



STARTING A

SPANISH

MINISTRY

In An English Speaking Church



Written by:
Uziel Hernandez

About the author

I, Uziel Hernandez, was born and raised in Mexico City. I lived in a Christian home growing up and have attended different churches in Mexico and in the U.S. I moved to the U.S. at the age of 13. Finding a healthy church to call home was a journey that took me and my family another 13 years. I can understand and share my struggles that have helped me shape the Christian I am today and can share my story. I have found Faith Bible Church and it's a church I can call home. I have learned sound doctrine and have been able to find a community of like minded individuals who want to glorify God and want to grow in Christlikeness alongside me. I am Married to my beautiful wife Jimena and have two boys and another boy on the way. They will grow up in different circumstances than I did and will speak the English language way before I was able to do so but I write this book to help address some of the challenges I was presented with growing up in finding a place that I could call home and I could call home that still allows for my culture and my first language is practiced yet a place where my children will grow up and still be able to have a community of believers and solid teaching. I want this to be available to the potentially millions of Hispanics that need Christ and the thousands who are looking to start or grow a hispanic ministry within your church context.

Table of Contents

Starting a Spanish Ministry in an English Speaking Church.

Chapter #1

Understand the Need 19

Purpose: This chapter aims to understand demographics and statistics and trends that can help identify the need and direction of the Hispanic church in the U.S.

- A. Spanish Across the U.S.
- B. Understanding the needs of Spanish speakers.
- C. Growth of Hispanic population and need for the gospel

Chapter #2

Overcome The Obstacles 20

Purpose: The purpose is for the leaders/church to be aware of what they are up against when starting a Spanish ministry. Some of the cultural challenges that need to be met.

- A. Shortage of biblical churches.
- B. Catholic background and pentecostal background.
- C. Problem with integration to the church
- D. Language barriers and cultural barriers.
- E. Cultural and Generational barriers.
- F. Teachers and training.

Chapter #3

Identify The Need. 33

Purpose: I want to be able to identify that there is a need for a Spanish ministry and some of the factors that would indicate that one needs to be started.

- A. The need will present itself.
- B. Speaking english does not mean being comfortable opening up in english.
- C. Needs that are unique to spanish speakers.
- D. Parents and family of those that are native speakers.

Chapter #4

Caring for Spanish speaking brothers

40

Purpose: There will be certain things that will need to be done to care and love for our Spanish speaking brothers to be accommodating to their particular needs.

- A. The support that is needed from the church.
- B. Financial support.
- C. Spiritual support
- D. Resources available to Spanish brothers.

Chapter #5

Start taking action

50

Purpose: This chapter is intended to give practical steps to take towards starting a Spanish ministry and the things needed to do so. Community Group blueprint, translation, Special activities, outreach events etc.

- A. Translation ministry.
- B. Growing the church
- C. Gospel centered teaching.
- D. Integrating the church message into the Spanish message.
- E. CG
- F. Special events
- G. Community

H. Accountability

I. Special events and fellowship.

Introduction

The great commandment in the bible is to make disciples and teach what you know to be true in order that God be glorified and the message of the gospel goes out into the nations of the world. But this does not have to be done in a foreign land where the word has never been preached (although it can be) but there's plenty of opportunity to reach people that have not been reached and talked about the gospel of Jesus Christ. In our valley we have a vast majority of English speaking individuals but we also have a Spanish speaking community that has been mainly neglected where poor teaching and preaching prevail and most do not know the true gospel of Jesus Christ. This may seem like a specific topic in ministry however there's a growing population of hispanics in the United States that is in need of coming to Christ and to become more like Christ. Just like any other people group they need a Savior. Sadly this particular group has been vastly misled in great part due to tradition they inherited from their culture. Although there is great richness to the hispanic culture and many values worth keeping, like friendliness and a sense of community that is not found in many other cultures, as a culture there's a deeply rooted catholic background that has carried out in how people know God and perceive Him.

Most hispanics will tell you that they believe in God and that they cling to the teachings of the bible. However this is vastly cultural as this is a tradition for most people and not a way of life. Most Hispanics can call

themselves catholic because they were once baptized and their family is catholic but they have no intentions to live a life that actually in any way reflects biblical teachings. This is a cancer that has spread for generations and generations and is simply a way of living.

In order to understand the problem we must get down to the roots of the culture and the way of thinking of the hispanic population. Although hispanics are from different countries and they are from different backgrounds there are some similarities that can't be overlooked.

In this book, we will discuss how Hispanics are a unique population and how we can best serve this population especially in an English speaking environment. We will dive into the cultural differences and what makes Spanish speakers unique as a group people. If there's anything that will be learned in this book is that God cares for his people. He cares for all believers from every race and tongue. And He died for every brother and sister without distinction of race or culture. This is the beauty of the Gospel. Israel is God's first chosen nation and there is a special place for them in scripture and in the story of God and humanity. But when Jesus came to die in our place there was a dramatic change to our destiny as humans. Now all people from every tongue and nation could be part of God's plan. With him tearing the veil that separated us from God he offers salvation to people from every race, every town in every background. "But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;" 1 Peter 2:9 (NASB95) they call these people extends to more than just a select group of people.

And this is amazing news for everyone who is not a Jewish dissent which is most people. And with a growing Hispanic population in the United States. It is no wonder why this book is relevant, God wants Hispanics to take part of his family and his kingdom. And we need faithful men and women who will carry out the gospel into this community. This is why churches must care about this, because the Church business is God's business and God is in the people business. May this book serve for His Glory and the good of others.

Chapter 1

Understand the need

The United State's first settlers came to this country with the notion that they would have religious freedom that they could not enjoy in their country of birth. Since the birth of this country we have seen many many people from all over the world move to enjoy this very same freedom that our first founders enjoyed. One of the largest groups that has moved to the United States is the hispanic population. Geographically speaking this makes sense. Just south of the border we find Mexico who is entirely Spanish-speaking. If you go down a little further we find Guatemala, Belize, el Salvador, Honduras, Bolivia, Columbia, Venezuela, Peru, Chile, Argentina, Costa Rica, just to name some.

Spanish across the U.S.

One thing they all have in common is that they speak Spanish. Cultures are different, food is different traditions are different but the one common denominator is Spanish. It should be no surprise that Spanish is so widely spoken only second to Mandarin. It has more native speakers than English with approximateley 460 Million Native Speakers. Considering there are thousands of languages in the world this is no small group of people. The great commission caused all Christians to take the good news of the gospel to every corner of the world. Everyone must hear the good news of

Jesus Christ. Missionary work is certainly a fantastic way for the good news to go out. It takes a special kind of person who has been called to go out to the nations and invest themselves in a different culture and language for the sake of the Gospel.

If one is called to the missionary field this calling should not be ignored. God has a special place for those who go into the world and preach the good news of Jesus Christ where it has never been preached and if this is your calling this is something that you need to prepare for and if the Lord sends you out into the nations then this is something that you need to pursue. The things that will be talked about in this book will be helpful for men who have the calling of a missionary, which means to do church somewhere else. However, for most Christians this is not a calling or a possibility because they are called to do church where they live.

It could be that there's responsibilities that would be neglected or simply that there's no calling to do that. However even if you are not called to be a missionary you are called the bible clearly calls us to still share the gospel and do so within the means that we have. You might not be able to share the gospel to a different country but you can share the Gospel to people in your country that may be from a different country. And we find plenty of opportunities to do that in the United States and many other countries for that matter. If God has gifted you with the ability to speak another language in this case Spanish, then you must use that ability for His glory.

In the United States there are an estimated 42 million people whose primary language is Spanish alone. In the state of California it is estimated that about 45% of the total population are of Hispanic descent. And most of those who speak Spanish and will have family members whose first language is Spanish. This makes hispanics them the largest minority group in the state of the United States making up about 18% of the total population. Sure there are a lot fo hispanics that have been in the United States for many generations. In fact some parts of the country formerly belong to Mexico making them automatic citizens of the United States. But the vast majority still keep their language and they keep their heritage and many of those still only communicate in Spanish in spite of living in the U.S.

