

Telling Our Story in His Story!

By **CLAUDIA BUSTAMANTE**

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“The Lord does whatever pleases him, in the heavens and on the earth, in the seas and all their depths.”

(Ps 135:6, NIV)

In March of 2006, I visited the William Carey Library in Pasadena, California. As I browsed through the books, I found a few Spanish books. Some titles were well-known and used in Latin America. Right next to them were the English *Perspectives* books. I remember holding them close and praying, “Lord, when will we have this in Spanish?”

A few days later, I had the honor of meeting Ralph Winter as he delivered a devotional to his leadership team. He said, “We must learn to give the best of our resources for the extension of his kingdom and learn to live with what’s left.” I hid that truth in my heart, and it has guided my life decisions ever since.

Seven years later, I got a call from Tony Vazquez, a well-known Latin mobilizer, who invited me to join the first intensive in Spanish to be held in Lima, Peru. Montserrat Antillón, with passionate leadership, coordinated this course with 50 leaders from South America. From this gathering came the launch of the first translated Spanish curriculum based on the 4th edition. I wept for 10 days as I studied God’s abundant mercies, his perfect timing, and his Word revealed in the paradigms of each lesson.

Meanwhile, God brought to my mind the names of some 350 Argentinian leaders with whom I could share about the study program. When I returned, I wrote to invite each of them to a meeting where I’d tell them about the revival I just experienced. Sixty people responded to that invitation, and I’m grateful to Jeff Adams for sharing with them about Perspectives via Skype.

It was impressive! The group unanimously supported the initiative to bring the program to Argentina. They asked me, “What do you want us to do?” to which I answered, “Take the intensive that will be offered in Kansas City in six months!” Four decided to go: a pastor, a prayer leader,

and two field workers. Another four Hispanic partners and friends from other nations also participated. In my first experience as an instructor, I had the honor to teach lesson 2 there. It was an inner revolution!

A long silence followed, and I wasn’t sure what was happening. Finally, in 2014, I received another call from another hard-working mobilizer, Pastor Rigoberto Diguero, inviting me to participate in another intensive in Ensenada, Mexico. In parallel, the first intensive began in Cuba. It was there that Bruce Koch, Perspectives Global Director, spoke about finding trustworthy people in Latin America who could share the courses in Spanish. It was important to understand the ethos as well as the legal and ethical conditions of hosting the course in our countries. I was honored to accept them. That’s when we began this great adventure. Thank you, Perspectives Global, for trusting and investing in us, and for opening the door for Latin America!

Our Great Adventure

In 2015, I began to participate in the recently created Council for Perspectives Global Spanish (PGE in Spanish) together with the other leaders of the existing programs. The early fellowship, mutual support, times of dialogue, and monthly prayer meetings strengthened the ties of the Spanish-speaking network from the beginning.

As we dreamed about developing programs in the countries that still did not have them, we held annual consultations in strategic countries.¹ In each meeting, more and more people joined our teams. As we increasingly learned about the global movement, our local teams grew stronger and had greater vision.

¹ Consultations were held in Costa Rica (2015), Mexico (2016), Colombia (2017), Orlando, Florida, USA (2018), and Brazil (2019). After the pandemic, we met in Panama (2023).



The worldwide pandemic in 2020 freed us to work with virtual programs, multiplying the course and students in almost all programs. In Argentina, we already had begun to use the Moodle platform in 2019 for student assignments. The global shutdown encouraged us to share this tool with PGE. In 2020, a council of leaders developed a course for 850 people on the platform. People from Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, and Guatemala worked together. Students from Spain, Panama, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Equatorial Guinea, Paraguay, Uruguay, and the Dominican Republic also participated.

The year 2023 challenged us to change, adjust, unlearn, and relearn to see where and how God wanted to make adjustments in all of us. We surrendered to his will and he gave us direction. We built a new service team, which we called “A New PGE.” The Kintsel and Flynn families from the Perspectives Global Service Office (PGSO) taught us six essential basics. These principles are now being spread among many more people who serve the Spanish-speaking movement, including relevant new areas such as virtual learning, technology, tutoring, mobilization, and new stewardship of growth.

