



INDIGENOUS TRAINING MINISTRIES, INC.

REVC'S NEWS & VIEWS

by
RevC

August 2017

TOGETHER WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!!

NICARAGUA



Nicaragua has always held a special place in my heart! Many years ago I spent a week working with a medical team in the city dump in Managua, the capital. The dump was a huge place with such a

strong smell it nearly took my breath before I even got there. It was hard to imagine that several hundred men,



women, and children survived off the trash and garbage that the huge dump trucks, truck af-



ter truck, deposited every day.



At the end of our week there, Dr. Tonya Hawthorne came to me and said, "**RevC, someone has to go and tell that**

long line of people that we simply don't have enough time to see them before we must leave."

Without even considering what this would mean to these people who had been standing in line for hours, I replied, "**No problem Doc!**" Confidently, I turned, picked up a folding chair, and walked to the small table where they were lined up to register before seeing the doctor or one of the nurses. I unfolded the chair and climbed onto it, facing the long line that was almost as far as I could see. It was at that moment that

God did something in my heart that I have yet to overcome, thank you Jesus. Suddenly, and very unexpectedly, Jesus did a work and changed what had been a relatively hard and stony heart, and gave me the beginning of a heart of flesh. Words were gone and I said nothing. I just stood there with tears flowing down my cheeks, as they are now as I again relive that moment in time. A "**kairos**" moment, a moment that may well echo throughout eternity, a moment when the love of God for His creation changes your very being and all that comes thereafter. After a few minutes of uncontrolled tears streaming down my face, I stepped down and walked back with the chair in hand, having never spoken one word. When Dr. Tonya saw my face still flowing with tears, she said, "You couldn't do it, could you?" I said, "No, Doc, I never said a word. I can't. I don't know what to do." Dr. Tonya said, "We will figure something out." It was a turning point in my life, a time that I knew God had something else for me to do. I truly believe that what we are a part of today through the ministry of ITM and our CTC program is a direct result of that one moment in my life—**A GOD MOMENT!**

With that bit of history, I arrived on the Thursday before Easter. Sondra Livermore, Pastor Jorge Ibarra, and Rev. Alfredo Martinez, our CTC direc-



tor in Nicaragua, were waiting to receive me. Sondra and I spent Friday and Saturday teaching Pastoral Theology to our CTC students and some guest pastors. We are expanding the CTC ministry and wanted the guests to experience what the training program is like.

On Easter Sunday, I preached in three services. The first



service was held at Iglesia Esperanza Fe y Amor (Center of Faith, Hope, and Love). This church would like to begin a CTC program in the coming weeks. That evening, we held a service at Cathedral Cristiana,



another location where we had a CTC program until it was sidelined after the pastor's wife contracted cancer.

She has had a miraculous recovery, and they are expecting to continue the CTC program very soon. Two people made decisions for Christ that evening. It was a good day in Christ!



The second service Easter morning was at El Alfarero (The Potter).



At the end of the service, a young couple came forward to dedicate their baby. (Sorry no photo) The young man held the

small baby with great pride. The pastor asked them if they were married and they said no! He then asked if they were both Christians. The young man said, "No," and she, "Yes." Then I saw the pastor do something I have never seen before. He told them in front of family, friends, and congregation that he could not dedicate the child under these circumstances. As the pastor told the young man that he was going to receive Jesus right then, the young man's eyes grew wider. The pastor then said, "You do want to receive Jesus don't you?" The boy shook his head yes, and the pastor had him repeat a prayer to receive Jesus. After that, the pastor asked, "OK, do you love her?" The boy said, "Yes." Then, as the pastor took their hands and put them together with his on top of theirs, he said, "OK then, I'm going to marry you right now!" The boy's eyes got even wider. Before he could think twice, he was saved AND married! The pastor then happily dedicated the baby before the Lord! He told the congregation, "This young couple is now part of our family. We are going

to see that they have a proper wedding ceremony in a couple of weeks." I later learned that the boy had been involved in the church when younger but had slipped away. After the service, he was crying tears of joy knowing that he was right with the Lord and ready to begin a new life. It was an Easter he will certainly never forget.

