

# Because of a Phone Call: *Virginia to South America*

It's true what they say: God works in mysterious ways. Jefferson Hernandez, Hispanic church planter at **Iglesia Biblica Campo Blanco** in Potomac Falls, got a call from the SBCV one day. The SBCV had received a phone call from an unknown Spanish-speaking person asking for help. Jefferson spoke with him and invited him to Campo Blanco so he could get to know him and share the Gospel with him. But the call did not come from Virginia—it came from Colombia, South America! Colombia's country code begins with +57, and Jefferson's area code in Virginia begins with 571.

Pastor Hernandez told the man that although he lived in the United States, he knew some pastors in Colombia who could help him. Hernandez called some pastor friends who were willing to help, but they realized this person lived in a different region. They contacted another pastor who lived near that area. When the pastor arrived in the town, the person did not answer the call or texts. The pastor called our planter in Virginia to inform him that he had not found the person. While they talked, a new friendship began between Pastor Hernandez and the Colombian pastor. During the conversation, the Colombian pastor expressed the need for training and shared that he had been praying God would provide training in sermon preparation and preaching.

This information moved Pastor Hernandez, and he called another SBCV church planter, Pastor Gio Ortiz

of **Iglesia Biblica Bautista Emanuel** (IBBE) in Leesburg, to tell him about it. Pastor Ortiz and his church had been praying for weeks, seeking God's direction to get involved in short-term missions in Latin America. They got together to organize the training, and another group of church members from the two Hispanic church plants in Virginia offered to go on the trip to Colombia. They also invited other Hispanic congregations in Virginia and DC.

When they arrived at their destination, they saw the need to train pastors, but they also saw the need to repair the church building. While the Virginia pastors trained the local pastors in sermon preparation and preaching throughout the week, other members of the Virginia team provided Vacation Bible School for the town's children. Others worked on repairing the building and, to the amazement of all, had it completed in a week (what would have taken 10 years otherwise)!

Like the Macedonian man in Acts 16 begging for help, these Colombian pastors had been praying for a long time to receive help from God. He responded by sending two SBCV Hispanic planters, who have been working as a team for years.

God often surprises us because He works in mysterious ways, especially in response to our prayers. What began with a phone call for help, God used to provide training to pastors in the mountains of Colombia; reach children

with VBS; repair a church building; and start a relationship between Southern Baptist churches in Virginia and brothers in Colombia. He did all of this so that the name of Jesus may be preached and exalted in all nations. ■