Since then, the complete course, including instructor videos, has been accessible in a completely online format. Other countries, like Mexico and Peru, used Zoom. During that year, the online course had 318 students and a team of 141 volunteers serving them. God gives greater grace where there is greater weakness! What a life lesson! What threatened to close everything down made way for greater glory—*his glory!* The online program is here to stay and accessible to all without excuse.

The cost of the work and fatigue was high, but the joy of the fruit was greater. So many gifts were used! So many people were served! So many received these truths! For the first time, our workers in cross-cultural fields could study at a distance. So many testimonies were told about the grace they experienced as God guided them to redirect their projects, labor, and attitudes. The Perspectives lessons crossed unthinkable frontiers using wireless technology.

For the first time, the national program began to serve neighboring countries that did not yet have the course,

thus forming a critical mass of certified students. Many of them are now members of initial teams developing the program in Ecuador, Venezuela, Uruguay, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, and the Dominican Republic.

We are challenged at every moment to renew, create, and produce what God tells us.

Ten Spiritual Principles We Learned

1 God’s timing had arrived for our land and the Spanish language.

With the help of Jonathan Lewis’ edited volume *Misión Mundial*, the Ibero-American Missionary Movement had been mobilized since the first Ibero-American Missions Congress (Comibam 1987 in São Paulo). *Misión Mundial* was “the course” that grounded mobilization efforts during that time. While this tool was good for its time, we slowly plateaued and needed a fresh focus from God.

The Holy Spirit blew on Costa Rica in 2011, then Mexico, and then the launch in Lima, Peru, in 2013. A new understanding was infused with a clear vision and unique passion, which I call “a personal revival that invites others to experience God.” The 15 lessons in Perspectives awakened us all to biblical, theological, and missiological insight and called us to surrender to Christ’s lordship. Today, Perspectives is a focal point that affects the local church, the national church, mission agencies, and even field workers.

There is a new understanding that the timing of when a course starts is subject to the fulfillment of God’s global objectives. Therefore, it must be governed by his perfect will. Without pushing, we check the intentionality of the Lord who goes ahead mobilizing and preparing everything with visible signs of the *kairos* moment.

2 Relationships prepare the way.

Each of us already had work networks mobilized in different ministries. We had experienced the cooperation and fraternity of doing things together. These relationships reinforced our confidence in what we were presenting in our countries. We had national and continental partnerships in the three Americas and elsewhere in the world, such as Spain and Equatorial Guinea. It was not difficult to inspire them to be part of Perspectives because God was in it.





Encuentro Panama 2023

They all recognized the need for renewal and redirection in mission work and in life itself. We called several significant men and women personally to say to them, “God says you should be in this course. There is something special from God for your life and ministry.” *And they said yes!*

3 The initial team models fellowship. It was natural to honor, respect, value, and support each other, even amid the pain and difficulties we faced. That has not changed. We learned that leadership renewal opens doors for growth and expansion. Significant changes came as new generations participated.

We’ve sought to put a few principles into practice: be transparent with each other, mature together, minister directly or indirectly, give ourselves to the fullest, and enjoy the synergy of gifts and abilities being put into action. Above all, we’re to be siblings and friends. Relationships are vital. Everything starts with healthy relationships. We learned that without a team there is no program.

4 What kind of leaders are we looking for? We understood Perspective Global’s (PG) expectations from the beginning. We understood our roles and responsibilities. We achieved gradual autonomy but always in interdependence with both the Spanish council and global leaders. PG told us, “We are

looking for servant leaders, humble servants with towels in hand.” These words reflected their genuine attitude.

In Perspectives, there is no room for arrogance, fame-seeking, or power because we are called to embody the message. We are called to his purpose—to be a blessing to others, having the attitude of Christ (Phil 2).

