



*A letter to current and future generations of
Latin American Leaders*

We, pastors and leaders from different countries and denominations, send this letter to you, the younger Latin American evangelical leaders. We do not write because it was required of us, but because of a deep desire in our hearts, because we love Christ, we love His Church, and we love our younger fellow servants in the Gospel.

This letter is an attempt to express what we feel for you because we are older and have had many years of experience in Christian work, also because we want to be of benefit to the present and next generation of servant leaders. This letter has no theological, ecclesiological, prophetic, missiological, or institutional purpose.

We write to you at a time in history that will be remembered as a world-wide milestone. These circumstances have reminded us that the Church is much more than a temple, and they are challenging us to look for new ways to communicate the message of the Word of God.

We honor those who came before us.

For more than 100 years and before we rose as local leaders, foreign missionaries, preachers, colporteurs and evangelists came to our countries. They were sent first by historic churches and missionary entities and later also by independent churches, who wanted the Gospel of salvation to spread in these lands. In times of persecution and scarcity they sowed the Word, in season and out of season, and in many cases they were not able to see the result of their efforts.

Many of them buried their children or their spouses in our countries, and they did so because they were obedient to the call of Jesus Christ. They founded churches, built chapels and temples, taught home Bible classes, trained new believers, opened theological education schools, and published books and millions of pamphlets that they distributed freely. We honor them and look forward to the day when we can give them thanks in the presence of Christ. (Rom 13:7; Heb 11:32-40)

We also honor the churches that sent them, and we are in debt to those generations that obeyed the command to go to the end of the world. They risked their health and their lives in the ministry.

We deeply respect those who, in almost all of our nations, were martyred for Christ's sake and their love for us. Others starved to death or suffered severe persecutions.

In the same way, the first evangelical believers in our nations showed decisive boldness when they trusted Jesus Christ and incredible courage when they spread the Gospel, even at the cost of their own lives. Each nation and denomination has their "heroes of the faith" that we do well to remember, and we must teach new generations about the feats of their lives as testimonies that each believer can learn from.



We honor organizations and servants.

Many well-known organizations and servants have significantly blessed our continent. It would be impossible to make a complete list of all the specialized organizations that invested resources and tenacious resolve in our nations. We honor those who have made available to the population millions of copies of the Holy Scriptures in different versions and languages. They are translators of the Bible, the different media that transmit the message, the organizations that serve children, young people, women and men, the publishers and distributors of Christian books, teachers and theologians, the schools of preparation for various ministries and many more who were and have been used by the Holy Spirit to make us what we are.

The contributions of these organizations and these dedicated servants — from historic, free, and pentecostal churches — have left a strong legacy for the coming generations.

We recognize errors and unfinished business.

We want to ask you, the generations who follow us, for forgiveness for the things we did not do and for the things we did wrong. We were not always agents of respect and unity, and we did not always reflect the character of Christ in our lives. The Heavenly Father's grace has reached out to us, but it does not free us from humbly begging you to overlook our failings.

During our time of ministry, there was a necessary transition of power in the churches and institutional authorities from foreign hands to national hands. In some cases the transition was peaceful, and in others there were conflicts and tensions that damaged leaders and believers on both sides.

We thank God that, as the years have passed, gradually relationships of mutual respect were restored, and in some cases the interdependence that ought to function in the flock of Christ was established. While we included indigenous Christian movements in formal church structures a little more than the leaders who preceded us, we recognize that we have not done it in the fullness that it should have been done. We beg you, the leaders of today and tomorrow, to include with respect and trust all the brothers and sisters in the faith from the different backgrounds and origins.

Many churches have recognized the importance of women's ministry in the life of congregations and in others this is still in progress. We recommend that you continue on this path. Looking back, we also see that in some cases we allowed ourselves to be openly carried away by political positions and personalities, both of the left and of the right. Today we realize that the Church has to maintain a position above temporal politics, preaching the values and eternal ethics that are based on the Bible.

Steps we have taken with the help of the Holy Spirit.

In all our years of service, we have not been ashamed of the Gospel.



In all our years of service, we have not been ashamed of the Gospel. This is how our parents in the faith lived, and we continue in their footsteps. While renowned evangelists preached the Gospel in massive public gatherings, thousands of common and ordinary believers in all our nations, day after day, lived and shared the Gospel with their families, neighbors and colleagues.

We want to mention the Latin American women who from the beginning were the principal force used by God to spread the Good News. God used them all for the extension of His Church.

