

Nicaragua Trip Report July 18-22, 2024

“Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ’s behalf, be reconciled to God. For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.” 2 Corinthians 5:20,21

I give thanks for God's blessing on the ministry trip to Nicaragua (in Central America). Missionaries, Eric and Wendy Harbinson, did a great job of planning and providing hospitality and transportation. It was a joy to meet with them again. (They attended the Grace Fellowship conference and workshop in 2018.) Eric and Wendy have a vision to equip church leaders with the message of the Exchanged Life for discipleship and counseling. Our base of ministry operation was Matagalpa, a two hour drive NE of Managua.

We had a full itinerary! Each of the seminars we presented was a summary of the core issues of our counseling: the rejection syndrome, identity, the wheel and line diagrams, and the need for appropriation. I was blessed with three different young men who did a great job translating into Spanish.

Thursday morning began with presenting the seminar to the staff of Hope Project (see the photo on page 2). Their team ministers to the material and spiritual needs of school age children. The next seminar we presented was that afternoon at Iglesia Comunidad Nueva Vida (New Life Community Church). The third seminar was Thursday evening at Iglesia Camino de Santidad (Way of Holiness Church) which was several miles out of the city on top of a scenic mountain.

Friday was a national holiday, commemorating the rise to power of the Sandinista government. That day I came down with a bug, so I welcomed the opportunity to stay in my hotel room and sleep it off. Thankfully, the Lord answered prayer, and I felt better to continue for the rest of the weekend of ministry opportunities.

On Saturdays Eric and Wendy are involved in a Bible Institute that features different levels of discipleship. The morning schedule is for three classes (one each hour) from 8 AM to 11 AM. I was the guest teacher at three of these classes teaching on Biblical Counseling, evangelism, and the fundamentals of faith. That afternoon we presented another seminar at a church that is a longer drive from the city at the top of the very tall mountain. Iglesia Mount Hermon has a beautiful vista but it’s a transportation challenge for attendees. Nevertheless, we had good weather and adequate attendance.

On Sunday we returned to the location of the Bible Institute to present the seminar to Iglesia La Fuente (The Fountain Church). The building has a metal roof and we were interrupted by a few minutes of heavy rainfall that was as loud as our sound system! But most of the time the rain held off and we had a fruitful



time together. The pastor read the Spanish Selfer's Prayer to the congregation at the conclusion and was visibly moved.

After each seminar, Eric and Wendy collected contact information and invited attendees to join WhatsApp groups to view online videos and continue to review and apply the discipleship counseling material.

To make the most of the trip, I packed dozens of Spanish GFI books (including my Spanish editions of *Blessed Reassurance* and *The Worthy Walk*) for distribution to the leaders there. The weight limit for my luggage was 50 pounds and the airport scale read 49.5. :-)

My return flight had an unexpected development. When my delayed flight reached Washington D.C., the connecting flight to Knoxville was cancelled. After an S.O.S. prayer, I texted our GFI alumni friends, Ray and Donna Kruse, who live near the airport. Happily, Ray picked me up and I enjoyed their hospitality and a comfortable night's rest. Then Ray drove me back to the airport for my 9:00AM flight that delivered me safely home. Hallelujah!

I give thanks to the Lord for the intercession of many, and for those who generously sponsored this ministry trip. Photos of the trip are at the GFI web site /About / Photo Gallery. I so appreciate the diligence of my host missionaries, Eric and Wendy. May God bless the ministries in Nicaragua and the resources that continue to be shared there.

Yours in Christ

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