



Equipping Servants... disciples making disciples

James Update July 2021

Finally, brothers, pray for us that the Word of the Lord may speed ahead and be honored, as happened among you! (2 Thessalonians 3:1).

Greetings from La Paz! God is doing remarkable things in response to your prayers, and we thought you might be encouraged hearing about it.

ESI in La Paz: For the very first time since we started ESI in 2002, the Lord allowed us to study the Bible with a Prosperity group in La Paz. In the early years of ESI, we received quite a bit of resistance when we invited them to study the Bible with us. But God did an amazing thing a few years ago when the church's seminary director saw his need to study the Bible, went through ESI, and in studying Romans came to faith in Christ – he has a powerful testimony. God is using him to point many people to Jesus. Formerly his seminary involved 50 people watching faith healer Cash Luna videos; now they have 2000 people studying Romans and learning what it means to walk in the righteousness of Christ.

Last Saturday 30 of his leaders graduated from ESI. What a privilege for me to be a part of that and hear how God has been working in their lives over the past 3 years. Some admitted they never studied the Bible before. Others saw the Bible as a self-improvement manual, and were at first angered and then surprised to learn that the Bible is God's story of rescue from sin through the death of Christ. They were also surprised to discover that the Christian life is not about people making themselves better, but about Jesus forgiving our sin, reconciling us to God through Christ's blood shed on the cross – and transforming us daily as we repent of our sins and rely on Christ's righteousness and the truth of His gospel. Many expressed thankfulness to God for giving them Biblical friends to encourage them in mutual discipleship.

COVID in La Paz: Debbie and I have never seen so many people around us die in such a short amount of time. Almost every family we know in La Paz has lost at least someone in their extended family. Even some in our church did not make it. This WSJ report shows COVID death rate in South America at 8x the world average: <https://www.wsj.com/articles/south-america-is-now-covid-19-hot-spot-witheighttimes-the-worlds-death-rate-11624299176>. The reason for such a high death rate? – protocols might be off; we are dealing with the Brazilian strain that affects young people. In the midst of great suffering, our church has been active caring for the sick and grieving. God has given great openness and many opportunities to talk about Jesus. As you might imagine our ILC pastoral team is beyond exhaustion as they go on helping and caring for people month after month without relief.

Training in Africa: It is a huge privilege to be able to support Egyptian Pastor Philip and his Streams of Living Water ministry across North Africa. Muslims make up a full one quarter of the world's population. Streams' training centers are training and mobilizing church planters all across this region, and God is bringing abundant fruit in the way of new believers and new churches. I have been developing materials and curriculum for these training centers, and will be in Egypt in September to train the trainers, as they get ready to start new groups in October. I also plan to visit the centers in the different countries.

Thank you for praying with us,

Kip & Debbie James

Our Purpose

To honor Christ by strengthening local churches to be true to God's Word, thinking, living, and serving with the Gospel at the center.

Pray for ...

- The 1700 active ESI participants in 160 groups in 14 countries. Pray that church leaders will grow in their passion for Christ and His Word, and in their commitment to disciple believers to know Christ and make Him known!
- That pastors and church leaders would stop walking alone and walk together in Biblical friendship — to experience Gospel-centered unity.
- For Streams Ministry in North Africa, for the church planters they train up and send out into very difficult locations.
- For Deb and her ILC women's ministry.
- That God will encourage Pastor Pepe in his pastoral ministry in the ILC Church in La Paz.

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