



CROSS
COLLABORATION
MTW MISSIONARIES TO PERU

MAY 2018

MISSIONS NEWSLETTER

**PLANTING CHURCHES
IN AREQUIPA, PERU**

**WILL YOU PARTNER
WITH US?**

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MEMO:
BONHAM FAMILY - 10788
GUTIERREZ FAMILY - 12762

**READ THIS LETTER
AND PRAY!**



“So this is all your fault?!?” he yelled as he looked at us from across the table. Typically, these are not the words you want to hear when you first meet someone. But in this case, these words came with a friendly grin.

We had known about Jorge (*not his real name*) for several weeks, but this was our first opportunity to meet him in person. A few weeks earlier, one of our seminary students shared with us what was going on at his church, expressing that his pastor needed help and prayer, and asked us to meet with him. Their church was in a season of very painful change and transition. It had been planted over 20 years ago and was founded upon the message of the so-called “prosperity gospel” or the “health and wealth gospel.” As the name implies, it is a message that promises riches, good health, and earthly blessing if you have enough faith in Christ and plant “financial seeds of blessing” (i.e., if you give sizeable donations to that church). The church had ballooned to an attendance of over 1,500 people by preaching this message, and Jorge was one of its pastors.

But around 3 years ago, the Lord did something incredible. Through an out-of-town friend and a book by a Reformed pastor, Jorge came to realize that he had never understood, let alone preached, the gospel of Jesus Christ. He realized he had been preaching a false message that poisons and deceives its listeners. This incredible act of God’s grace put him on a path of exploring the true richness of God’s grace.

But, for Jorge, this also meant real sacrifice. As he began to preach the real gospel, his church lost half its attendance. For those of you who understand the deception of prosperity “churches,” you know that they work like pyramid schemes. Money and power is passed up the pyramid. As you can imagine, this change of message and loss of money quickly put a huge burden on Jorge.

The leadership above him wanted him to return back to the prosperity message or resign. He would have to surrender his job, his comfortable lifestyle, and risk not having another paycheck. We cannot express to



Most of the students in the 2nd module.

you how a great of a sacrifice this man was confronting. And what was his response? His answer was short but powerful. "I have spent so many years preaching a false gospel. You can fire me if you want, but as long as I am here, I am going to preach the true gospel of Jesus Christ to redeem the years that have been wasted." His act of repentance as a pastor was to preach the gospel in order to "restore the years that the locusts have eaten" (Joel 2:25).

Jorge finished telling us his story, and we began to share ours. We told him had when we had first come to Arequipa on a vision trip, we had prayed for reformation in Arequipa and we hadn't stopped since. That is when he looked at us and said, "So this is all your fault!?" He then asked us for help through this transition and to pray for the remnant of his congregation that may go with him as he leaves. Then he registered as a new student so that he can continue learning more about the true gospel in order to preach it boldly.

Friends, the Lord is using Seminary Bíblico Reformado (SBR) in ways we could have never imagined. We are starting to hear more stories like Jorge's. People are hearing, for the first time, the true gospel of Jesus and thirsting for more. They want a real relationship with Christ. They want to learn more of His Word. They want to serve His church. This is the purpose of SBR. The Lord is using us both inside and outside the classroom for his glory. We do not know what the Lord is up to in Arequipa, Peru, and Latin America, but something is happening. Perhaps a reformation is coming. Perhaps the Lord is waking up his church.

We are only three months in to the ministry at SBR and already have had to do construction to make more room for students. We are past our one-year vision for growth! But to be honest, the financial support has not kept up with our physical growth. We are thankful to those who have sent one-time donations, but at this point we do not have any monthly financial partners. We understand that people want to see a track record to get behind something. This story, among many others, has confirmed to us that the Lord is using SBR for His church. ***Please pray for "Jorge," the other students, the teachers and please consider becoming a monthly financial partner to offset some of the costs of the students.*** Please email us if you would like to partner with SBR.



Our new and expanded classroom.

To-The-Point Prayer Requests

- Pray for "Jorge" as he endures financial loss, broken friendships, hard choices to make, and spiritual attacks from standing firm in the gospel.
- Please continue to pray for Nikki's sister, Lacey Madden, who is battling brain cancer. Pray for the Bonhams as they struggle with being far away from family during such a difficult time.
- Please pray for the McCall family as they travel around the US raising support and knocking on doors. Pray that they would raise their support quickly so that they can join us here in Arequipa!
- Pray for Seminario Bíblico Reformado and for the student body. Pray for the students as they finish the semester and consider whether or not they will continue on in our program.
- Would you please also pray for Nathaniel? He gets migraines on too regular of a basis. Please pray that the Lord will relieve him of these.