Understanding the needs of Spanish speakers

What this means to us is that there's a huge population group that needs to be reached in the United States for Christ. We don't need to look very far to find people who are dying without Christ every day. There should be a sense of urgency to share the gospel as Christians. But in order for us to do this we don't need to look very far. We can start here at home. And this is why I believe this book is a very important book because it is highly applicable to the current situation of this country into the shifting and ethnic composition that we are seeing more and more every day.

I write this book as an average Christian who happens to be a Spanish-speaking believer in the United States. I would like to speak to the hearts of all of those who are either involved with the Spanish speaking ministry or those who would like to in some way support the ministry. And I

can speak to this because I have seen the great need unfold right before my eyes and it is something that I'm passionate about. I want to see people's lives be changed and I want to see more hispanics come to Christ and the only way to see this happen is be part of the solution. We have to be willing to be part of solving this great need not only because it sounds like a noble thing to do but because it is commanded by our Lord Jesus Christ.

Hispanics come from different backgrounds and different customs. But most of the Spanish-speaking people will have a strong Catholic background. This has been ingrained because of the Spanish conquest that took place. This has been one of the bloodiest indoctrinations that ever took place. The Spanish would tear down temples from the needed to build Catholic churches. They also went as far as building images that would look like them and the Virgin Mary for example looks like a native. With that being said it is not just a religious duty to be a Catholic but it is a cultural duty. Among most Hispanic families our way to honor your family is to be a good Catholic. This does not mean you have to be involved in the church or even attend for that matter. But you just have to claim that you are Catholic. Get married by the Catholic Church to baptize your kids. It is rare for somebody to actually understand the doctrine of Catholicism or even to be a practicing Catholic that regularly attends mass on Sunday. Sure there are other religions that exist in Spanish speaking countries however by far the most dominant is Catholicism.

With this being said a great number of Spanish-speaking people in the United States only means one thing a great number of people with a

religion who claim to have a relationship with God but they do not. It is just that, a religion. This could be looked at it in a negative light, but it actually is a great opportunity. It is a great opportunity for the English-speaking church to help the cause of the gospel and do missions here at home. It is also an opportunity for those who speak both English and Spanish to help expand the kingdom of God with such great need.

And this is not a Spanish-speaking issue only. There are many languages and cultures that are found in the same position with different religions that they follow but with one common denominator they are all in need of Christ. You see the United States used to be known for being a country of Christianity. Although not perfect but most countries would look this way if they wanted to know anything about the word of God or the gospel. This country historically sent out missionaries to the world and try to evangelize the world. And God is still doing great things in this country however we see a major shift in which lesson this is this country being a country that believes in the word of God and adheres to it. The foundation of this country is there. God has blessed us nation beyond belief and that's why so many people around the globe want to come here. But because of such amazing blessings because of parents not teaching their children the word of God this country has more or less lost its sight on Christ and has not focused on materialism and self indulgence. This should not be a surprise as Romans one tells his dad this will happen. However we know that Christ still has many people among the city and it is our responsibility as Christians to reach out to those people.

If you have been given the gift to speak another language could be Spanish or any other language then it is a great opportunity to take the gospel to others that may speak that language. There doesn't need to be great missionary work or you might not necessarily need to leave your country or go to a foreign land. All you need is to be faithful to the word of God and begin within your means. Begin with your neighbors, begin with the people around you, start spending the work of God at home and let those who are gifted in who are called to go as missionaries do that. And we should support them but realistically speaking most of us do not have a calling.

Being born in a Christian household I was brought to many churches since I was child. I have attended church in Mexico where I'm from. But I have also been to many churches in the United States. Because when I first came here I didn't really speak that language very well we always went to churches that had some kind of a Spanish ministry. And we went to different ones but it seems like most churches that we went to we're not biblical. I now realize that because I did not understand what a biblical church was back then.

Most churches that I have been to usually had one pastor. There was never a plurality of our elders. It was a one pastor and it was mainly his family that ran the show. The problem with this is that the Bible calls for a plurality of elders there's not just one elder mentioned in the Bible. There could be a teaching pastor or there could be a certain elder who is gifted at a certain type of ministry but not just the pastor. Most churches that are establishing in the United States tend to be with a Pentecostal background. They believe in the power of healing, they believe in miracles they believe

and prosperity gospel. If we look at the Bible all those things are possible to God God can heal God can bring prosperity and God can do miracles. However when people are coming to church not to glorify the one true God then we run into problems. This is because people only come to church to fulfill their own selfish needs. They are not trying to know the one true God and to be him they are trying to see how God can fulfill their desires and how he can make them be who they want to become. This is an inherently wrong problem that is not just found in a Spanish-speaking church but it is found in the heart of man. Unfortunately the Bible tells us that man will do mass for teachers that tickle their ears with doctrines that are convenient to them. This is the case with a Spanish-speaking church in the United States. I have found very few biblically sound churches in Spanish.

Good biblically sound churches are hard to come by but they are especially hard to come by in Spanish. This is why this is such an important topic to discuss because our Spanish-speaking brothers and sisters are dying every day without knowing Christ.

Most of the churches for Spanish speakers are usually unhealthy churches. I know that because I went to a number of them. And I am now found in a biblical church that teaches the word of God and I can understand how much of a difference that actually makes in the life of the believer. If we truly care about the word of God and we truly want to see the kingdom expand it then we need to care about the quality of churches that are available to the people of God. But quality churches do not just happen. Quality churches come from quality men who have been instructed in the word of God who are passionate about seeing the kingdom of God grow.

My search to email a good church took years to come by. It was one bad church after another, it was one bad experience after another until God's sovereignty brought me to a church like FBC. Luckily that's where I started my family but I am sure that I went through those difficult broken churches because I needed to know what a biblical church looked like and what a ministry looks like. It is not that I want to start anything special but it is that I would like God's word to be upheld in the church as if it was the most important thing because it is the most important thing. There is so much collateral damage to bad ministry and that's why I would like to dive deep into how to find and start a biblical bible believing ministry that would have it's goal to glorify God and to teach others in the spanish-speaking community what a church that is biblical looks like.

Growth of Hispanic population and need for the gospel

The growth of the Hispanic population in the United States there comes a great opportunity. This is to share the word of God this is to have a strong church that is being built in Strong ministries being built. Faith Bible church which is the church that I attend is a church that I can say with great confidence is a biblical church. Because there isn't any biblical church in the area that I live that is a Spanish-speaking church. A ministry was started in this church in order to meet the needs of the Spanish-speaking brothers and sisters. This is what I would like to dive deeper in. It has been a huge blessing to have Spanish ministry that not only is biblically sound and teaches the word of God but has great fellowship and needs the cultural needs of those who are involved. This is the greeters gifts that I

have to be able to speak the language but it is now my responsibility to share the good news and to speak to those who are looking to start this type of ministry in their church but are not sure how to go about it and what the indications that this needs to be started are. The growth of this particular populations is a need that must be met head on and Spanish is not going away any time soon because so many people that speak it have the need of a ministry that understands them and their needs.

Chapter 2

Overcoming the Obstacles

After reading the needs that the Spanish speaking population faces living in an English speaking country you might have realized that there's a real need to understand and grow the Spanish speaking church. As Christians we can not stand by and watch his church be led astray or not do anything at all for that matter. "And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." (Mathew 28:18-20) This task however does not come without its challenges. But the problem that we face here is not that there aren't enough Spanish speaking churches to go around as we do see a number of Spanish churches popping up. The problem is that there's a severe scarcity of churches that are teaching the sound doctrines and that have the right teaching. We have churches ranging from a couple families meeting together to midsize to large churches that have a full worship team. There is a great variety of Spanish speaking churches but there are many similarities in between them.

Shortage of biblical churches.

