



Biblical Institute of Central America

A Two-Year Bible School - to prepare evangelists and church leaders

September 2013

... to the Pacific shores of Central America

www.bica.info

From the Caribbean . . .



Beloved of Jesus,

Greetings in the special name of Jesus. We must glorify Him by taking up His cross and purpose. God in Heaven, please help us to know and to do.

Striking news: God loves to party. It's biblical. But what kind of party? Super Bowl? In Luke 15, we see what turns on and sets off heaven and earth. In the early verses, friends and neighbors rejoice when THINGS are found. In the latter part, God rejoices and is exceedingly glad when the DEAD become ALIVE. What happens? There is kissing, acceptance, a robe, a ring (to do business in his father's name), shoes, fatted calf, and eating. Let the celebration (party) begin! Be happy! There was music and dancing. Wow! Let the good times roll!

Friends, it is party time in the church. We must generate the heart of compassion in each other. We must have the heart of God in order to be His people. God's mind-set is to bring people to repentance and celebrate the event. Just think, if we would have a really exciting party to receive the new people who are now alive. That would change them—the hugs, kisses, laughter, promises to serve and love them. We could get to know them in a special way, arranging to spend time with them, and in the future would solidify them. They would say, "Praise God, I have found life! I have a special family!" They would be like a little child opening their presents. Wow, and again I say, "Wow!" The day of salvation is the most fantastic day in our eternity. No day is more worthy of celebration. Party hard and often. The greatest event in life needs to **be** the Greatest Event in Life.

Brother Arnaldo Lux reports from Honduras for August: Totals: 966 visits; 477 Bible studies; 41 baptisms, 22 restored. Part of the work was to establish a house church in Dionisio, El Progreso, Honduras. This also included a campaign in San Juan Pueblo.

Brother Erick Garcia reports from Nicaragua for August: Campaign in Sutiava, Leon: 32 baptisms, 10 restored. Weekend assignments: 5 baptized, 23 restored. Wednesdays in Dulce Nombre (new church since June): 9 baptized. 19 House churches: 17 baptized, 1 restored: Erick: 5 baptized, 4 restored. Totals: 110 baptisms and 38 restored = 148 saved. A first-year student, Arnulfo Sanchez (16 years old) had 9 baptisms in August. Nice work! Glory to God!

Roberto Alvarez reports from Guatemala: Evangelistic campaign work with San Marino Church of Christ: 29 baptisms, 3 restorations, 398 contacts. Before the campaign, this church had 37 members. With one week of campaign by the BICA students, this new church almost doubled. Glory to God! Weekend work serving the 23 small congregations around Guatemala City: 44 baptisms, 44 restorations, 67 disciples for teaching others, 1,118 contacts. Totals for August: 73 baptisms, 47 restorations. (Every year, BICA in Guatemala City receives requests from more congregations to be included in the weekend work.)

See page 2 for an excellent article from a recent church bulletin of the Maryville, TN, Church of Christ, printed by permission from the author.

To make donations for Honduras and Guatemala, mail to P.O. Box 788, Belton, TX 76513. For donations for Nicaragua, send to Northside Church of Christ, 3401 North 3rd Street, Temple, TX 76501.

May God bless all that you do. Always, please, Always pray for us.

In Christ

George Hall

Trying to Produce the Effect Without the Cause

By Jonathan Jones II (printed with permission)

Dr. Jerry Jones was one of the featured speakers in 2012 at the Spiritual Growth Workshop in Orlando, Florida. I recently was blessed to listen to an audio recording of one of his lessons called “The Church as the Body of Christ.” I have transcribed a powerful point that he made that I think we should all deeply consider:

“When we talk about the pattern for the church—the pattern for the church, folks, is Jesus. I want you to remember what I just said here. The early church preached Jesus, and they practiced what they preached. If you don’t remember anything else, remember that statement. When you are talking about the pattern for the church, you are talking about Jesus.

One of the issues we have to deal with is what I call *cause and effect material*. What we have done is we have failed to recognize the difference between these two things. Acts is *effect material*. The Gospels are *cause material*. Keep that in mind. What we have tried to do sometimes is to reproduce the effect without the cause, and we can’t figure out why the effect is not doing so well.

(Then he gives this illustration): You drive down the road and you see a cornfield. You say, “That looks like a good cornfield; I’d like to have a cornfield like that.” So you buy the field across the road. You go over there and cut that man’s cornstalks down and plant them in your field. All of a sudden, you look, and your cornstalks aren’t doing so well, and you can’t figure out why. “Oh, I know what the problem is! He has a sign in the corner of his field that says, This is a cornfield’.” So you go over and put a sign in the corner of your cornfield, but that doesn’t help it. “Oh, I know what the difference is! The difference is that he has a fence around his.” So you build a fence around yours. And it still doesn’t work, because you didn’t understand the cause of what produced the corn to begin with.

The power to do what you find in the book of Acts is found in the Gospels. That is why you don’t diminish Jesus and the Gospels. We have tried to reproduce the effect without the power. The power is found in the Gospels.”

Our job is to make disciples of Jesus. Our first work is to convert people to Jesus. One of the reasons why we have not been more effective evangelistically is because we have tried to convert people to the church instead of to Christ. A list of correct doctrines does not motivate a transformation of life. The story of Jesus is what draws people to obey. Once a person has been truly converted to Christ, obedience to doctrine will naturally come (John 14:15). Rather than starting with the “effect” of the church and her doctrine, let’s start with the “cause” of Jesus and the Gospel. Before we get to the body, we need to start with the head!



Baptism in Honduras