campaign led some 400 people to Christ in a single week!

Unai launched eight cell groups through the campaign follow-up effort and developed one main group to become the "mother church."

I had the privilege of preaching there to an overflow crowd—they no longer fit in their store-front facility.

This young church was actually featured in the San Sebastian newspaper a few months ago—and again just last week on the regional Basque TV network!

As I drifted to sleep last night, I was thanking God for the powerful blessings we are seeing in all the fields. I began to realize that the very real and personal blessings we were experiencing are just examples . . . they are multiplied by the hundreds in the lives of our World Link Ministry team around the world.

Then I began to do the math. In Cuba, Vietnam, and Eastern Europe alone, we have some 700 church-planting evangelists!

Imagine how many Samirs and Unais they could testify about!

The second report comes from Cuba, where last week I was baptizing people and preaching the Gospel. One evening we stopped at Cuatro Caminos, a town of 75,000 people.

The outreach there is just one among 1,400 church-plants we've established in Cuba. The church-planter in Cuatro has been working there for 11 months.

But don't be fooled—these are not 1,400 house churches. If that's what you were thinking, I wish you had been with us one Thursday night at one of these churches!

After just 11 months, more than 100 people gather regularly for church. We met under a large rectangular hut—their auditorium. Twenty-two people were baptized that night.

One man being baptized was the owner of the hut. He and his wife were baptized not only *on* his property, but also *in* the baptistry that he built himself on the stage.

We heard testimonies there of people who just months ago were serving and paying homage to demons!

People from Shades Mountain Church in Birmingham were with me—they were blessed and shocked at the same time. Worship pastor Michael Adler had the joy of baptizing these 22 new believers.

Our friends Scott and Kelly Gurosky, who have partnered generously and sincerely with us, brought along their two boys to witness and to be part and parcel of the powerful things God is doing in Cuba.

When Scott and Kelly thanked me for the trip, I said to them what my heart says to you:

I thank you for appreciating spiritual blessings.

I thank you for holding as precious the things that God calls precious.

I thank you for investing in eternal souls, which are eternal treasures.

Month to month, as we heed the Lord's voice, we see the fruits of righteousness, **fruit that remains**, springing forth. He has appointed us that we may bear fruit: "This is to my Father's glory," Jesus said in John 15:8, "that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples."

I pray today that you'll help again. For the 800-plus workers serving around the world as fruitful vines and vineyards, you and I are like roots. *We may not be seen, but we are vital for their fruit-bearing.*

As I ask for your gift of support today, I want you to know that I am deeply grateful for the special effort last month that helped us cover much of the deficit of the year. We are asking God that with this month's giving, we'll be able to retire the deficit and confidently face the "Summer Harvest" in July.

We need \$97,000 for the month to meet all commitments and run in the black. I am happy to share the full report with you, because it shows how much the Lord is doing in the lives and ministries of just the few people I mentioned—imagine the fullness of the entire multitude of workers!

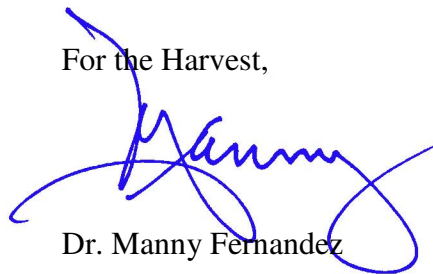
The pace does not slow down in summer, and the help needed is also the same.

As a wise son gathers in summer, let us also gather that we may honor our Father.

Thank you again for everything you do . . . thank you for being a part of this great global adventure to which the Lord has called us together!

Please let me hear from you soon.

For the Harvest,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Manny Fernandez", with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Dr. Manny Fernandez

P.S. Samir and his church send their love. Unai and Rebekah and their church send their love. The people of Cuatro Caminos send their love.

Let us respond not only in word but also in deed . . . to continue undergirding their inspired efforts with the practical support they need. I am eager to see how God uses your generosity today in the "white harvest fields of the Master"!