I remember as a child going to many churches in the U.S., we were trying to find the right church to go to. And every single time my family and I ended in churches that were not biblical until we found the church that we are in now. I would like to give a brief description of what a lot of hispanic

churches look like in the U.S. to get a better understanding of what we are dealing with. The church is usually led by one guy. He is the teaching pastor typically and he is the one who has control over everything. He is the only authority, he may have people around him that he consults but there's no one above him or ever at his level for that matter. Ministry leaders were typically family members or related in some way. Other than that the only ones that made the cut to lead were people that were known to do everything the pastor said without questioning anything, regarding the pastor as the highest authority as if he was obeying God when obeying the commands of the pastor. And all that is related to money and finances is handled by the pastor or a family member never discussed with the church. In terms of doctrine it is usually a doctrine that is charismatic or as they call it led by the spirit. The sermons are overly emotional and they attempt to pull strings in the heart and emotions rather than to the knowledge of God and the understanding of his word. They are usually full of promises and most of them are not founded in scripture, it typically is about finances and healing and victory. The worship music differs but it usually has an emotional feel to it and very often very little scripture if any at all. Usually the worship group put an emphasis on sounding good, and putting on a show and creating an ambiance of worship. This is a church that is typically led by interpretation of the bible based on what God tells the pastor. There's usually not a solid doctrinal statement if there is one. There's usually great anecdotes and examples told by the preacher but it doesn't consist of reading the scripture. People rarely feed the proper doctrine of the bible and the church usually holds to teachings that are out of context. Churches range from very spirit led and feeling driven. To churches that are extremely legalistic that will measure your holiness in whether you keep a

certain rules that the church holds to such as dress, music that the congregants listen to, abstinence from alcohol and dancing, and many external factors such as attendance and dress. Following all these rules will put you at a better position with the church and will give the appearance that you have a higher level of spirituality than those in the church.

This description obviously has many variations as there are many churches out there.

It is impossible to sum up all the Spanish speaking churches in the U.S. and across Latin America but sadly this is a description or a variation of it that would describe the majority of Spanish speaking evangelical churches.

This is not a pretty sight for the Church of Jesus Christ but we must remember that He is still in control and he will lead his church and those who are elected will never be plucked from His hand. With that being said our hope is not lost. There are some churches out there that are biblical and they're following the word of God to lead the church. Reformation is coming to Latin America and God is doing great work in some churches. And we have to remember that even in churches that are not very biblical they are people that truly love the Lord, one to honor him that just do not know where to find a biblical church or simply cannot get out of the one that they are in because of lack of a better option.

Catholic background and pentecostal background.

Culture plays a huge part in people's lives. It affects the way they think about the decisions that they make and also what they value most. This is no different for the Hispanic culture. Most Hispanics will consider themselves to be Catholics. Most practicing Catholics that are Hispanic do not really have a true faith of their own. Catholicism is mainly inherited through the family line and to be a good member of the family means to be a good Catholic. In most cases however people do not take their faith seriously but they are very zealous of the fact that they are Catholics. And the problem is not that most people hold to the teachings of the Catholic Church but the problem is that the family is very protective of these values. To renounce Catholicism in many cases means renouncing your family ties and betraying your family and your traditions. This is a cost and most people are not willing to pay therefore will just continue on with the tradition that they receive from their parents. The problem with Catholicism is that it has a doctrine that is works based. Most of the teachings of the Catholic Church encourage people to do good things to be a better standing with God. They also encourage the appearance of holiness in a mostly demonstration of your love for God. Unfortunately this is very deeply rooted in the thought of most people. So they relate God to doing good things for others and working their way up to heaven. Of course the Bible talks about doing good works. "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them." (Ephesians 2:10) The Bible does call us to do good works, but this good works should spring forward from a regenerated heart. The Bible clearly says that God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them. However this must come from an internal change that has taken place. God first has to do the regenerating work in our hearts so that out of that three

can be changed and good works. This is huge and this is not just catholic teaching but this is human nature to want to work your way to salvation. This is however not the message of the gospel of Jesus Christ and this is very hard for most people with a catholic background to understand and to accept.

Because of this when these people get converted to evangelicals and they carry a lot of the same baggage from the Catholic Church. God can change the heart of these people but a lot of these people don't have the tools to be able to read scriptures for what they are and understand that salvation is by grace alone. I remember for years and years in my childhood not knowing whether I will save or not and this wasn't because I didn't see through in my life or I was interested in Jesus Christ. The main reason that I wasn't sure is because there was never a clear teaching I believed in my heart that if I had a good day and obeyed the word of God and did what a Christian does I was saved. On the contrary if I had my thoughts bad actions and just wasn't close to God that I feared that I had lost my salvation.

This carried with me for many years and I never was able to figure out how I could be sure of my salvation. This is one example of how an unhealthy church can have such a big effect on the people. If there isn't a healthy view of who God is and the gospel peoples life will directly be affected by this and their decisions will be affected by this.

Another big problem that arises is that people when they come to the United States they are looking for a church similar to what they have at home. Unfortunately in Latin America there aren't very many healthy churches. So we have this massive influx of people who are looking to find

a church exactly like the one they left. Many of them are disappointed, many of them are frustrated for the fact that they cannot find a church like the one they left back home. And this could be a number of things from teaching, to worship, two different events that they had. Unfortunately this creates a divisive environment for people who are not like-minded each seeking for the exact same church that they left. What is up happening is that the churches try to recreate the church that they left back home. Did usually ends up working out in a family starting a church that meets at a home without a clear distinction of roles or a group of elders to lead the church. This is very dangerous as the Bible is clear of what a baby church should look like. When growth occurs in this church there's usually a disagreement because there's not a strong leadership. A lot of these churches result in a split and we have what I like to refer to as bacterial growth, or growth by division. The people on one side will go one way and the people on the other side will go in a different direction. This is not what Christ wants for His church. We are one body and one mind for the kingdom of God. This is never what the church was intended to be or how it was intended to grow. One of the bigger problems that the Hispanic church will face is that there will be many unqualified leaders that will rise from these churches. This is Mimi because in the settings of small churches amongst those who started someone needs to write and become a pastor. A lot of these people do not have a calling or simply just don't have the tools to be prepared even though the desire is there. This does not mean that God cannot raise elders and pastors from a small church setting but this does mean that people who are not qualified to lead Ministries are leading ministries which leads to even more bad teaching and bad leaders are racing from those ministries. And the chain goes on and on and on.

Problems with integration to the church.

With some of the problems mentioned above the Spanish speaking church has had trouble integrating with the English church. It is common that an English speaking church will partner up with a Spanish ministry to grow the church and have a way for those who have family members that only speak Spanish or who are most comfortable learning about God in their native language can do so. This can be an amazing way of growing the church of Christ. However there are some dangers to keep in mind. When we have individuals that are used to doing church a certain way it can be difficult to integrate the church. Time and time again I have seen Spanish ministries that started with one vision for the church that ended up wanting to create a different culture altogether from the English church that started.

Sadly many times this can be a platform for men who do not love the church that might be looking for a platform to project themselves. This is something to be extremely careful with because sometimes these people can seem very godly in the eyes of the English speaking Elders or teachers but there is no supervision mainly because of the language barrier. This can create a dangerous scene for the church because there is no integration. The Church is not one heart, one mind and there is no common goal. Not only is this dangerous but is putting the people that go to church at risk of being led astray.

In this book we will discuss some of the things that are key for church integration so we must look at that with more care but for now we must

understand that this has to be done the right way and this has to be done with wisdom. There is a real danger for false teachers and prophets to infiltrate into a church because there is no accountability, no supervision and there is no clear scriptural guidance in many cases. This is a recipe for disaster

The biggest take away is that there are a lot of hurdles to overcome, but we have to know that God loves his Church. And we have to know that he wants people from every race and every tongue to come to know him and enjoy the riches of His love. So we must push for this end goal as it is the reason that we are here on this earth and to reflect Christ.

Another big problem that we find within the church is that people want to come in find the exact same church so they came from. This could mean that they did things a certain way back home. Certain practices that they do not see here in that is discouraging to them. We have had people that have left because certain music was played or simply because the preacher was not dressed in the way that they thought they should be dressed.

