

Wednesday, April 6, 2011

Greetings from the Land of Eternal Spring (AKA Guatemala),

It is our prayer that this message finds you all doing well. We are doing fine.

We just finished our 2nd annual ITL Lectureship. It went very well. We were also blessed to be able to complete our 1st Graduation from ITL, both the 3 year and 2 year program. That too went well. We will send more information on both of these events very soon. However for this writing we want to focus more on how the lectureship and graduation had an influence on what has taken place afterward; three precious souls have been added to the Lord's Kingdom.



The first addition took place on Sunday afternoon. One of our graduates, Edras Tista, had his parents and other family member here for the lectureship and for the graduation. His parents were permitted to stay with Edras and his wife, Aries, in their quarters at ITL. During this time, as in previous opportunities, Edras and Aries shared their faith and the Gospel with his parents. Thankfully, his mother Francisca de la Cruz decided on Sunday to put her Lord on in baptism. One of her many memorable statements is, "We gave Edras to the Lord and to His church several years ago. Now it is time for me to give myself to the Lord and to His church." Needless to say, there was a lot of rejoicing at this occasion. Edras stated, "It is the best graduation gift I could have ever received." He baptized his mother.

As much effort as has been given to fix the leak in the baptistry, there is still a leak. As a result, there was no water in the baptistry. Thankfully, Francisco Ramos has a tank of personal water that his family uses that is large enough to baptize a person. So, a very large group, including several English speaking guests, traveled to Francisco's home to witness the birth of a new sister into Christ. How exciting! Francisca came to see her son graduate, but she herself graduated from the world of darkness into God's marvelous Kingdom of light. After her baptism there was a time of singing in both English and Spanish. One can only imagine what heaven is going to be like.



The second addition took place as a result of Byron's mother, Aralee Hernandez, being here for the lectureship and graduation. Yesterday some of her family members came to our house to visit her. Some of them are members of the church. Regrettably, some are not faithful to that commitment. However, one of her nieces, who is faithful, has a 15 year old daughter named Katherin who is suffering with cancer. Recently, the doctors amputated her left arm and she is presently receiving chemotherapy. Her mother has been studying some with her and had a great desire for her daughter to come to the knowledge of God's truth. Byron took advantage of this time and offered a Bible study with her and with everyone else present that wanted to listen. Everyone listened. And, at the end Katherin was asked if she understood what she had been taught from God's word; she said yes. She was then asked if there was anything she

needed to do. She responded, "I need to be baptized." What a touching statement to hear!

After her desire was made known we began to secure a place for the baptism. Since we were already near the capital city, we were hoping to use the pool at the Holiday Inn to immerse this new babe into Christ. The hotel said yes. But, due to a party already on the program at the hotel pool, we were going to have to wait later than we wanted to baptize her.



So, off to Linda Vista we went where we found that the baptistery was still dry. Yes, for those of you that are guessing, you're right. We went straight to Francisco's home to baptize Katherin. There was a good number present to be part of Katherin's special moment. Byron had the honor of baptizing his cousin. Just think! God used Aralee's being here for our Lectureship and Graduation as a opportunity to touch several souls. We are praying that through this event others in the family will be restored and that others will name Jesus as their Lord and Saviour.



The joy did not stop with Katherin's baptism. Why? After she was baptized and while changing her clothes, the statement was made to those waiting that there is water and if anyone else needs to be baptized it is possible. Jose Alfredo, a teenager from the Linda Vista congregation (and Francisco's nephew) said "I am ready." Many of us have been talking with Jose Alfredo for a while now. There were tears shed when he made it known that he wanted to give his life to the Lord. Jose Alfredo was asked who he wanted to baptize him. He said that he wanted Hermano Hi to do it. As you can imagine, Hi was honored to allow the Lord to use him in this way. Thankfully, we did not have to go out to search for water. :-)



Just thinking about how God has used a chain of events for His ultimate plan to save mankind is heart touching. Three souls have been added to the book of life as a result of some people coming to a lectureship and graduation. God is awesome! Please pray for Francisca, Katherin and Jose Alfredo. We ask you to pray that God will protect them from the devil and from those who work for the devil. We believe that God will use these three new Christians to touch the lives of others. Please pray that this will be the case.

After considering events like the three just mentioned, one might think that the lectureship and the graduation were boring. Let us be the first to tell you that both occasions were everything

except boring. As we mentioned earlier, we will be sending another report very soon concerning them. We just wanted to share this news as quickly as we could. So, be on the lookout for the lectureship and graduation update.

We love you!

Con amor en Cristo,

Hawatthia
Byron



“Teaching the CENTRAL MESSAGE in CENTRAL AMERICA!”