

July 2, 2020

Dear Friends and Supporters,

Last time I wrote you, our world looked much different than it does now. I pray that these uncertain times have helped us remember and realize Who is truly the only One in whom we can trust and depend on; and that is Jesus. It is a comfort to know that He knows exactly what is going on, that everything works for good to them that love the Lord, and especially that He is coming for us soon! I know we are all looking forward to that!

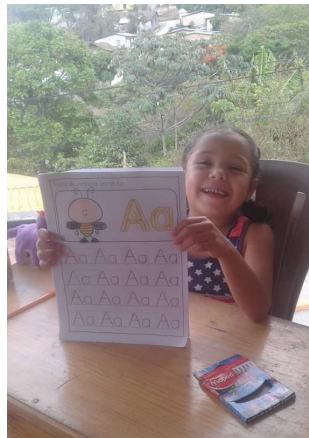
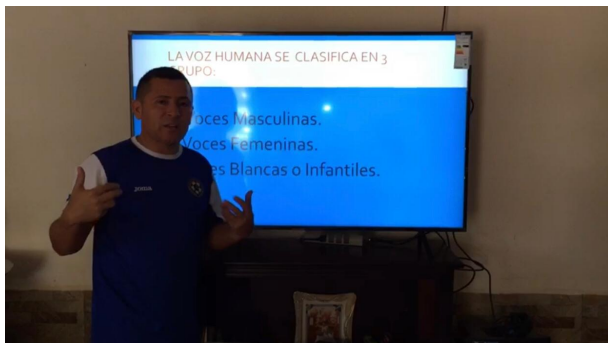
For this newsletter, we have some touching stories to share with you. They are an amazing reminder that in spite of the current ugliness of our world, God is still working and has never stopped! But first, we want to address some questions that many of our sponsors have asked concerning our sponsorship program and schools. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, our schools have been closed and many sponsors have rightfully asked how our ministry is still functioning. Please read through the FAQ below for some clarity.

### **If schools are closed, how is my monthly support being used?**

*Although schools are closed, our teachers are still sending school work to our students virtually and sometimes the teacher drops off the work to the students homes. This means that our teachers are still working. We have continued to pay our teachers and school staff, so our school budget has not changed in spite of schools being closed.*

### **How is my child doing their school work?**

*For the most part, our teachers use the popular messaging app called WhatsApp. Most people in Honduras have phones that support this app. They will send assignments and homework to the parents through WhatsApp and the parents work with their kids with their schoolwork. Some of our teachers have even used the video conference app called Zoom to have a conference class with our students who are able to have access to it.*



### **What if my child is from a remote village and/or does not have access to the internet?**

*It was a struggle in the beginning to be able to reach students with no internet. However, as time went by and people realized that this was going to be a prolonged situation, they made the effort to find access to internet and/or WhatsApp to get their kids up to date with their teachers. Our principal sends us frequent reports showing how many students they have been able to reach. So far, they have been able to reach and work with 91% of our students. They are continually doing all they can to reach the remaining students to get them up to date with their assignments.*

**What if my child is an intern (lives in the dorms)? Do I still pay double child support even if they are not living in the dorms?**

*Yes, it's true that the students are not living in the dorms at this time. However, we have continued to send our monthly budget so we can pay all of our staff and dorm employees. We know these are hard times for everyone and as God continues to provide, we want to make sure our people have a paycheck to help them get through these difficult times until we are able to open the school and dorms back up again.*

**Are my kids still getting food from the feeding center?**

*When the country went on lockdown, we were forced to close our feeding centers, so they have not been open since mid-March. However, we are in communication with our pastors about reopening them. We hope to do this in the next few weeks as soon as we can establish some safety measures in order for the kids to receive their food in a safe way with the least exposure possible.*

**Can I still send my child a special offering or food bag?**

*If your child is from San Marcos, then yes, we can get them a food bag and/or a special offering if we have stock in our store. If your child is from the outer villages, it will take a little longer as travel from village to village is not permitted. However, we hope to open back up to our regular operations as the Honduras government permits.*

We hope and pray that this will ease any doubts or concerns about how the ministry is still functioning. This is all very new for us as it is for everyone so we are still getting used to this “new normal”. We thank you for your understanding and patience with us during this time. If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact us!