The Gospel is the heart of who we are! We ask that you not forget that the churches and institutions you inherit were created thanks to the Gospel and evangelization. (Rom 1:16; 2 Tim 1:8)

Our pride has been and is the Lord Jesus Christ. We believe in Him, in His life, His teachings, His passion, His death and resurrection, His heavenly ministry now for us, and we believe in His second coming — may it be soon!

We confess that we have repeatedly failed Him, just as His disciples failed Him; but we have found in Him forgiveness, restoration, consolation, and the strength to rise up and serve Him again with all that we are. (1 Cor 1:31; 15:3-5)

We have tried to be Bible-centered. The Bible has been our text, our comfort, our instructor, our corrector. We confess that we do not understand it as we would like to, and for this reason we read it and study it every day. We implore you to build and continue your lives, families and ministries holding fast to the irreplaceable Word of God. (2 Tim 2:15)

The Church in Latin America was founded on the bases of Bible distribution. International and indigenous translators have done an enormous job, and today Bible translation is the responsibility of all the Church.

In contrast to the defined denominationalism of the past, we decided to expand the tent of fellowship (koinonia) to reach out with spiritual and fraternal relationships among historic, free, and pentecostal churches. That spirit drove the formation of different entities and the creation of national evangelical councils that bring together leaders from a wide range of denominations.

From this, the cross-denominational respect that has blessed our continent grew. (Is 54:1-3)

Given that various theological positions exist among the evangelicals of Latin America, we adopted the Lausanne Covenant as the doctrinal platform for our united efforts.

This Covenant has served us very well because it declares the cardinal and essential points of the evangelical Christian faith and leaves other important points to be discussed by each individual denomination. We recommend that you consider the Lausanne Covenant for similar purposes.

At the end of this letter, there is a link to access this document.



Representatives from Latin America have formed an integral part of the great world evangelical congresses such as Berlin (1966), Lausanne (1974), Manila (1989) and Cape Town (2010), the three meetings in Amsterdam (1983, 1986, 2000) and many others. Each of these conferences have issued documents that we recommend you study.

A word of encouragement and blessing to new leaders.

You are now guiding the Church in a time of strong ideological opposition, growing inequality, overwhelming corruption and idolatry of the profane. It is not the time to be indecisive or allow fear to overcome you.

As God says in the Bible: "Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young . . . Be strong and courageous . . . Be holy in all you do. . . Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind . . . Love your neighbor as yourself . . . Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. " (1 Tim 4:12; Joshua 1:6; 1 Pet 1:15; Mat 22:37, 39; 2 Pet 3:18)

Learn from the history of past generations and avoid making the same mistakes. Stand firm in the cardinal truths of the Christian and Biblical faith. Love God more. Preach and practice the Gospel, which is the Good News of salvation in Christ Jesus for every person.

Don't allow changes in culture or society to change you. On the contrary--allow God to transform you and use you to redeem the harmful elements of the culture and develop the culture of discipleship, following the teachings and example of the great Master, Our Lord Jesus Christ. Trust in God's sovereignty, for despite unexpected events, and even through them, He fulfills His eternal and sovereign purpose for the Church at all times.

Jesus' disciples gave their all, their very lives, for the cause of the Gospel and filled the world of their time with the words and the works of the Gospel. Now it's your turn. Not only our continent, but the whole world awaits you to give and show the message of true hope in Jesus.

We remind you, and bear witness that "God did not give us a spirit of cowardice but a spirit of power. " It is time to preach the Word and "defend the faith once for all given to the saints. " It is time to "make every effort to keep unity in the bond of peace."

It is time to "run the race with your eyes on Jesus, the author and finisher of the faith" because "we are more than conquerors in the One who loved us!" (2 Tim 1:7; Jud 1:3; Eph 4:3; Heb 12:1-2; Rom 8:37)

We are sure that you will go far beyond us. A Biblical, visionary generation.



A generation of prayer, evangelistic, committed to the social responsibilities of the Church and to all that the process of "going and making disciples of all nations" signifies and implies.

In the power of the Holy Spirit, the present and the future are ours!

This is not a farewell letter--quite the contrary. Our generation will continue to serve the Lord with all our might until He calls us or comes for us. We want to someday say like the apostle Paul with humility, but convinced, that "we have fought the good fight, finished the race, kept the faith" (2 Timothy 4: 7). We want you to be able to say the same someday in the future.

Finally, we pledge to pray for you in the assurance that, as you always have, you will continue to pray for us.

Together serving the King,
Sunday 12th pf July of 2020

<https://www.lausanne.org/es/contenido/pacto-de-lausana/pacto>

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