Newcomers will usually associate the preferences of the church with biblical truths that are not laid out in scripture like that. But they believe that by not practicing them they are being disloyal to what they know to be true. We know that the Bible has a clear outline of what are the church priorities and how they will play out. I think this is not just a problem for Hispanics but it is hard for them to find the church that they left in their home country then someone who lives here that could easily find a church like the one that they used to go to. This can be a challenge because they will have to be

worked with to help them see what a biblical church looks like and why things are done the way they are.

Language barrier

They should be in obvious one every speaking of a Spanish ministry in the United States. However there's more than meets the eye here. Coming into a different country and living in that country without having control of the language can be a rather traumatizing and life changing experience. This is because communication is at the core of who we are as humans and when someone is not able to do that there can be some self consciousness issues as well as some frustration. Even sometimes there can be some kind of resentment from not being able to understand. This is not necessarily personal but someone who will feel automatically distanced from someone who does not understand their language. This is only natural, so there tends to be a natural division between English speakers and Spanish speakers. It can at times even feel like they could be some kind of rival or just two different types of people. The bible tells us that we are one body in Christ.

“For even as the body is one and yet has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ.” (1 Corinthians 12:12)

Our goal should always be integration for the church, this is what Christ wants: His people will be one people and his church is one church. There should be a sense of unity and this is possible through His blood only and through his sacrifice. If we are one body then we must integrate people

from every culture and every background. The church should be a place where no one feels excluded because we all have one Lord and we all have one goal to glorify him though all we do. With this in mind and understanding there are going to be difficulties that arise from a multicultural church. We have to remember that we have the greatest similarity and the most bonding characteristic that anyone can have which is being brothers and sisters and sharing the same hope of eternal glory. There's nothing that can bring us closer to one another because we have the same father. We are of the same family and we have the same goals and purposes in mind. We can help each other get there. In the coming chapters we will discuss how this integration can happen and what are some of the key ways to integrate the Spanish speaking church and to do so in a way that most glorifies God and brings Him glory.

Cultural and Generational Barriers.

Another problem that is important to mention is the separation that there is sometimes between generations. Growing up in a different country definitely influences a person. It influences your culture and how you think about things. It definitely influences your upbringing. Your upbringing will influence the way you will live your life and your perception about life. A lot of Hispanics who came here when they were already adults grew in a completely different setting than their children will grow up in. Most children will feel comfortable with English being the language that they will use the most. This is because they will go to the school where they are only taught in English they will have friends that will speak in English. The only place that they will really learn Spanish is at home and not parents encourage the

language. And sometimes we have a disconnect from parents who would rather learn about the word of God in Spanish and the children who feel rather disconnected if they are tied in Spanish. That doesn't mean they can't learn anything or that the word of God will not have an impact on them if it's done in Spanish, however we have to understand that culturally there will be more identified in English. This also leads to a problem that the parents will often take their children to a Spanish-speaking church only and their children will feel completely disconnected from the church and therefore will not be fed the word of God. They may be around peers that are going to the same situation but when sitting in the messages or listening to the worship music it's me just feel like it's something they will only do in a church not something that they can take home and understand. This is my church integration with Spanish and English that is so important. Have to understand that we must bridge the gap that can be caused by cultural separation. In the next chapter we will discuss how this can be done and what the word of God says about this topic.

Teachers and training.

One of the biggest challenges that I have come to encounter within the hispanic culture is the lack of qualified men to be able to teach or to lead the church. It is very common among the hispanic churches that there is a lack of qualified men. One of the problems is that there is not very much church training available for men. This means that most people who are teachers in the church have not gone through any kind of training or do not have any informal training other than having attended a church. This poses a problem because this means that almost anyone can be a teacher. Some

teach out of necessity because no one will do it so they have to step into that role, and some will want to teach but they do not have the tools to do that. In many churches the problems of women preachers will be present because there simply is not enough man that will take up that task and do it. The needs a lot of the times are not met by the church because most of the times the elders (if it's there's a plurality) will not have much formal training themselves. Now I'm not saying that every elder or teacher must have gone through seminary because that is unrealistic and not everyone is at the stage that they can do that but it does mean that they must have at least have to have gone through some training though their church and have been verified as teaches and that they do have the gift of teaching. The problem is that if anyone can be a teacher we will get many low quality teachers rather than the ones that are truly qualified. And some of those people that got a chance to teach in their church with little to no training will want to have the chance to teach in a church here in the us. One of the things that we need to help the hispanic culture understand is that training is very important. This is submitting to a program at church or simply being disciplined and accountable to someone who is qualified that you can learn from. The training center for example at Faith Bible Church has been a huge help for me to understand the ins and outs of ministry and to be able to have the necessary tools and knowledge to go out and do the work of God. This was new to me as I have never been in a church that offers formal training for the members of the church and I can see how much this actually strengthens the church not only because it has helped me personally but I can see that man that have gone through the training have been able to serve the church and take on rolls that further expand the kingdom. This is also a loving thing to do because man that get trained are

able to go out and serve in other churches and this furthers the kingdom of God as well.

Chapter 3

Identifying the Need

The need will present itself

As a leader or elder in a church Ministry how can it be identified that there is a need for a Spanish ministry to be started. The Bible is clear when it tells us that “John He *said to him again a second time, “Simon, *son* of John, do you love Me?” He *said to Him, “Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.” He *said to him, “Shepherd My sheep.” (John 21:16)

A big part of being a pastor or a shard comes from knowing and understanding the needs of your sheep. We must be listening to what the needs of the church is and then be able to act on them. This is different from being a people pleaser and compromising the word of God. The word of God should never be compromised in order to please people. However there's the other side of the coin when a particular need can be ignored. Some of the signs that we want to look for to realize if it is a good time to start a Spanish ministry. One of the first signs that you need a Spanish ministry is the fact that you have a number of Spanish speakers at your church. This may sound like a simple concept but it is too often overlooked or not tended to and most churches. This is not because the pastor doesn't want to see the church grow or that the staff does not care about Spanish speakers in most cases. This is largely due to the fear of starting something new in the church that most leaders would not be comfortable in. It could simply be the fact that they feel that they would be unable to help if you

need a rose so they just decide to put this on the back burner. However this is not going to make the problem go away so we need to take some action if they need to arise. There are some ministries that may not be the focus of a church largely because they are not what the church is supposed to do but when it comes to starting a ministry that will serve people and help them grow in Christlikeness we should always be interested in serving this need.

There's usually a group of people that will start gathering or will be most comfortable with each other. In my experience we realized that there was a need because we noticed that a group up hispanics will always get together after the service. They all attended an English church but they would talk about the word of God and start helping each other understand the message. Most of them did this because they had family members that were coming to FBC and they were coming along with them. Or they came to the church because their children like the youth ministry and they decided to come to the church as well to see what this is all about. Many times there were also families that had had bad experience with many Spanish speaking churches or they were looking for a church that had sound doctrine and this church was nowhere to be found so they ended up trying an english church. There are many circumstances for which Spanish speakers will end up at an english church but regardless of the circumstance God brought them to the church so we need to care for them.

This will form an unofficial community that will be attending to to church, they will be part of the body many of them fervent believers who love the word of God and want to learn more about the Gospel and grow in holiness

but this may be hindered due to the lack of resources that are available for them to learn the word of God and from their ability to understand that messages every Sunday.

Speaking the language might not be enough.

Nobody really likes to admit that they do not understand something. This is because most people will be embarrassed of not knowing something we're not understanding something. This is no different with the English language so a lot of the times people will feel way more comfortable learning in their Spanish town but will not say it because they are embarrassed of being criticized or not knowing the language. The church is a place to learn about God not a place to learn English although the Bible tells us that we strive to do things as if done for the Lord and the Spanish-speaking brothers should make an effort to learn English the church is not a place for them to feel excluded. The church is a place for them to be fed the word of God and for them to be instructed in fellowship with brothers of the faith.