Because of the pandemic and lockdown of the country, the people in Honduras are suffering. The Honduran health system is not equipped to face a global pandemic of this magnitude. All the hospitals (public and private) have no more room for more patients. We have friends who have tested positive that have had to wait in hospital waiting rooms for at least 8 hours, waiting for someone to see them. Now there are reports of cases in San Marcos de Colon. People are worried and they are scared. It is heartbreaking to watch from so far away and not be able to do anything.

Besides this, most people live on a day to day basis and because of the lockdown, they have not been able to work. Because of this, we started a Disaster Relief Fund to help our pastors, church members and others with food bags to help them get through this crisis. Thankfully, we were able to get food bags to all of our pastors, the elderly from our elderly center and to over 2000 families in our churches. We are blessed to have an amazing group of volunteers in Honduras ready at any time to make up food bags and deliver them to those who need them. We are so thankful to them. We are also trying to help our pastors and churches in Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and Mexico as they are also being affected by the pandemic. **So many of you have been so gracious to help with this fund and we thank you from the bottom of our hearts!**





Now, on to some stories!

Our national pastors have been the true heroes of the faith through these hard times. In spite of some not being able to have church services, they have come up with creative ways to reach their people with the Gospel. Here are just some things they've been doing:

- Some have used social media (for those who have access to it)



- Some have placed loud speakers in the doorways of their churches facing out so the neighboring homes can listen as they preach



- Some have tied loudspeakers to their cars to preach as they drive around different communities



We could not be more proud of these faithful men of God who will stop at nothing to preach God's Word.

Pastor Santiago Colindres contacted us and shared with us what he and his people had to do to get food to a particular village. He was helping to deliver food he had received from the Disaster Relief fund for the village of Morolica. First, they tied the food on the back of a donkey and traveled three hours on foot. Then, they came to the river which was very full because of the current rainy season in Honduras right now. They built a raft with rubber ties and wood. They tied the food on it and 4 men held on to the raft and waded in the deep running river water while some other men waited for them on the other side. Because of their dedication and sacrifice, the people in the village of Morolica had dinner that night.



A couple of years ago, we visited a very small community with a group of students from our discipleship class and some American visitors from First Baptist of Loganville, Ga. We took food bags, clothes, shoes and other items to give away. One of our students preached a short message and there were 5 people saved that day! A couple of weeks ago, one of our teachers had that community on her heart. We helped her get some money together for food bags so she could go back and visit the people there. When she got there, she found that the community was suffering because they had no food. One of the ladies who received a food bag ran home shouting, "Thank you Father. Thank you Lord! You have brought us food today!" They also found out that one of the men who had gotten saved 2 years ago had died a year ago. This means he is in Heaven today!!



God has not stopped working. As someone said, "God is not in quarantine" and He has continued to work in and through people's hearts.

Arold, Annie, and I are still in the US. We were supposed to go back to Honduras at the end of March. However, our flights were cancelled by the airline due to the lockdown, so we've not been able to return. We're just waiting for the Honduras borders to open back up so we can plan to go back. It's been so hard to see our people suffer and worry over everything that is going on and not be able to do anything because we are so far away. We try to keep in contact with them as much as we can to encourage and lift them up. We miss our people and can't wait to see them again.

Also included in this newsletter is a letter from Stevie. He has been in Honduras this whole time and knows first-hand how everyone has been affected by the pandemic.

Please keep us in your prayers as we also continue to pray for you, the US and the whole world. We know that God is in control and we have to keep our eyes on Him. Thank you for your prayers and faithful support.

Love in Christ,

Arold, Stephany, and Annie

### ***A Message from Steve Tyson:***

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

It's a blessing to write to you and tell about the wonderful works God is doing here in Honduras.

