



# MENNONITE *Air* MISSIONS

Vol. XLIX | No. 2

March, April 2014

## My Testimony

I, Lucio López, was a sinner far too great to receive this prize. You see, the Lord had never been in my heart like He is now. I sought after worldly things and desired to have great riches and become famous in things that do not honor God at all! When someone would talk to me about God, I would always make excuses or even lie so as not to have to go to church. When they would ask me if Christ lived in me, I always said "yes," but it wasn't true!

Anyway, I lived in fornication, maliciousness, lust, and other things that totally destroy a person's life and joy. When a person belongs to the world or the enemy (Satan), he may feel as I did, empty and sad, wanting to make other people suffer in an attempt to find happiness. I longed for peace and joy and something to satisfy, but at the end of the day I would feel like a person who takes water in his hands and watches it disappear . . . he fills his hands again with water and again it quickly goes away. I always felt sadness and pain, and my heart was bitter . . . all while pursuing what we all seem to want—power, glory, wealth, and fame—so that people would respect me. In reality I knew that

this great vacuum in my life could never be filled, and I lashed out and hurt others.

But I thank God our heavenly Father that we can have salvation and freedom from our sins! I now feel great joy, and I desire to serve the Lord. I can truly sing, "A wonderful Saviour is Jesus my Lord, He taketh my burden away, He holdeth me up, and I shall not be moved, He giveth me strength as

my day," and "Jesus is the Rock of my salvation, His banner over me is love."

Christ is love, incomparable to anything else. No one and nothing can equal that love, and we have no way to repay it. Silver or gold can never pay the great sacrifice that Jesus made for us. Another song runs through my mind: "With what can I repay such a great love, a love that gave His life for a sinner like me?" . . . yes, a sinner like me and all of us! We will never be able to repay that great sacrifice that He made and we have nothing to give Him in payment for loving us so much.

If you want a clean life and a clean heart, I encourage you to accept Jesus' forgiveness! He is the Stream that washes our life completely clean!

Now the world is not my home; I am but a pilgrim here. Nothing here should own or bind me; rather, my heart and soul belong to Christ. *Lucio López*

*I remember Lucio as a little boy in our children's classes on Tuesday afternoons. He lived less than a block away from the mission house. His family is staunchly Catholic, his father a trusted, well-known and respected man in our town. Lucio is one of the youngest of nine children . . . at least, there used to be nine. His brother was shot to death about three years ago, while Lucio was studying to become a certified teacher. One afternoon he came to our house to work on a project with our son Mynor and I asked him about his brother's death and how his family was relating to it. He cried. We prayed together. He shared openly about his feelings, and I began to pray for the young man almost daily.*

*When we started the school construction project, Lucio had just graduated and came looking for work. As he worked with Christians, he was drawn to their peace and inner joy, something so missing in his home. He started visiting our church services and, months later when an invitation was given, he responded. Even before the invitation song started, he walked to the front, climbed the two steps of the platform and stood beside me as we sang, "There is power in the blood."*



**Lucio López is a newly baptized believer who rejoices in his new relationship with Christ.**



# EDITORIAL

by Cesar Vasquez

## How Should We Seek God in Time of Trial?

It was Sunday afternoon of the Youth Institute last September, and the three-day event was almost over. Two other brothers and I had been asked to organize a panel discussion in which we were to try to give scriptural answers to the random questions submitted by various young people. We had been given the questions the day before in order to start thinking about them.

Among the questions was one that grabbed my attention more than the rest. It said, "How should we seek God in time of trial?" This question made me realize that there was a young person out there with a great need in his life.

During the panel discussion, the moderator pulled questions randomly out of a container. Near the end of the time, that question was pulled and read. Each of the panel members tried to explain the importance of seeking God with a sincere and broken heart, admitting our sins and weaknesses. They then reminded everyone of God's purpose in the midst of trials.

The panel discussion ended a few questions later, but the work of the Spirit was only beginning.

Finally it was time for the last service. The youth filed in and found their places. After a moving devotional, the time was given to Brother Stephan Gingerich, who preached the evening evangelistic messages during the Institute.

His message centered on "Seven Secrets of the Christian Life." At the close of the message, he gave an invitation to all present to consecrate their lives to the Lord. While listening to the melodies of a beautiful song, young men and women stood and walked forward with tears streaming down their faces, expressing their answer to God's call on their lives.

Older brothers and sisters willingly went with the groups of repentant young people to counsel and pray. So many had responded that there were not enough mature Christians to go around.

I felt an urge to stay at the back to make sure everyone had someone to counsel with. My attention was drawn to a young man who had stood to

his feet after the invitation had ended. I decided to accompany him. This young man had walked away from God for a time, and during that time God allowed an accident in his life that had almost ended it. It wasn't so much the helmet he was wearing that day that saved his life, but the mercy that God extended to him, as stated in Jeremiah 31:3: "The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." With tears in his eyes, the young man told me, "This is why I wrote the question, 'How should we seek God in time of trial?'" This was that thirsty soul! That soul in need, that wanted to know God's purpose for his life! May God receive the praise. This young man and many other young men and women were able to seek the Lord in a time of trial!

Why does God allow trials to come in our lives? Isn't He supposed to be a loving God?

Why, if He is truly almighty, doesn't He eliminate our suffering?

When Lazarus died, the Jews, seeing Mary and Martha's suffering, asked a very interesting question in John 11:37. "And some of them said, Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?" In John 11:4 Jesus states to his disciples that "this sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby."