As someone who has lived in the United States for most of his life I have learned the language and the culture and I feel really confident in speaking about many different topics in English. In fact there's certain things in my life that I can only think about in English because I learned in English. For example, things related to my work in which I first was trained in English. Things related to what I learned in school or things related to the things that I have primarily learned in English naturally come to me in English. Things that are important for life however are always mostly thought about or understood in the person's native language. This is because there is

something about someone's native language that has the most powerful effect on someone because it touches on who that person is.

There are many instances when we have people that speak both languages that can totally go to the english speaking service and be fine for the most part but they prefer to speak to Spanish when it comes to their faith.

Needs that are unique to Spanish speakers.

Hispanics greatest need like anyone on this earth is to know and come to Jesus. Like everyone else they need to grow in holiness they need to grow in knowledge of the word and they need to grow in repentance. They have a lot of the same needs than most people will have. Obviously it is very hard to generalize because everybody has different needs however they're no different than most people. They are prone to be prideful, they are prone to covet, they are prone to lie, they are prone to lust, and this is not because they are hispanic. This is because this is the nature of humans since the fall. The fall brought the curse of sin entering the world and this affects hispanics just as much as it would affect anyone. However there are some needs that are unique.

One of the main tasks that we need to focus on when it comes to our hispanic brothers is to make sure they understand the fundamentals of the faith. So often I encounter people that claim to be christians and that claim that they know the Lord yet they do not understand the fundamentals. The problem is that in a lot of the churches that they may have been prior to joining a biblical church. Sometimes the fundamentals of Christianity are not there and this comes though in the theology and the way that scriptures are handled. It is far too common to encounter people that make a doctrine

out a verse taken out of context. For example, this is making a doctrine out of a verse like that of

“For where two or three have gathered together in My name, I am there in their midst.” (Matthew 18:20)

This is a verse that is commonly used in prayer meetings to say that God is really listening to their prayers because they are two or three gathered.

This is not the authors' intended meaning but the problem is that many people use this verse to secure their prayers being heard. This is one of many examples that can be brought up that are rather superstitious and not biblically founded. This is a common problem among hispanics and it is reflected in the way people live their life and the way that they see God.

Another fundamental problem in theology is that of the understanding of the attributes of God. It is very common for people not to understand who God is and humanize him. This is making him like a human and giving Him attributes that are unique to us. This is easy to do because our tendency is to have something familiar that we can relate to. But this will lead to an erroneous understanding of Him.

This also leads to elevating an attribute of God over another. This can pose some problems as to understanding the role of the believer and what God expects from the believer. For example if a believer elevates' God's love as a more important attribute of God then they will have the tendency to believe that God will love them no matter what and that they are not responsible for their actions because God will forgive whatever they do.

See that poses a problem because God is also a God of Justice, God is a God wrath and God is a God of order just as much as He is love. We can not forget that the moment that we elevate one attribute of God over the other this changes our entire view of God and who he is for us. This is why

the fundamental character of God. This is one of the greatest needs of understanding the basics of the character of God and the foundations of the Christian faith and basic theology.

Understanding the plurality of Elders.

This is something that should be considered part of the fundamentals but you would be surprised how many Spanish speaking Christians I've never even heard of the plurality of elders doctrine. I can attest to this because in the many years that I was in churches that were not biblical it was assumed that there was one pastor that would take care of the congregation only. Sure there were other people in leadership but there wasn't anybody else that would be able to take charge and make the hard decisions. It was always a pastor only the pastor and if he decided something then that's what the church had to do. And for the most part he couldn't be challenged, not even by the Bible because he claimed that the Holy Spirit will reveal to him what the Bible is trying to say and give him wisdom to make whatever decision it is that he wanted to make. This is not what the Bible talks about. The Bible always refers to the Shepard's and the elders in a plurality.

“For this reason I left you in Crete, that you would set in order what remains and appoint elders in every city as I directed you,” (Titus 1:5) The bible is clear when it tells us that there is to be a plurality of Elders so it is something to watch out for as the tendency will be towards thinking that one guy runs the show and everyone else is under His authority.

Need to be in the community.

One of Christian's greatest needs even if they don't realize it is to be in community. This especially true for Hispanics that are typically living in an English-speaking community. It is because typically there aren't a lot of Christians people they can communicate as easily with let alone other Christians. This is why the church should be a place for the community where they can meet other people that are like-minded that would like to glorify Christ. The Christian life is the best life, knowing your creator and knowing he cares for you. Also being part of the greatest plan in the greatest kingdom and knowing that he wants you to be part of it is the best thing that could ever happen to anyone. But although it is the best life it is not the easiest life. To the Christian life we experience many trials, we live in a world that hates Christ and therefore if we love Christ they will hate us too. We realize that there are many circumstances where a Christian will need someone to talk to, this could be about a current struggle, or it could also be to share victories or discuss a topic that may not be clear in the life of the believer. But this should also be a place for accountability where a Christian can tell somebody else about his struggle and can keep accountable on his progress.

Therefore this constitutes one of the greatest needs for Spanish speakers to be dissatisfied in the skit only to be filled in the contacts of the church.

Chapter 4

Caring for Spanish speaking brothers

So exactly what is it that the church can do to help the Spanish ministry and how can the Church support the Spanish ministry?

Part of the job of the leadership in a church is overseeing the different ministries that are available and realizing the needs of the saints in a church. This is part of any healthy leadership as the bible tells us that the leaders should Shepard the sheep. In fact this one of the commandos that Jesus gives John who would become a key part of His church. "He *said to him again a second time, "Simon, *son* of John, do you love Me?" He *said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He *said to him, "Shepherd My sheep." (John 21:16)

And a great part of shepherding is caring for the individual needs of the sheep. So what are some of the ways that the church can help our Spanish speaking church flourish. Here are some of the things that we need.

Encouragement.

This may seem like such a simple yet often overlooked part of the help that the Spanish ministry will need. Too often the English and the Spanish ministries will seem to be working independent from each other. Like one didn't have anything to do with the other because they feel like different churches or culture. But this should not be this way as the church serves one matter and that is Jesus Christ.

One of the ways is to encourage the ministry. One of the most important things is to communicate with the ministry leaders. The Spanish speaking leaders will be a great contact point and the way to know the state of the sheep and what are the main concerns or things to work on. This is a vital part of ministry and it should be constantly practiced. No one will know the needs of the Spanish speaking members better than the leaders who are men that trust the Bible and want to see the members grow in faith and holiness. Some of the questions that are important to ask are.

What areas is the ministry having success in?

What areas in the ministry are struggling?

What is attendance like?

What are the needs of the members of the church especially those that are members?

What discipleship is there in place to help those who are not consistent in attendance?

Is there a particular family or congregant that needs special counseling?

What are some of the biggest obstacles that the church is facing right now?

These are all questions designed to engage with the Spanish leaders and also to open up conversation that might otherwise not occur.

Financial support.

Another important aspect of ministry is to have financial support. This may mean that there needs to be funds for outreach events or for certain things that pertain to ministry, this could be chairs for community groups. This

could be funds necessary to buy equipment for worship or to have outreach events. The most important tool that a ministry should have is the word of God. This should be a priority that needs to be in place but the ministry also needs financial means to function. We are not of this world and that is something every christian needs to understand but they need to be able still use the resources that God provides to do his work.

As a church, what we can do to help this ministry we should have a budget allocated to help with the basic things of ministry. Trusting that God will provide for his kindling and that he will provide for his people and for his work.

It is not that the ministry is dependent on money, the ministry is depending on the Lord but God gives us resources to be able to put at work in ministry so it is an important part of any ministry to have funds available to be able to do the work of God.

Spiritual support

Something that is going to be key for the ministry is a spiritual support. As a Spanish ministry is growing there will be support needed in many different areas.

Prayer

Another very important way of helping the ministry is by continuing prayer. Having these conversations is the first step but it is not enough.

