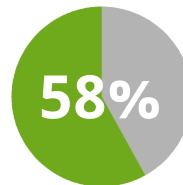


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"I get it!"



STAN SLADE



SUPPORT PLEDGED



GLOBAL

“I get it!”

“Great! Tell me what you’re seeing....”

“You are not just helping us dig into the Gospel of Mark. You are teaching us how to work with all of the Bible. I can use what I’ve learned anywhere in Scripture!”

My conversation with Nora was just the kind of interaction I seek in every teaching opportunity. Thank you, Lord! Yes, we seek to understand whatever Biblical passage we are working with, to the best of our shared ability. But I am also always aiming for something more. I hope, pray and try to work so that the **way** we go about discovering the meaning of passage before us will equip participants to more effectively discover the meaning of any part of Scripture.

Nora is fun to work with! She is a charismatic leader with a quick mind and a winsome personality. She is a teacher who also pastors a church in the city of Matagalpa, Nicaragua- and a cancer survivor with an indomitable spirit.

I first met Nora several years ago, when I went to Matagalpa as a “visiting professor,” contributing to the church leader training work of [CEPAD, the Council of Protestant Churches of Nicaragua](#). CEPAD was born 45 years ago, when Gustavo Parajón, American Baptist missionary doctor and pastor, led Nicaragua’s Protestant churches in a heroic response to the earthquake that leveled the city of Managua at Christmastime in 1972. Since then, CEPAD has continued to lead in disaster response, long term development, conflict transformation (especially during the bloody wars of the 1970s and 1980s) and capacity building for churches and their leaders. I have had the privilege of playing a small role in CEPAD’s church leader training work for the last fifteen years.

Over the years, working with CEPAD has given me opportunities to meet, encourage and help to improve the effectiveness of hundreds of Nicaraguan pastors and local church leaders. For many years, the vehicle for our encounters was a series of workshops in widely scattered areas, focused on questions that the local leaders wanted me to help them wrestle with. Often, that meant responding to their requests for help to bring solid Biblical and theological understanding to bear on their daily ministry challenges. Over the years we have “done theology” together: we have sought ways to express in word and action what it means to follow Jesus in Nicaragua today.



Last week I worked with a small group of local, regional and national leaders from across Nicaragua in a more concentrated setting. For five intensive days, we engaged deeply with

the text of the Gospel of Mark. Through individual research, intimate conversations around tables and whole-group dialogue, we looked at the way Jesus worked with individuals in need, with crowds, with opponents and with his closest followers. We used the contributions of every participant—questions, observations, insights and reflections—to build a shared sense of Mark’s inspired message and its relevance for ministry in Nicaragua today.



Nora was a lively contributor to our shared work throughout the week. Our conversation about the usefulness of the approach we were using came a couple of days into the process. She was excited about her discoveries in the Gospel of Mark, and excited about the tools she was developing for her pastoral work with all of the Bible.

It is a joy and a privilege to be able to contribute to the ministries of Nora and her colleagues who work at the grassroots level across Nicaragua. I wish you could be with me, to hear the passion in their voices and see the light in their eyes! Their excitement over what they are learning and its usefulness for their service to Christ is contagious!

CEPAD’s executive director, Dámaris Albuquerque, always explains to workshop participants that International Ministries is able to send me to serve alongside them due to the generosity and dedication of churches and individuals who sustain this ministry. As these enthusiastic leaders return to their churches, you are touching congregations on the Caribbean and Pacific coasts of Nicaragua, in the northern mountains, on the southern plains and in metropolitan Managua. They are calling their communities to come to Christ, grow in Christ and transform their worlds in the power of the Holy Spirit. Thank you for praying and giving to make this ministry possible!

May you be blessed, as you bless the people of Nicaragua (and beyond!) through this ministry!

Stan

P.S. A brief word about support: after 6 years off devoting most of my time to the home office staff of IM, this month I am returning to full-time service as a global servant. This means a big jump in the time and energy I will invest in the formation of leaders like Nora—both in Nicaragua and all around the world! This change also requires a big jump in support. I am deeply grateful for everyone who has prayed and given faithfully over the years to make this ministry possible. I am also eagerly praying and looking for additional churches and individuals who will join with us! If you are not already giving to and praying for the work God does through me, please join us! You can sign up to [give](#) and to receive updates (which will now become more frequent, once again!) through [my page on the IM website](#), or by calling 610-768-2323. I would love to hear from you (stan.slade@internationalministries.org), and would love to find a time to get together with members of your church who want to learn more about what God is doing in this ministry!