The trials we go through are not for the purpose of weighing us down, or making us grumble and complain. They are brought into our lives for the glory of God.

A student who had been punished at school many times by his teacher whispered to his friend who was on his way out to be punished, "Lean in really close to the teacher; the further away you are, the more it hurts."

Let's stay close to the Lord in our trials and tribulations, and God will be glorified by our lives, not only here on earth but through all eternity! Blessed, eternal love!



**The MAM board visited Guatemala in February and spent an afternoon of worship and fellowship with the Guatemalan church leaders.**

## No Turning Back

She stood with knees trembling and heart beating fast. Could she? Brave and determined, she was committed to completely following through with her decision. With a strength not her own, she faced the audience and shared her personal testimony.

She was honest. Peer pressure and fear had been a stronghold in her life. She liked the pomp and pride the world had to offer. But her heart had been empty.

At the invitation of a friend, she had attended a youth meeting and loved the songs and Bible stories. It became her dream and desire to become a Christian. But it looked impossible.

Recently, with shining eyes, she had turned to me and said, "I'm going to be baptized! I thought I could never be a Christian. It looked too hard. But with God, everything is possible."

**She has decided to follow Jesus.**

The night had finally arrived! It was a beautiful evening. A balmy breeze danced through the leaves and floated into the open window of the Getsemani Chapel, bathing everyone in its path.

Anticipation filled the air. A very special occasion was about to take place. Seven young, committed

souls were about to publicly identify themselves with the Lord Jesus Christ by taking the step of baptism.

Brother Stephan Gingerich brought a message on "Seven Secrets for the Christian Life." Opening with Proverbs 3:1-14, he exposed some wise instruction for the child of God written by King Solomon.

He continued with a scripture in 2 Corinthians 6:17-18: *Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.*

Some of these youth had to literally *come out from among them and be separate*. They faced opposition. They were made fun of. They had been rejected. They had been accused. They had to choose not to listen to the lies coming from their own blood family or close friends.

But the Lord continues with these powerful words . . . **I will be a Father. You shall be my sons and daughters.** What security and rich promise for these youth who have decided to follow Jesus!

With meaning, each young soul confessed the Lord Jesus Christ and promised to be faithful unto

*(continued on page 4)*



# Personnel Notes

**Jeff and Crystal Yoder** returned with their family to Virginia in January after nearly nine years of faithful service in Guatemala. Most of their time was spent serving the Lord in El Naranjo and Santa Rosita. Jeff was involved in pastoring the church there as well as many other aspects of mission life, and they will be greatly missed. Many thanks and the Lord's richest blessings to them as they adjust to life in the States.

**Danny and Linda Beachy** returned to Idaho on February 11 with their four boys. Danny served as mission pilot and was involved with many different aspects of outreach in the city for 2 years and 8 months. His dedication and careful hand have been greatly appreciated.

**Vicki Hershberger**, from LaGrange, Indiana, came in the middle of January to serve as nurse for the clinic in El Chal.



**Vicki Hershberger**



**Lauren Martin**

**Lauren Martin**, from Shippensburg Christian Fellowship, arrived the first of February to serve as nurse for the clinic in El Naranjo after completing 3 weeks of Spanish school.

## No Turning Back . . . continued

death. Bishop Isaias Muñoz from Oratorio proceeded with the pouring of water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. After a special prayer for each individual, he bade them rise and welcomed them into the family of God. Each one turned to face the congregation to share his personal testimony of what the Lord had been doing in his life.

It was an evening of much rejoicing for our El Chal congregation. Seven souls were added to the church family after a difficult year of struggles, tears, and temptations. Satan had raged, seeking whom he may devour, but God had won the battle.

The service concluded with everyone joining hands and singing the song, "I Want Us to Be Together in Heaven."

**Though none go with them, still they will follow.** Will you pray that they will rely on the power of God each and every day to follow through with their commitment?

**The world behind them, the cross before them.** No turning back. Some of their crosses are pretty heavy. Will you pray that God will give them special strength?

**They have decided to follow Jesus.** Will you intercede on their behalf?

*Lydia Zook*



**The El Chal Baptismal Class 2014.**

**Left to right: Tiana Martin, Dunia Galicia, Marisonia Berganza, Edix Berganza, Lucio López, Kevin Palma, and Hubener Palma.**

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### Mennonite Air Missions (USPS 383-570)

Mennonite Air Missions newsletter is published bimonthly by Mennonite Air Missions, Inc. Editor / Mission representative: Brian Yoder, 2695 Floyd Hwy. S., Floyd, VA 24091; Mennonite Air Missions Board: Chairman: Duane Eby, 14438 Daley Rd., Hagerstown, MD 21740; Assistant Chairman: Wesley King, 30 Juliasam Dr., Belleville, PA 17004; Treasurer: Amos Hurst Jr., 140 Rothsville Station Rd., Lititz, PA. 17543; Secretary: Lee Lehman, 2065 Sollenburger Rd., Chambersburg, PA 17202; Urie Sharp, Leon Yoder, Mervin Kuepfer, Pete Shirk, Stanley Neuenschwander, Jeff Weaver. The newsletter is sent free of charge. Send all newsletter correspondence to MAM Newsletter, 7995 Saint Peter's Ch. Rd., Bolivar, OH 44612. MENNONITE AIR MISSIONS is published on the fifteenth of January, March, May, July, September, and November.

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