As we all know COVID-19 has affected many families, homes, businesses, and even nations throughout the world. Our heart goes out to everyone whose loved ones have been affected by this terrible disease.

Here in Honduras, quarantine began in the first days of March. Businesses, airports, and churches were immediately closed, but one thing that has not stopped is preaching and spreading of God's word to the lost. Over 80 of our pastors have been having services in different homes with small gatherings throughout the towns and villages of their communities and also giving out food bags to the many needed. Some of our pastors like José Santos Espinoza, who started working with my parents in Nicaragua back in 1970, refused to close his church by saying "the gospel has to be preached no matter what comes our way. We will never stop."



Santiago Colindres, another precious man whose brother was burned alive during the Sandanista revolution in Nicaragua back in the early 80s, talked with the mayor in the town of Duyure where he pastors asking if she would allow that they continue having services because not even during the war was any of our churches closed. The mayor gave permission, and how could she not when a few years back she had received Christ in this same church.



One of our younger pastors, Christino Garcia, who entered our Bible school back in 2004 and graduated in 2007, is one of our hardest working men. In 12 years, 5 churches have been built and established and two new works are being started at this moment in the villages of Chupadero and Orocuina, where this young man pastors. About one month ago, he tested positive with COVID-19 and even though he's been very sick, God spared his life.



Another blessing we have received during these difficult times has been the correspondence of the radio ministry. Even with this lockdown throughout the countries of Central America, it still cannot stop the radio signals that are carrying God's word 18 hours a day, 7 days a week. Perhaps more than ever we have seen God use this ministry to the fullest. More phone calls reporting many salvations have been received and many that have caught the coronavirus have called asking for prayer so that God might heal them. In these times, it's very easy to see the spiritual needs of so many and only in Heaven will we know how many lives have been touched. The radio is still reaching the the countries of Nicaragua, Honduras, and El Salvador. In this critical time, we know how important this outreach is.



We thank God for showing mercy and grace in our lives and in this wonderful work that he has bestowed upon all of us. We deeply thank you for your love support and prayers because we are a family in Christ working together until His return, no matter the cost.

May God bless you is our prayer.

Steve Tyson

## Update on Special Needs from Previous Newsletter

Thank you so much to all who have donated to these projects!!

### Carlos Davila and his Immigration Papers

We were able to raise all the money Pastor Carlos needed for his immigration papers! He is now working with an immigration attorney in Honduras to finish everything and get his Honduran residency.

### Well in Matapalo, Nicaragua

Enough money came in for them to dig the well deeper and buy an electric pump to get the water out! This is a huge blessing for the people in this community especially during these difficult times!



### Land in San Isidro, Honduras

We have raised enough funds for the land in San Isidro in Northern Honduras to be purchased! Now the church there will have a piece of land where they can one day have a church building!

## Current Special Needs

- Pastor Juan Gonzales pastors Mt. Moriah Baptist in Jinotega, Nicaragua. The roof on the pastorium is in very bad condition. The wood is deteriorating and when it rains, water gets in the house. The church has been able to raise \$1000 on their own. **They just need \$1000 more to be able to change the roof and the electrical system of the house.** Our desire is that our pastors and their families have a decent place to live because of the sacrifices they make for God's work every day. Please help us pray that God will provide for this need.
- **We are continuing to raise funds for our COVID-19 Disaster Relief Fund.** The pandemic situation in Central America is getting very critical and we want to be able to provide food and any other necessary items to our pastors, staff, elderly, church members and any others in need. If you'd like to donate, just go to [www.goodsamaritan.ms](http://www.goodsamaritan.ms). On the front page on our website is a donation option for the Disaster Relief Fund. Most of all, please help us pray for our people in Central America!
- ***We also want to ask for prayers for the mission as a whole, as we are now feeling the financial strain from many sponsors who have had to unfortunately stop support of Good Samaritan Baptist Missions.***