Consideration to this matter and prayer are key parts of how to next help this ministry. Leaders are not supposed to know everything or have the answer to everything. But they are supposed to try to find resources and

answers to take care of the need. Coming to the Lord in prayer with regards to the needs of people should be the first thing that a ministry leader should do. Here is what the bible tells us about prayer. James 5:16 (NASB95)

16 Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.

Part of the relationships that need to be created involve accountability and confessing of sins to one another, but it also involves prayer. Prayer is often the most unused resource that a Christian has. We are so involved in doing and fixing and creating solutions to problems that it seems like often a burden or an extra responsibility to bring things to prayer to the Lord. But prayer is one of the best investments and one of the greatest tools that a Christian will ever have.

“Do not [a]be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and pleading with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. 7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all [b]comprehension, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.” Philippians 4:6-7

These words from Paul to the church of the Philippines could not be more true. Ministry is certainly something that could create some anxiety. This is because most of the times we feel like our success is directly correlated with our performance. There is one sense in which this is true and that God gives us the responsibility to carry out his instructions and work. But there is another sense in which it is not us who will do the work in ministry but it is the Holy Spirit carrying out the wishes of the father to grow his church and strengthen his people. So therefore it is so crucial that this ministry will

be supported in prayer. Martin Luther Says “To be a Christian without Prayer is no more possible than to be alive without breathing.” This cannot be more true also for the ministry. So one of the ways that we can help the ministry is praying for the particular needs as they come up when communicating with the leaders and praying for this ministry in general.

Support with doctrine and teaching

Another important point should be to discuss different material that the ministry should be studying. If the Spanish ministry is part of the church then it should also have access to the same material that is available in English. For example there are books that might be helpful for the Christian life and a lot of them will be also available in Spanish. It might be a good idea to make these resources available so that people can read long and understand what the church is also studying and be in tune. One of the things that have been extremely helpful here at Faith bible church is having also a summary of the sermon that was preached on Sunday. Everyone who will attend the group will have a different level of understanding. Some will have understood a lot of it some would've caught maybe half and some very little. But having a short summary at every community group meeting has proven to be extremely helpful. This may mean that the notes of the preacher need to be made available for translation as soon as possible so that there's time to prepare for the week after a short summary of the message. This will help people be in tune with the teaching of the church and will also engage them in a way that they would have otherwise not been engaged.

Doctrine is the foundation of who a church will ultimately carry out their beliefs. This is because what a church or a person for that matter believes that's how they will carry out their life. It is important that the Spanish church will have access to solid doctrine and biblical teaching. It is important to have a clear doctrinal statement in Spanish. As regular members of the church people should be able to identify, agree and follow the doctrinal statement. Not having one or not having people to it could lead to many difficulties. One of the most difficult situations that a church can have is having people with conflicting doctrines. This can arise from a number of things including and different churches that they came from where they might have taught them differently. This is part of helping people understand the gospel, at our church we have people who are becoming members affirm the doctrinal statement. And if they do not agree or understand a certain part of it here, encourage them to speak to an elder or somebody that can explain to them or help them understand. This is key to the health of the church because I want to make sure that the church is one heart and one mind.

The body of Christ should function as one unit. *“Now I exhort you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all agree and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be made complete in the same mind and in the same judgment.”* 1 Corinthians 1:10 (NASB95)

It is very common within the Hispanic community to have church divisions. Either because some people believe something that others do not. Or because they never discuss what they actually believed in forming the church and then problems arise. This does not mean that everybody has to be the same person or have the same preferences. Also doesn't mean that

the church is going to go around setting some kind of police making sure that everybody thinks the same way. Of course there's room for preferences and there's also room to have ideas and use your gifts as you have been uniquely gifted by the Holy Spirit. But there are things that are non-negotiable such as foundational things that have to do with salvation, what the church believes in and what the church stands for. Those are things that are not negotiable in the church or in the Bible because this is the way Jesus Christ set them to be and the bible is clear about it.

Support with Counseling

Counseling is as much a discipline as it is in art. This is because we have the side of the knowledge of the Bible. Which takes years to master and understand if worked at it with discipline, but it is not just the knowledge that makes a good counsellor but it is wisdom. And wisdom. In the words of Charles Spurgeon. "Wisdom is the right use of knowledge. To know is not to be wise. Many men know a great deal, and are all the greater fools for it. There is no fool so great a fool as a knowing fool. But to know how to use knowledge is to have wisdom."

This is exactly what a counselor is to do. Counseling is one of the greatest in the wars of the church because it deals directly with God's most precious possession to his people. This job is only fit for somebody who possesses both knowledge and wisdom and it's not an easy task. It requires someone to be both patient and persistent and it also requires somebody who has a love for people. In many instances the people getting counseled to not believe that they are getting help but rather they feel attacked or they may

be misled by the devil into belittling their sin or trying to prove that they are right. People are always prone to see the sin in others but are slow to see the sin in their own hearts. And this is why the work of a counselor is so important in the church. In the Spanish ministry this is no different. We have people that have difficulties or that may not know how to apply the bible in certain areas. They should be able to counsel the people. This is a way that the English ministry can support the Spanish ministry. If I assume that the Spanish ministry will be the smallest ministry I need to help equip and train men who will be able to be good counselors.

Support in Discipleship

Discipleship is so important for many reasons but discipleship could be summarized as intentional relationships with the purpose of coming to Christ or becoming like Christ. A church that does not have discipleship is a church that will not be fruitful. Discipleship is at the core of what we are to do as Christians. This is why it is so important to have a discipleship program within the Spanish community. We must train men and women to seek out others and pursue them in accountability and growth. This is an important part of his ministry but it also needs to be an important part of the Spanish ministry. The way that people grow in God designed the church is to have intentional relationships and there is just something about these relationships that can play out a huge effect in growth. We need to be mindful of this because this will not be a tendency that will just happen. This is something that needs to be taught and encouraged so that people are able to do it. Because it is not natural we must facilitate it. Whether the

English church can help with this is number one by showing it played out in the church. Leading by example is one of the most important things that can be done. The church needs to be a place where discipleship is just part of what the church does. Having this model and standard will greatly help a Spanish-speaking church to grow in this way as well. The church needs to teach on this and show how it actually plays out biblically.

Support in Equipping

Pooping is one of the most underrated things but it's certainly one of the most valuable things in church can have. Equipping means mending than finding the holes in the game. How this translates to ministry is finding the things that need to be fixed or changed. Are you getting this? It's going to come from men who truly want to do their best work for the gospel and the work of God. Who are constantly revising what is working and what is not in who are looking to be faithful and continue to evaluate how their performance plays out. Not in a way that is self-serving for wanting to stand out but in the way that they will be honoring Christ. This skill is valuable in many areas but it's particularly valuable in ministry. Sometimes a ministry or a church has done something mainly out of tradition or without a true biblical foundation. And it may be draining the resources of the church and not producing much fruit. These are the things that we want to make sure that are being addressed. We want to help the ministry be fruitful so therefore we can help our Spanish brothers grow this ministry as much as they can grow.

Other ways to love your brothers

A lot of these points are able to be summarized in this way: there is no substitute for training men and no substitute for investing in godly leaders that will lead his people. There's a lot of things that can be improved and methods that can be developed but without people who truly love the Lord who want to do his work and who are willing to sacrifice then God is able to work through those people and he is able to do great works. Another way that the church can help support the Spanish ministry is by simply being Christ-like toward the Spanish speakers, you do not want to make assumptions but it is better to ask. I had a situation where I was asked if I was part of another hispanic family that I had not met yet when I came to the church. Of course I understand that this was not ill intended and that there were many family members of that family but I think that could make some people feel uncomfortable. You also want to stay away from assuming things like they must work in construction or they must have a big family, or they must eat burritos. I know that these are things that could very well all be true. But most people want to be asked those things instead of making the assumption. Another thing that can be loving is just asking questions, approaching them shows the love of Christ to them. I know that sometimes it can be intimidating or can feel out of your comfort zone because you may not know what to say and questions to ask but remember they are just people like you and me and they want to know other people and not feel like outsiders.