Because of the current situation in Nicaragua, this trip became even more important. We learned the government will soon pass a law requiring all pastors to have a license and a minimum of one year of Bible schooling from an accredited Bible institution. There are over 1400 pastors who are members of the National Association of Pastors (CNPEN) of which between 80-85% have not had any Bible training. They are now all in jeopardy of losing their churches and right to pastor.

On Monday, Pastor Jorge, Rev. Alfredo, and I were interviewed on TV where we introduced the CTC program.



Later on Monday, Jorge, Alfredo, Sondra and I met with Dick Gonzalez, a missionary from Nicaragua to India.



He was very excited about the possibility of translating the CTC program into a couple more Indian languages for use in training pastors in India. After that meeting, we met with Pastor Sergio Martinez, from Matagalpa.

Sondra stayed a few extra days to help him get their new CTC program underway. She emailed me that they started two new CTC programs during her extended stay, this one and one in Esteli.

On Tuesday, we met with the president of CNPEN, the Pastor's Association. He was very pleased that we would make the CTC program available without



cost as most of the pastors in the association do not make enough money to pay for Bible school. He told us that out of the 153 districts in Nicaragua, they are in 142

of them. He is planning to hold meetings with all the district leaders to encourage them to contact Alfredo as soon as possible to get the CTC training underway. Later on Tuesday, we met with Pastor Cristobal Perez, the head of another denomination who wants to add a CTC program to his ministry. Shortly after that meeting, we met with Pastor Ismiel Vargas and his wife from the first church I spoke in on Easter. They are planning to undertake the CTC program to help train their leaders.



With all the good things God was doing, it's not surprising I became very ill Tuesday evening. I had not been that sick in years of traveling, but then we had not seen God open so many doors so widely for the CTC program. It was obvious the enemy did not want me to attend the meetings that were scheduled for Wednesday. Miraculously, 15 minutes before we were scheduled to leave, I felt well enough to get up and dress for the meeting with President Mauricio Fonseca and Vice-President Enrique Solís, of the Evangelical Alliance of Denominations. Honestly, I was so weak I didn't think I could get out of bed! God was with us, however, and enabled me to be there! This may eventually prove to have been the most important meeting of the trip!

The president of the Alliance was very impressed with the CTC program. However, he had already made an agreement with the Lutheran University Pastoral Training program.



He was excited that our program would cost the pastors very little, only what we needed to cover teacher expenses and a place to meet. When the pastors' alliance had learned of the government's plan to pass the law, they had set in motion a way to get their pastors licensed. The Lutheran University had spent \$50,000 USD to get the government to approve their Bible program. Naturally, they want to charge fees, fees the pastors cannot afford, to recoup their investment. While I was busy talking with him, Sondra was speaking with the vice-president who is also president of a denomination. Before the meeting ended, he decided to scrap the curriculum he had and use our full CTC program. The

president said he would speak with the other leaders of the denominations as well as with the Lutheran University to see if there was any way our program could run alongside under their umbrella. It will be interesting to see what God does!

God has His eye on Nicaragua! I have not been in another country where 70+ denominations are willing to lay aside their differences and work with each other to accomplish anything. In July, Nicaragua has 3,000 missionaries coming to work with the Alliance of Denominations for a period of one week to train people to win others to Christ with a goal of winning a million people to Jesus in one day! God, grant it to be so! All the more reason these pastors need to be trained.

After that meeting, we traveled two hours to Leon for another meeting with pastors from that area. Six



men were there, one of which had seen us on TV and learned of the meeting. The pastor who organized the meeting also attended the classes Sondra and I taught on Friday and Saturday. That sold him on the need for a training center. He has already committed to begin very soon with Alfredo's help!

