

Ricardo and Beth Gomez

October 2017



I am well aware that this newsletter is overdue. Part of that is due to the fact that we're juggling a lot of different balls right now but also because, as I told Ricardo yesterday, I've been "waiting for inspiration." His responded, "Don't wait for inspiration. Just do it!" Today I'm tackling the task at hand so that you can be informed partners in ministry with us....which (naturally)brings me to a football.

I'm no football coach or player and I never played one on TV...but I think I understand a little bit about tackles. Football tackles require **power**. That is why they train and lift weights. As I tackle this task, I rely on Holy Spirit's power to communicate effectively with you...it is the same power required each day of our ministry. Jesus promised it in Acts 1:8. "But you will receive **power** when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and **you will be my witnesses** in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." There is some training involved for us as well...to develop spiritual muscles...as we grow in our relationship with Christ.

Football tackles also have a **purpose**: either to advance your team and ball down the field or to foil the attempts of the opposition. As Christians (not just as missionaries), our purpose is to do the will of God and **be His witnesses** wherever He has placed us. We are to be in forward motion, advancing His Kingdom despite the opposition's efforts to drive us into complacency or intercept our best efforts. We need to be sharing His gospel story, as well as the story of God's transformation in our lives with the people around us. For this, we need to know the story and pray that God will lead us to the people whose hearts He is preparing. Our goal is to see His Kingdom advanced!

Power and Play Book

We spent a few days in Panama City last month meeting with the FM Latin American leadership team to unify our vision and purpose throughout the region. Our collective mission is about reaching Latin American's for Christ specifically through developing and empowering leaders and church planting. We returned to Medellin with a sharpened focus before Ricardo set off to the New Room Conference in Nashville where he spoke about church planting and personal evangelism. Much of that conference's emphasis was on receiving the power of the Holy Spirit for the task at hand.



Ricardo continues the task of developing leaders through the seminary classes he teaches. During this 8-week session he is teaching 4 classes...3 different groups of students are taking his "Theology of Suffering" class and he's leading one group through a course on "Pastoral Counseling." Last night, the Suffering class went to hand out bread and a hot drink to the homeless people of Medellin.



We've also been leading another couple's course here on campus. We have 14 student/staff couples as well as 5 Free Methodist couples (from 2 different churches). We are investing in their marriages so that they can invest in others and use it as a tool to plant new churches. Indeed, one couple has already started a new couples ministry in our church as a result! We've also been doing the hard work of couple's counseling for two couples in crisis and a couple that has just begun dating asked us to walk alongside them

through this process. Our end goal is to facilitate healthy marriages that are the building blocks upon which healthy churches and healthy societies are built.

In the midst of that we have been planning for, and this morning will officially open, an office for Pastoral Formation. This is where a group of writers will come together to write the curriculum for the 18 courses required for FM ordination to be used throughout Latin America. Beth will be the office administrator, Pastor John Jairo will lead the team of writers and Ricardo will supervise the overall project. It is a project we've been trying to do for 10 years!!! With this initiative we hope to finish in 2 years. Through these courses leaders will be developed and empowered and our goal is to unify the content of the theological training for all Spanish speaking pastors in Latin America and the United States.

Likewise, God is orchestrating a church planting movement here in Medellin through the Camino de Vida church. Pastor John and Ricardo have been alternating sermons on fulfilling the Great Commission and Community Church Planting. We currently have 35 small groups meeting in homes throughout the city...of which about 8 are really new church plants. We had the privilege of eating lunch with Brayen, the young man we wrote about in the last newsletter, twice this month. He brought some friends along for the first meal. Their honesty about their lives and budding faith was refreshing and their plans for the church in their own neighborhood inspiring! They are a great example of how sharing Christ with one person has a snowball effect (sorry, couldn't come up with a football analogy) as that person shares Christ with their family and friends. Exciting! Exciting! (In fact, it is much more exciting than a football game!)



Advancing down the field

So as we look to the future, toward the goal if you will, would you pray with us for the above mentioned "plays", particularly the pastoral formation project and the expansion of the Gospel and ensuing discipleship of new believers like Brayen, Sandra, Alexis, Erika and the many others being reached through the power of the Holy Spirit manifested in God's people fulfilling His mission?

Also, please pray for the team of 8 people from Hillcrest Church and the Pacific Northwest Conference who will be learning, living and serving alongside us October 14 – 22!

Special Teams

Prayer team. The past couple of months have been difficult for many of our church family. The hurricanes in Houston and Florida directly affected our own personal family, friends and supporters. As you know, Hurricane Maria devastated Puerto Rico. Most of the island is still without power, clean water and the basic necessities not to mention damage to their homes and church property. Our FM family there is suffering and serving. For more on how to donate or help with the recovery efforts there, please click on the picture above. And please, please, please keep all of those who have been affected by these horrible hurricanes in your prayers!



Giving team. Thank you to all of our faithful donors who make this ministry possible. Your prayers keep us on the field each day and your gifts enable us to do the task at hand. By this time of the year we should have received 75% of the annual giving but as of today, only 67% has come in. In order to catch up on a pledge or make a one-time donation, you may do so by [clicking here](#). Also, it is time now to be thinking about 2018 giving. If you would like to change your pledge or make a new pledge for next year, you can do so by following [this link](#). Feel free to contact us with any questions, concerns or other pertinent information.

Finally, there is an **urgency** to make the tackle at the right time. We sincerely believe that God brought us to Medellin for such a time as this! As Ricardo reminded the church in Sunday's sermon, being Christ's witnesses is urgent business. "Don't wait for inspiration. Just do it!" At the end of the service, when Ricardo invited people to accept the mission of being God's witness and receive the power of the Holy Spirit, over 25 people readily went forward. God is putting together a formidable team here in Medellin and it is exciting to be involved in the movement He is creating!

Glad to be teammates on His Powerful Team!
Ricardo & Beth, Juliana & Jonathan

