

August  
2008 

*"I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you..."*  
Jer. 29:11

Greetings, Dear Friends of GTC,

This month, we are privileged to share the story of a brave and dedicated pastor, who was met by many obstacles throughout his ministry, and yet, providentially was lifted up by God's righteous right hand.

Pastor German Diaz was born in Neiva, Colombia. His father was one of the wealthiest merchants in town, and held in high esteem by the local government and Roman Catholic hierarchy of Neiva.

German's conversion to Christianity led him to study God's Word so deeply that he developed a passion for ministry. German began to teach bible studies that grew into a small church. He passionately and faithfully preached the Gospel. As his small congregation grew, the Roman Catholic bishop also grew—worried! He called for a meeting with German and congratulated him on his charisma, but warned him to stop preaching from the Bible and start teaching what he, the bishop, would tell him to teach. German graciously declined that advice and the bishop warned him that if he did not obey him, he would be excommunicated from the Roman Catholic Church, and that such a move would cast an embarrassment over his father and family. "In all respect to you and to your office," replied German, "I cannot stop preaching from the Word of God. And besides, your Excellence, since I am not a Roman Catholic, there is no real need to excommunicate me!" At this, the bishop arranged another meeting, this time with German's father. The bishop informed Señor Diaz that, because of the influential status of the Diaz family in Neiva, it would be best to perform a ceremony of excommunication of his son, German, from the Roman Catholic Church, during a High Mass, at which time, Señor Diaz would publically disinherit his son, Pastor German Diaz.

The ceremony took place. Present were members of the high society, the governor, the mayor, and other government officials. Señor Diaz was perceived as a hero to the Roman Catholic Church and the city of Neiva.

Pastor Diaz was not only disinherited, but he experienced a great deal of persecution in his town. He discovered that every place he rented for the church, the rent agreements were suddenly cancelled, forcing the church to move many times. The government refused to hear his legal complaints.

Since the Roman Catholic Church influences much of the political workings of the city of Neiva,

the bishop ordered a street in front of his residence to become a private area. This caused a large restaurant, immediately adjacent to the bishop's house, to cease operations.

Under God's sovereign plans, the restaurant owner began to rent the building to Pastor Diaz for the use of the church. The building opened every morning for prayer, besides midweek evening and the Lord's Day services. The bishop himself would occasionally stop at the door to observe the worship services. However, it was not long after that the government changed the designation of the street from private to public, and the restaurant owner rescinded the lease to the people of Iglesia Reformada Agua Viva, Living Waters Reformed Church.

German and his people immediately began to pray, and eventually found an open area that was available for purchase. But the money was not available, the interest rates were 36%, and the banks also knew of his "forsaken" family status, and did all they could to prevent him from building a church.

And so, in the very early hours on Sunday mornings, the entire community of Living Waters Church would carry chairs and benches to hold an open air service. German Diaz also began to attend the seminary conferences held by Gospel through Colombia. There he met and spoke with Dr. Bruce McDowell, Vice President of GTC, and Dr. Noé Acosta, Executive Director, and German shared his story with them. Bruce and Noé surveyed the site where the congregation of Living Waters Reformed Church was meeting, and they were deeply moved and awed by God's blessing on this church. The location of this available piece of land was ideal—right in the center of the prettiest and wealthiest part of town!

When they heard of the outrageous interest rates from the banks, GTC proposed to help German with a low interest loan. When German heard that GTC had obtained a loan from a Christian investor at 6% interest, he dropped to his knees, crying out to God, "*Papito, Papito, gracias por su bendición. Estábamos orando por once años, y hoy usted contestó!*" ("Daddy, Daddy, thank you for your blessing. We have prayed for eleven years, and today you granted us your answer!") German still has a Heavenly Father! German kept his face on the ground, thanking God for a long time.

When the settlement was made on the purchase of the land, the entire community purposed to BUILD the church with their own resources and labor. The leaders capably organized the project, and every day the members of the church contributed something to the labor, often after their regular working hours. Since Neiva is a center for decorative tile, some of the tile was donated from leftover lots. The floor looks like a beautiful mosaic, a testimony to the mercy of God. The church members developed a sweet union of fellowship and love—contagious to anyone who visits that church.

Within three months the church was ready for full service, including Sunday school and choir. Noé and Mimi Acosta had the privilege of being there for the dedication service. *As Noche de*

*Paz*, Silent Night, echoed from the church, curious townspeople came out on their balconies to listen to a “choir of angels”.

Since GTC’s involvement with this church, the government now recognizes Pastor Diaz and his church.

German’s father began to suffer from Alzheimer’s disease. Although German’s father could not restore his son to the inheritance, German cared for and witnessed to his father. To God’s magnificent glory, Señor Diaz died as a Believer in German’s arms.

This June, I visited Pastor German Diaz and his Iglesia Cristiana Reformada Agua Viva. This church is a perfect testimony to the glorious sovereignty of God and his mercy upon His children. This church community is faithfully paying back the loan received through the Christian investors, exemplifying its integrity.

You can see how the Lord uses your prayers and contributions to GTC. If you are inspired to invest in the Kingdom of God, I humbly urge you to consider helping with the GTC Church Project Investors. If you are interested in learning about it, please call 386.738.6898. The investor will be truly blessed! Please pray for this ministry.

It is always and only for the Glory of God!  
Bryant Skinner, Jr., President of GTC

***WOE TO ME IF I DO NOT PREACH THE GOSPEL! (1 Cor. 9:16 ESV)***

**Gospel through Colombia, P.O. Box 741034, Orange City, FL 32774**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

I shall commit a partial scholarship for \_\_\_\_\_ pastors for \_\_\_\_\_ years at \$180 per year each.  
Enclosed is my contribution for the month of August 2008 \$\_\_\_\_\_. Scholarship:  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_