Chapter 5

Start taking action

In the past few chapters we have learned that there are many specific needs for your Spanish speaking brothers that are unique to the ministry. But understanding the need is not enough, we must be able to act on the call in order to have a fruitful ministry. In this chapter we will be discussing what those things are and what are the things that a ministry can do in order to be better served and in order to be able to be a more fruitful ministry. What are the things that the church can make available so that the Spanish speaking brothers are better served.

Translation ministry.

Translation ministry is a very important piece that will help the Spanish speaking members to understand the teaching of the church and be in connection with the body. This is very important as we discussed earlier because we want the church to be one heart and one mind. The translation ministry will consist of a team of men who understand the word of God and who obviously are capable of speaking in both languages. Ideally you want to have somebody whose primary language is Spanish who understands English. This is because their addiction will be better when speaking in Spanish rather than him being somebody whose primary language is English. This will make the translation easier because at the end of the day the diction will be in Spanish. This does not mean that their Spanish is

perfect but it has to have a level of understanding so that the people are able to get the idea. The importance of having a person that knows the word is that in a given situation they will be able to think quickly on their feet especially something that may not be translatable in English. This is because sometimes there just isn't a word for something that's in English. Or there's a general understanding of what something is in English that just doesn't exist in Spanish. This will require some dexterity and also some practice. In the Faith Bible Church we lead trials before we begin the translation ministry. In order to be more effective we have run practices so that we would be able to translate the ministry live.

Another aspect of this ministry would be to do this for a live audience. As a preacher speaking we want to be able to get the message translated. It is very helpful to be able to have the preacher's notes beforehand to get familiarized with the content and not just go there without any background on what he's going to speak about. It is also very helpful to have notes that are transcript based but this is not always possible because of the different teaching styles and notes that different preachers develop. One thing that is very important is at least how the Bible verse is that the preacher is going to read. It is nearly impossible to flip through the Bible verses if they're not known ahead of time if one was to do the live translation. There has to be coordination and preparation for this because it is not something that could be just done on the spot. But we do at Faith Bible Church if the preacher will send his notes ahead of time. Usually a week ahead but there are weeks that he will send them three or four days before the actual date. It's really good when we get in a rhythm because we know when to expect the notes and we know how to prepare accordingly. There are times however

that the preacher will not have these notes ready until the night before. These are the things that we have to learn to adjust if we want this ministry to take place.

Speaking with Luis Contreras who is the translator for Grace Community Church he said that it is something that you just do when I asked him what his secret is. Meaning practice, practice, practice. That's how you get better at it. But it takes the right person to be able to accomplish something like this. We whenever we look for this person it has to be able to be. He has to be someone persistent, who loves the Lord and who can accept criticism if he makes a mistake or is willing to hear others and change something if it does not sound or mean what the preacher has to say.

This is an exhausting task. That takes a lot of preparation. It is also very profitable for the people so it is recommended that this is done by at least two men who are able to cover each other whenever the other one is not available. This can be alternated. However this does not mean that one person cannot do it all but we have to take into consideration his commitments and his effectiveness in order that she will not burn out and be successful.

This is a task that will require a minimum four hours to complete this task a week. Some weeks may be longer than others and vice versa but this can be expected to prepare for a Sunday sermon. When are the key things to also be successful in this ministry is communication with the person preaching. If there's anything that needs clarification or something in the sermon that is not clicking it is a good idea to be able to ask the preacher what he's talking about or to get better contacts. This will help greatly when translating it.

I never thought that would be important for the church to consider investing in devices that would be able to send a signal and have people with headphones be able to listen to the Spanish translation. This may be something that is an initial investment but as the ministry keeps growing it will be more and more beneficial to have. This can also be one way that the church can support this ministry financially as this equipment will be used in that manner.

Live translation is a great commitment for a church so I would advise that once there was enough of a need where you have a consistent group that could benefit from it. If there is not a large enough group for this to make sense then we can default to recording the translated messages.

Growing the Church

There are many ways to help the church grow. But when he comes to the Spanish service there are appointed ways that we can help to do this. Obviously we know that the growth comes from Christ. We should have this very present because we cannot have a mentality that we have to grow the church. He's the one that grows his church.

One of the first steps that we can do in growing the church would be to have a reach event. These are events that could be set up by the Spanish ministry in which the community will be reached out to.

It doesn't necessarily mean that you have to put together a community event however this is possible. But you can start by taking a long community event. It's already happening for example we had an event that

was put out by a Spanish community and they had a movie night and it was all in Spanish. What we did is that we used the ice cream truck that our church has and were able to contribute to the event and also share the gospel there. And also this serves the purpose to invite people to church. This will be a great way to have people that may have otherwise not come to church start a relationship and have an entry point. Some people may have thought about coming to church but may not have had any contact point or have no one inviting them. This is a great chance in which the church can do that. What is important to remember about these events is that there needs to be connections made. You can not expect to go there and have people just approach you and want to go to church. You must reach out to people and to make sure that they are talked to, listened to and they can see the love of Christ in you so that they can realize that this is a place that they want to be in. Not to draw them in just for the fun and the friendship but to show them that there is sweet fellowship in the body of Christ and that there must be something different about how Christians handle themselves and how the world handles things.

You have to remember that it is God that has the growth. And you have to remember that if this is going to happen, then God is going to make it happen. There is nothing that you can do to stop this but you do have to do what you need to do to be equipped for ministry ready for any challenges. It is important to identify the gift of the brothers of the ministry because they can be used in the area that they are strong and they can have a greater impact.

Gospel Centered teaching.

The gospel is the most central message of the entire bible, there's great wisdom in the bible and God tells us that "All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; 17 so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work. (2 Timothy 3:16–17). However, if there is one message that we would like to deliver to someone before they die would be the message of the Bible. So as a group we need to be able to focus on this great and fruitful task.

Community Group; The heart of the spanish ministry

There are many things that are essential to a ministry and there are other things that could be optional depending on the needs of the church. A community group is one that is essential. In an English-speaking church community group will be the primary outlet for Spanish-speaking ministry to take life. This is because this is where relationships will grow and community happens. A community group can be defined as its own community and culture within the church. It is almost like a mini church within the church. This is because a community group will have its unique characteristics that make it different from every other group. For example here at Faith Bible Church we have different community groups that vary between age groups locations and stages of life. They are community groups for college students, community groups for singles, community groups for seniors, community groups for blended families, community groups dad meet in an area and may not be specific in any of those things. A community group has much more value than the eye meets. In a large

group setting especially it could be hard to get to know people. Sometimes short conversations will evolve and overtime they will lead to friendships. But for the most part this is Carter for most people that are not as outgoing or may not want to get as involved in other people's lives. The Bible "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. (John 13:34) and unfortunately this is too often overlooked. More and more we have Christians that believe that they can be part of a church, listen to the sermons and be done and go home. They do not need to get involved in anybody's life in order to be part of a church. This is one of the more satanic lies within the church "so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another." (Romans 12:5) Unity of brothers and sisters is not something that would just be helpful but it's something that is commanded By God and our own good. "Bear one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ." (Galatians 6:2) no they said it is not possible to do church within a small community which you can have three of the following.

Discipleship

Discipleship could be defined as intentional relationships with the purpose of coming to Christ or becoming like Christ. If there's any trait of a church that should not be negotiable would be this one. This can sometimes make people uncomfortable because it requires that you open up your life and that you up your life and you openly discuss what's going on behind the scenes. Whether this is something that you are making progress for the glory of God and are experiencing growth. Or this could also be something where their sin in your life or there is an area that is still in need for great

growth. And so sometimes people feel uncomfortable especially in the United States because people tend to be very private about their life. They do not want to be out in the open where other people could think badly about them or criticize them for the way that they live their life. This is not what the church is about this is not what we are called to do. Instead we are too “confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed.” (James 5:16) And this is exactly what discipleship seeks to do, we are to have a relationship to be able to hold each other accountable and to be able. This is all to say that we can exercise discipleship in community groups and there's no better place for it. This is why the church must enable community and must help to

Evangelism/Outreach

Another clear purpose of the community group is to help people come to Christ. I know this may sound like something we've already talked about but there's great value in having people that have shown interest that are not yet believers to come and be with other believers. We understand that God is the one that is at work and he's the one that moves hearts towards Him. But as people become part of the community group and come to hear the word of God. The moment tells us that it is by hearing and hearing the word of God that somebody will come to Christ in their presence. We must enable that and we must be a group that is open for visitors that makes them feel welcome. Not compromising the truth but also having compassion and demonstrating the love of Christ on those who are new or have come to the CG for the first time.

