

April 2015

CHANGES

Pennsylvanians love lines. If they encounter a lane closure, they begin lining up in single file miles before the restriction actually takes place. It doesn't matter that every quarter of a mile there is a sign that boldly reads "Use both lanes to merge point". As far as they are concerned, the merge point begins behind the last car in the line. Woe betide the person who ignores this unwritten rule, for shortly some truck driver will pull out and deliberately block the use of the second lane. And for the plucky driver who takes the sign at face value, he or she soon discovers that getting back in line will take a maneuver worthy of an Indy 500 driver.

Perhaps what caused me to notice this so readily is the reality that a line painted on a highway in Bolivia is merely a suggestion not a rule. A lane closure becomes a puzzle to be worked out, and drivers going in both directions form their "own" lanes, often resulting in traffic jams that take hours to unscramble. Without a policeman to direct traffic, signs are useless.



In both cases I am always struck by how difficult it is to change a mindset. We become fixated on "the way it's supposed to be", or "the way we've always done it".

Traditions are good and necessary as long as they don't become a deterrent to growth and innovation. In those cases, stability and success can quickly give way to mediocrity. If we become complacent with the status quo, it will quickly become the norm, and when it does, vision becomes too risky. I don't want LATCOM to fall into that trap. I want our mission to grow, to improve, to continue to be a catalyst for the transformation of individuals, families, communities, and nations.

We have a 30-year legacy of the Lord using us in transforming individuals. God has given LATCOM great success over our years of existence and we could certainly be tempted to rest on that legacy, but I don't want to stop there. The need is too great; there are millions that still need life in Jesus Christ.

Because of that we are pushing this year for renewal and new beginnings. By God's grace the U.S. office of LATCOM has been transformed in the past three years from a small, family-centric operation to a highly professional team of men and women working hard to take us into the next thirty years. Now it's time to rebuild our Bolivian mission EPLABOL.

In February I (Tim) was named as the two-year interim president for the executive board in Bolivia. The reason put forth for this unusual change had to do with vision. Since February we have begun to restructure our Bolivian mission. New restrictive laws are forcing us to re-launch the mission, to bring in new board members, to find an executive director and to develop strategic plans for growth and innovation.

Although Monte Blanco Camp has been awesomely successful, we want to continue to provide excellent programming and infrastructure. This year we are launching programs in sports camps, marriage retreats,

specialty camps, and innovative new programming for our existing clientele. To attract more campers and continue to grow we will need to focus on some new construction projects and in greater training for our staff. We are currently developing master plans for the construction of a swimming pool, the irrigation and seeding of our play field, a metal roof over the cement basketball court, and the upgrading of the aging water system to provide potable water for the entire facility. We need a new multi-use dorm facility, and upgrades to the existing dining room and chapel so we can handle groups of 500. Also, we have the possibility of forging some strategic alliances with another mission that will enable us to broaden our outreach into the surrounding communities through farming and skill level training in mechanics, carpentry, and machine shop work.

In our church planting work among the Chiquitano people this year in REDES, we are introducing a new outreach to 43 Chiquitano communities surrounding Concepción through the work of Onesimo and Elodia Rojas. In April they will be in Orlando, FL for training and to work with our staff on a five-year strategic plan for evangelizing these unreached communities. In July, John and Karen Lytle, Nathan and Kathy Ramsey, and Ken and Nancy Whisler will be working with Omar and Anna Vasquez and Lomerio Church leadership in developing a five-year plan for reaching the 23 Chiquitano communities in that area.

Through our leadership programs we will continue to teach about 9,000 secular leaders in Latin America this coming year. We will also continue to expand the training of indigenous leaders throughout the Amazon Basin as opportunity arises and funds become available.

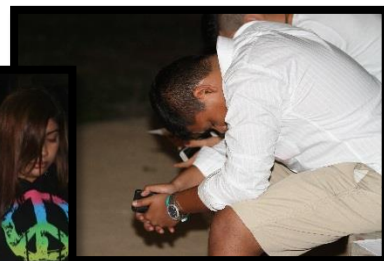
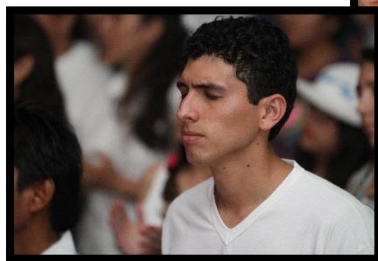
As you can see we have **vision**! We're excited at what God still wants to do with us! Last year we ended our year financially struggling, yet you did not give up on us, and by your generosity and God's grace we are still alive! THANK YOU! Your response to our cry for help is what we needed. Now let's look forward to what God has in store for us this year. I'm excited at the potential that lies before us.

Let's use all the lanes available, the Holy Spirit's guidance to work through difficulties, and the power that is ours in Jesus Christ to forge ahead in changing this fallen world for the glory of God.

Keep supporting us, keep growing with us, keep storming the throne of heaven with your prayers for our needs and ministry, and get excited with us at what God is going to do this year through all of us together.



Tim Ramsey



TRANSFORMING LIVES AND BUILDING ETERNAL FOUNDATIONS THROUGH TRAINING, EQUIPPING, and MOTIVATING