5 A sense of consecration We’re all volunteers but we give ourselves fully to the program, maxing our time and covering our expenses. We also meet others’ needs as God directs us.

Also, our resources must be managed with the consciousness that we are stewarding resources for God’s kingdom. That awareness makes a significant difference. It opens doors to supernatural provision. It also is a generous expression of love to invest in travel to support courses in other regions that are in the process of growth and consolidation.

6 Quality instructors matter The quality of the instructors—their lives, teaching skills, biblical depth, experiences, and background—enrich the lessons. We always remember that we are the message even before we speak. We must be zealous when delivering the paradigms discussed in each lesson. Being so can make each lesson a learning and transformational experience. We pray for classes with anointing and revelation. We seek men and women who reflect with their lives the lesson itself.

7 Prayer is more than a duty.

We pray for one another. During the process of a course, many personal situations come up in conversation. Through prayer, we cover each other's health, families, finances, churches, hearts, and character. We pray for all the Spanish programs and the entire global movement, its 40 national programs, its leadership, its regions, and its challenges.

8 Annual National Retreats

To strengthen the communion of our national program, we create annual spaces to resolve pending conflicts: to forgive, ask for forgiveness, heal relationships inasmuch as it depends on us, laugh and cry together, worship and minister together to the Lord in spirit and truth, and better know each other and the families of those we serve. We see ourselves as one big family that grows organically.

9 When the best ones leave...

Loss can strike at any time. We lost some because God called them to eternity and now rest from their labors. We lost Victor Ibagón, whose life fell like a seed in Barcelona.

With his departure, we had to reorganize. Many things depended on him. This loss helped us become more aware of our vulnerability; it also encouraged us to live intentionally, more focused, and with a sense of destiny more than ever before. We lose others because of their wholehearted obedience to the Lord when they go to their mission fields, and so we must cover their tasks. Our loss is a gain for his harvest.

10 We do not work in isolation.

Listening to all God is doing around the world, our teams have stronger vision. The global feeds and empowers the local. Working cross-culturally with others follows the model of Jesus who chose to minister *with others*, not just to them.

There is no doubt that Jesus led Perspectives for his Father during his time on earth. He was the first coordinator, the first instructor, the first corrector of lives, and the one who launched disciples to bring about the fulfillment of his eternal purposes.

We come from that history... and we are part of his history still.

A Note from the Translators



This article was translated by Ken and Glynis Kintsel. The following note gives further background to the work of Perspectives in the Spanish-speaking world.

Our vision for seeing the Perspectives course in Spanish began in 2003 when we took the course in English in Oklahoma. After finishing the class, the Lord gave us a vision to share the course with our Spanish-speaking friends. We were aware that God was working mightily with the Spanish-speaking church in the area of missions and was calling many people to get involved in cross-cultural ministries. We also realized that Perspectives would be an important tool for preparing believers from that part of the world for that kind of work.

However, when we checked with the Perspectives home office about how to get connected with the Perspectives program in Spanish, they told us that the course did not exist in that language yet, so they invited us to join them in praying for the translation of the materials. We began asking the Lord to give this tool to the Spanish-speaking church as well. After eight years, Perspectives Global contacted our ministry, King's Way Center for World Mission, asking us to oversee the translation of all of the materials into Spanish!

The Lord put together a team of believers in Texas, along with translators in Costa Rica, Spain, Argentina, and Mexico who worked with us for two years on the project. It was a huge effort that was completed in 2013 when we then opened a service office to help the emerging programs during those first years. This work now functions under the the direction of the Spanish Perspectives Council. We had the privilege and opportunity to help plant Perspectives in Mexico, Cuba, Argentina, Colombia, Spain, and the United States. We've also served other new programs in the 12 countries where the Perspectives Study Program now operates. All glory belongs to the Lord for what he has done and will do through this valuable material. 