



August 2017

Reaching Across Ministries



Mid-year ministry update

New Groups

It is exciting to report that workshops with two new groups of pastors will begin in Laredo and McAllen, TX during the next 60 days. Both will meet at the Christian radio stations in each city.

RAM in Panama

The Wounaan Indian association of churches has set up a discipleship training center at the edge of the jungle where students attend for 5 months. RAM is helping by sending training material and Bibles. Below is a building in the training center.



Work continues in providing discipleship training material to pastors of small neighborhood churches. New attention is also being paid to their personal family needs and some funds are also provided for church fans, chairs and Bibles for congregations.



Approximately 25-30 financial partners continue to support the discipleship efforts of the ministry. Due to reduced ministry income, some cost cutting measures have been implemented.



Workshops no longer include refreshments; two projects are combined on trips to the border in order to reduce travel expenses and; pastors requesting Bibles are now encouraged to absorb part of the cost. In addition, Rick, who serves as full time missionary to assist the pastors, now has a reduced monthly salary of \$1500 and his wife Kathryn works full time in a secular job. All of these measures are permitting the ministry to continue making progress while sustaining a balanced budget.

The outlook: About 500 border churches qualify for RAM assistance, but the emphasis remains to develop deep relationships with just a small group (50-60) at a time. This produces better quality training, deeper knowledge of community needs, and ultimately more effective discipleship multiplication.



Questions? *If this report motivates you to investigate how to help RAM, but you are not clear as to how, please contact us. We can certainly use your help.*

Reaching Across Ministries

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Pedro, a persistent pastor

Pedro leads a church in a remote community outside Laredo, TX and attends RAM workshops. Some in the congregation rely on him for transportation to attend church and the attendance varies since some of them work on weekends.

The church cannot provide a salary, so Pedro and his wife do general maintenance work and also rent a food truck to sell refreshments around the community. Shown here is the pastor at their house, a group from Wayside Chapel Church (San Antonio) doing some maintenance work at their church, and the congregation after a discipleship training session earlier this year.



Reflections

After years of sharing about the importance of making disciples through the ministry of RAM, I have come to see what I call the "gap" between knowledge and obedience. This occurs when there is agreement that knowledge is essential to obedience, but through the daily walk obedience is not necessarily the end result of knowledge.

I do not claim to have full understanding why this gap exists, but after being exposed to churches in different cultures and social demographics, I sense this "gap" to be universal.

Something that could shed some light on this is the fallen nature of man. It is amazing that obedience was the key to maintaining a proper relationship between Adam and Eve with God. When He told them not to eat from the forbidden tree, obedience was all that was required. Yet, Eve took the fruit because supposedly that would give her

superior knowledge.

Today, one commandment believers are called to obey is to "go and make disciples", yet it is so easy to acquire knowledge how to, and still go through life just making a few disciples, and yes, sometimes none. **Could the error be that discipleship is probably thought of as knowledge based rather than obedience based?**

Do you find yourself occasionally in this "gap" too? If so, join me in making a resolution to be an obedience based, followers of Jesus.

Rick

"Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching"
(John 14:23)