When we got back to Managua, I ate a small meal before packing and sleeping a few hours before I left for the airport at 4:30 am. I did not need an alarm clock! By 2:00 am I was making regular visits to the toilet while snacking on Imodium AD in between trips. I was so sick I wondered how in the world I would be able to get through the flights and four-hour layover in Miami. After I had consumed the max of meds and two bottles of Gatorade, Sondra drove me to the airport and prayed for me to make it home. God was faithful to our prayers as I did make it home without further incident on the flights although I spent some time on a "throne" in the Miami airport. The only thing worse than being sick is being sick in a foreign country or while travelling internationally!

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I believe we are in the midst of a strong spiritual battle for Nicaragua. Please pray for God to continue to allow

us to be used in Nicaragua for His glory!! Please remember to pray for Rev. Alfredo Martinez. Evangelio Completo, the small but growing denomination that we began with in Nicaragua, partially supports him. They are not able to support him for the work he is doing with CTC. If things go as we believe, his time will soon be consumed by growing CTC locations across the nation. At this time he does not have a vehicle, and he will soon need one.

It seems to me that almost every time I leave the US for another country, I return with yet another great opportunity to truly make a difference and see fruit that will multiply and multiply. I don't know what to do other than pray and let the opportunity to make a difference in God's Kingdom be known as best I can. If God does what it appears He is doing in Nicaragua, CTC could become a platform for pastoral training that could open the door for many other Central and South American countries. As a mission, we don't have a weekly platform to solicit support. We must depend totally on God to speak to hearts for every personal and ministry need we have. This is how a mission should be. Although I sometimes wish it were not that way, it is impossible to please God without faith! Faith is acting on what you believe God is doing before you see Him do it.

Although we don't always get it right, I believe we get it right much more often than we miss the mark, especially when it concerns ministry. We are not a church with a huge building debt and don't have a lot of overhead. Our townhouse, however, was costing more than we wanted to spend on our housing. Last year, Vicky and I downsized our living situation, believing that God would surely sell our big townhouse quickly and enable us to be debt free in order to increase our ministry ability. **We moved but the townhouse did not!** As I said before, we don't always get it right. We are trying, however, to do what we believe God would want us to do. Perhaps when God sells the townhouse, I will see why it has taken so long. Hindsight is always a revelation!

It is May 2nd as I write this newsletter. The two churches I would like to see us build in Malawi are still on my heart. To do so we need **\$10,000 each** to make a difference there. This trip to Nicaragua could play an important role in what God is doing in the Spanish-speaking world. Pastor Alfredo will need financial

help. We are ready to put the online version of CTC in Spanish which will also cost money. I am on my way to China this Friday to begin training another group of underground pastors and house church leaders. Then, I will be home for two weeks, after which Vicky, Sarah, and I will leave for Ecuador where we will teach and visit family. Vicky and I will make a side trip to Peru to teach our Shawi Indian group in Yurimagus. Thus, we depend on God as we look to Him to speak to your hearts. We cannot give what we don't first receive.

This past 18 months we have seen our personal support diminish by **more than \$20,000** annually. Most of it has been due to churches enlarging their local ministries, or changing their focus from foreign to local missions. We keep making adjustments to our living in order to make ends meet, and continue to trust God to speak to hearts as we endeavor to help fulfill the Great Commission. Where you invest does make a difference.

You are always in my prayers for the blessing and hand of God to be upon your lives. I pray that you will have ears to hear and a heart that is open to act in faith. We only have a short time here on earth to make a difference that will echo throughout eternity. If you're looking to put your name on anything, this is not a ministry that will do that. If, however, you're looking to see your giving multiply exponentially, and build up treasures in heaven; this is a ministry that will help make that happen. Thank you for standing with us!! May the blessings of our Lord be multiplied back to you as you invest in His Kingdom work! We thank God for each of you!
TOGETHER WE'RE MAKING A DIFFERENCE!

PS: As you are reading this in August we should be home from our time in Peru and Ecuador, and I will probably be getting ready to return to China for another training session.

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