

**"ANNOUNCE GOD'S MESSAGE AT ALL TIMES"
(PREACH THE WORD IN ALL SEASONS)**

"Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season..."

2 Timothy 4: 2a

The apostle Paul wrote Timothy to encourage him to preach the word in season and out of season (announce God's message at all times). So following this recommendation of the apostle Paul, Timothy had to give importance to preaching the message of God. In the same way we have to announce the message of God, the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, the word of eternal life. Each of us is called to announce God's message. God's word brought blessing to our lives. The gospel helped us to recognize our sins, to repent, to be born again, and it gave us a new spiritual life. The gospel we received gave us true joy.

Throughout history, Latin America has had many problems of violence, guerrillas, poverty, earthquakes, floods, crises, etc. But the biggest problem that we can see in our countries is the problem of sin. Many think that the biggest problem in Latin America is poverty and that is why many Latinos go to other countries such as the USA or Europe to seek a better life and to be able to solve the problem of poverty in their families. But poverty is not the main problem.

I lived in an environment of poverty, with five brothers and a father who abandoned us. Poverty certainly caused pain in my heart because I had nothing to eat; I sold donuts on the street and I helped my grandfather who was a street sweeper to receive tips from people and to buy clothes. My life was very sad because of poverty and I lived at the top of a hill in Mexico City. That's why when I was a child I thought that when I grew up I would like to earn money, have a house and buy a television. But actually the biggest pain-causing problem for me was that at a young age I experienced sin through fornication and incest. I wanted to resolve the conflicts caused by my sin through psychology and by reading self-improvement books. But this did not help to solve my inner problem.

When we hear the gospel, the word of God awakens our conscience and helps us to recognize that we are sinners and it also helps us to hear the voice of our Father God through his Holy Spirit who seeks us. The gospel helps us to know that God is our Father, that he loves us, and that he sent his Son Jesus Christ to save us.

Certainly in our continent there is a lot of poverty but there is much more pain because of sin and because of the meaninglessness of life living in sin. I did not find a meaning for my life either. When I was 18 years old, while talking with a friend at the door of her house, it happened that a car that was going up the hill had a brake failure, causing it to fall backward and running over us both. In that accident my friend died and I was left with fractures and marks on my body. Even though I had survived, they thought I was going to be paralyzed. But I didn't thank God that I was alive. For me, living or dying was the same.

What every man and woman needs is to hear the gospel. May it help us to recognize that our life was given by God! The gospel helps us understand that we are children of God and that we should live a holy life. Our continent is full of the sin problem. Certainly, Latin America is a continent with a lot of natural and cultural beauty, which is why many tourists come to visit. However, there are many who suffer from adultery, materialism, homosexuality, alcohol-related problems, murder, incest, envy, lying, idolatry and more. There is a terrible spiritual darkness pervading this continent because of sin.

When I entered the university I was invited to study the Bible. I rejected it because I did not want to recognize myself as a sinner, nor did I agree to give tithes and offerings to God. I thought that money was only to solve my poverty problem and not for God. But by rejecting the teaching of the Bible I lived like the Prodigal Son in this world, dirtying my life with sin in brothels. Living in this sinful environment, the police arrested me, stripped me and accused me of selling drugs. My life was dark, chaotic and empty. But God had mercy on me and in a Bible conference he helped me listen to his message in John 8:11 "Neither do I condemn you; go now and sin no more."

Knowing that Jesus did not condemn me I was able to confess all my sins and I received the grace of forgiveness and God gave me the great joy in my heart of the Holy Spirit. Upon hearing the forgiveness of my Lord Jesus, I cried and cried as I felt so much peace in my soul and relief in my heart to know that I was forgiven by God. I felt great freedom to leave all the burden of my sins on the cross of Jesus. I felt great joy and freedom, so much so that I felt I was flying higher than the birds. I experienced great happiness in my soul when I found God my Heavenly Father who did not condemn me.

By this undeserved grace I decided to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. In doing so, God helped me to be established as a shepherd of his sheep, guided me to marry by faith, helped me finish my degree and get a good job. I came to work in an office of the Mexican government as

head of an area with a high salary. In reality, I did not live praying for world mission but little by little, I forgot the purpose of my life and my marriage to live for the mission of God and to be a source of blessing for UNAM, Mexico and Latin America. This relaxed me spiritually and I began to be tempted in my work by a female worker. I was slowly wrapping myself in sin with her. God made me see my condition and I wanted to flee from sin. I thought that if I stayed in Mexico I would die in sin, but if I went out as a missionary then I would die as a missionary. So I chose to die as a missionary rather than die in sin. I quickly wanted to go out as a missionary. I didn't even want to confess my sin because I was so ashamed. So I bought two tickets for my wife and myself and we went out as missionaries to Peru.