Fellowship

Another important aspect of this that should not be missed is the fellowship. As Hispanics a great part of the culture is to talk and just be able to share life with each other. I think this is part of every culture but Hispanics really value a sense of community and to be able to have some place to come to that they can share what is going on with their life. This is one of the sweetest things that a Christian can enjoy is to be able to just talk with other believers and be able to share life. This obviously should have a spiritual focus, however all aspects of life for a Christian should involve the beliefs of a Christian. This is why talking about even the small things of life is a sweet joy. Friendships that are built in a community groups and one of the closest friendships that I hold personally. Getting to know other believers and encouraging one another is the best way to grow lasting relationships that will encourage us to keep growing in Christ. Some of the greatest convictions and motivators have come from relationships with people that are convinced of the same things that I'm convinced. It is sharing community that helps shape people to be more Christlike

Community Group Guiding principles

Another aspect of the community group that must be considered is the practicality of how the group is going to run. We must always have a schedule of what is planned for the community group. Not to say there's any room for flexibility if a special need arises or prayer needs to happen. However we should respect the times and be able to follow a timeline of what is to be accomplished in the community group. Hispanics are well

known for their ability to miss deadlines and begin services late. This may not seem like a problem but we have to remember that more than Hispanics we are Christians. And in Christ we always want to try to do everything with excellence. That said we should respect the start time and finish and the general overall timeline for the community group. For example a typical schedule for a community group in Faith Bible Church is sometime of reading time fellowship time typically lasts about 30 minutes. Then we get onto announcements and we talk about what's going on with the church and the different things that may have been missed by those who speak Spanish in the regular Sunday service. Then we move on to sometime worship depending on the available time this could be one or two songs. Then we get on with a summary of Sunday's sermon. This is done to strengthen the knowledge or filling the gaps that may have not been understood from people listening to the service in English or those who were not there would have an opportunity to fill it in on what was spoken. It is simply a review that is very helpful and valuable. Then after this we go into our small groups. This is where we can be very intentional about discipleship in about sharing and bearing on another's burdens. This is not a time where everybody just gets to unload what they wanted to say. But in a structured manner this should be a time where we could exhort and help each other grow by confessing our sins and seeing how we can biblically and practically overcome them. This is the time to be able to share what we are going through in a small group setting and be able to provide wisdom and be transparent. When people become more transparent they can really address the issue.

Something of great importance as well is to have someone someone grounded in the word that is able to lead the small groups. Which you don't want is a place where there is no guided conversation and everybody is sharing their experiences, feelings and nothing about what the bible has to say about it. This can be a common pitfall because often someone will want to take the lead that might not be biblically grounded and may say things that are unbiblical or simply not grounded in scripture. Since the Manny situation where somebody who is near to the group or who might be coming to the church for the first time and sit in the group have a lot to say about the Bible and what it teaches and they pretty much take over teaching wrong doctrine. We just have to make sure that this is handled with care. I'm not talking about cutting out a person who wants to learn or who may be confused but I'm talking about protecting the flock and making sure that someone that is trying to teach false doctrine does not get to do that. In a community group there definitely needs to be someone who is grounded in the word who can intervene or can explain better if something is not entirely accurate. Obviously we want to give people the chance to express themselves and to share their legitimate needs. But too often there are people that use a community group as a platform to project their own ideas and to teach something that may not be biblical.

Worship

In a community group we want to have some kind of worship. Every church has its strengths and different people with different towns. But if the church has somebody who is knowledgeable of the word who can have a musical

gift then this could be a very valuable thing for the church. I want to make sure the first of all this person is grounded in Scripture. That they know the Lord and that there's food in their life. Again we want to be cautious of anybody who is newer or anybody who may be looking for a platform to elevate themselves. Somebody who has the heart of a shepherd who wants to lead the church into worshipping Christ is one of the greatest honors that anybody can have and it should not be taken lightly and it should not be filled because of pure talent. Talent alone does not qualify any as the worship leader. They must be godly and they must know the word of God even if their musical talent is not as good as someone else who is very musically gifted but is not faithful or does not know the word of God very well.

It is important to note that the worship ministry will be one that is meant to lead people towards Christ. This ministry is more than just music that sounds good (although Latinos like music) But it is meant to lead people to Christ. It is important to know that most of the Christian music in the Hispanic world is music that is feeling driven. Or it could also be very focused on the technical part of the music or having a great song but with little substance to it. A lot of times it is repetitive of the same phrase that can be ambiguous in meaning. "Let it rain" "Fire come down" things that may not have any biblical ground or that have no clear scriptural reference that may confuse the audience into thinking that they are feeling the presence of God but in reality they are only distracting from the real meaning. This is all to say that the style and maybe tone of the music can vary, and that is a preference of the church and that can be different but the most important thing is the content. We have to make sure that the content of the music is biblical. This

does not mean that we have to sing bible verses and that is the only thing that is acceptable. But this means that that the words should state biblical truths and that it could easily be traced to a scriptural reference. This is because God gives us the tools to glorify Him most through his word and we can learn how to best sing to him through the tools that he gives us in his word.

Conclusion

In summary, we have to remember that Hispanics are like any other group people that need the gospel, the word of god, and to grow in Christlikeness. This can only happen in the context of the church. Having a spanish ministry that would allow this to flourish is the first step towards fulfilling the command in Matthew 18 which is to go out and share the gospel where everywhere we go. This is to be done also with people of different languages and backgrounds. And this is what we are to do. This could be defined as missionary work. The definition of missionary work is just doing church somewhere else. Well in many cases this can be very much like that, this is because even though hispanics may geographically live in the United States, their culture and customs are still mostly adapted to what they lived for a good part of their life or even got from their parents. I understand that this may not be the case of every hispanic specially if they have lived in the US for many generations. However, there is a constant influx of hispanics into the United States that will not stop any time soon if things continue to be the way they are. Another factor is that in areas of high hispanic concentration in the US we can have a great number of people that are still very much part of the spanish culture even living in the

U.S. It may seem unreal to think that someone that lived in the U.S. most of their life does not feel comfortable speaking in English or even understands it well but this is very much true for thousands of people living in the U.S. And this is not because they do not want to speak English or they do not try but there is simply no need. When you live in a predominantly Spanish speaking community, your family speaks Spanish, at your job you only speak Spanish, and most information that you would need to survive is available in Spanish no wonder people do not speak Spanish. This is all to say that there is a great gap that needs to be filled in the U.S. Of course this can be resolved by having Spanish speaking Churches however there are a number of obstacles, if the churches follow the patterned laid out throughout most of Latin America, a church will end up with poor theology and with all kinds of unbiblical teaching. We need more reformed churches which are rare among the Spanish community. A reformed church with biblically sound teaching would benefit the Hispanic community. But before a church can become a church it needs to start somewhere. The Spanish ministry in an English speaking church can be the answer to many of these gaps. For a community in which a reformed church is something new it is a great way to introduce and help people understand the reformed doctrine. Number two, a Spanish ministry in an English speaking church could bridge the gap between generations in which the older part of the family can go to the same church as the younger part of the family that may feel that they understand more English. It also makes the church a more welcoming place for people of different backgrounds and reminds us that if we are in Christ we are one no matter the background and language. Having a ministry that can accommodate these needs is something that a church can do to care for their community. Having the Spanish ministry in a

english speaking church will also accomplish integration and God's people will be better served and therefore He will be more glorified.