Arriving in Peru, being at the airport, we told the taxi to take us to the closest hotel to the Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos. I prayed to God: "Lord I don't want to take the plane flight back." But in reality, I didn't want to live a life of sin, because I already knew that Jesus is my Savior.

Paul told Timothy to preach the gospel at all times, to announce it, even if that moment doesn't seem like the best." Perhaps it was not the best moment of my spiritual life, although I had an acceptable life in my work, but God used this difficulty in my work to send me to Peru as a missionary.

While in Peru I understood why I did not die in that accident where my friend died. God wanted me to know him and be saved from my sins and God wanted me to serve his gospel in Peru. We began to serve the history of Peru with great joy, but soon the difficulties arose through health, work and visa problems.

For almost a year I couldn't find a job. I cried out to God saying, "Lord, nobody gives me a job, but you have a job; give me a job." At that time God gave me his word from John 6:37b "... and whoever comes to me I will not cast out." Although the companies I was applying to rejected me, God did not cast me out but He welcomed me. I only prayed to God: "Lord, don't let me go back to Mexico." I didn't want to go back to Mexico because I didn't want to go back to my past life. Now God has given me a stable job as a teacher and a resident visa in Peru.

Many young people were invited to meet Jesus. We left our baby at home watching television so that M. Eugenia could go to campus to go fishing while I went to work. During the conferences we would leave our little son with the neighbors so that we could serve young people. But they all left. This caused great sadness and pain in our hearts. However, in due time God raised up two young people, Shepherd Jorge and Shepherdess Caty, who,

loving God and his word, grew in faith and were established as the first marriage of faith in Peru. This marriage of faith was the work of God, and even M. Sara Barry and other servants of God came to Peru to bless this union. Now Shepherd Jorge and Shepherdess Caty are growing as coworkers in the faith.

Paul told Timothy to announce God's message at all times: "Announce it, even if that time doesn't seem like the best." This year it seems that it has not been and is not a good time to announce the gospel. But although it does not seem to be the best moment, Paul's exhortation to Timothy was not to look at the circumstances but to focus on God's message. Not always are the best times or the best conditions conducive to proclaiming the gospel. On the contrary, it is in difficult times that the gospel has been announced the most. For example, the apostle Paul was in prison, but despite his condition, while there he wrote several very deep and powerful letters. Also because of the persecution of the first century many Christians were scattered to many regions of that time and the gospel reached faraway places outside of Jerusalem.

Due to the terrible crisis in Venezuela, many Venezuelans left their country. God used this crisis also to fulfill his will for the gospel to be preached and our brothers now serve new chapters as pastors and missionaries.

For many years it seems that it has not been a good time to preach the gospel. However, even in these circumstances God calls us and allows us to share his word. In Peru, we currently serve the worship service using Zoom. In our worship service only Shepherd Jorge, Shepherdess Caty, sister Margarita and my family attended. Now, many other people such as Ana Cristina, Ruth, Caty's nieces, sister Jaquie and our families from Mexico are beginning to participate in our services through Zoom. Our brothers invite their friends and family to Bible study on Fridays and worship service on Sundays. Those who cannot connect by zoom listen to the message on WhatsApp. Also, I record the Sunday messages for them in Zoom, in audio and in a PDF file, and then we share them so that they can listen to the message. And Shepherdess Caty serves the 1:1 Bible study by Zoom. In the school where I work, I share the word of God with the students every day.

As Paul encourages Timothy to preach the gospel even if the situation does not seem to be the best, so in this pandemic crisis through social networks the gospel is being announced. Although it may not seem like the best time, even in this situation we must preach the gospel. We have to announce this message of salvation and forgiveness of sins through our Lord Jesus Christ

who paid for our sins on the cross and who rose again on the third day and ascended to heaven and will return again.

This pandemic is another sign of many that our Lord Jesus said would happen. But he also said that it was necessary for the gospel to first be preached to all nations. Many people have died from the coronavirus, but also many people have died from cancer, and many others die every day from various diseases. But the most terrible death is that caused by sin because it leads us to hell. But when we receive Jesus in our hearts we have the forgiveness of sins, salvation and eternal life.

Let us pray to continue announcing the message of God at all times, even if the situation does not seem to be the best.