



FUNDAMENTAL BAPTIST MISSIONS INTERNATIONAL

June 2021

HONDURAS (Choluteca), Central America Just a Ten-Year-Old Boy

What can a ten-year-old boy do? Not much, right? Wrong! Ask Fabio Betancourth. It all started with a cheap guitar—a gift from a Christian lady (and lover of music) to a ten-year-old boy living in Choluteca, Honduras. The lad, Fabio Betancourth, was enamored with the stringed instrument. He plucked and plinked by the hour until he could sing simple Gospel tunes and accompany himself with melodious guitar chords. When a local radio station owner heard Fabio sing, he was invited to perform every Sunday morning on a live two-hour radio program. Within weeks, Fabio had not only charmed the locals with his songs but had learned to run the station as well.

Disaster struck when, at age twelve, the once Christian family fell apart. His parents divorced, his mother moved out, and soon his father departed, leaving Fabio and his sister, age sixteen, to fend for themselves. When his sister left, Fabio continued on alone. He went to school, he sang in a band, and he played at parties. In other words—he survived.

Sixteen was the turning point in Fabio's life. A friend invited Fabio back to church. When Fabio decided to surrender his empty life to Christ, the hidden anger and bitterness disappeared. Serving Christ became Fabio's passion. Before high school ended, Fabio interned at the largest shrimp company in Honduras. His excellent spirit, impressive work ethic, skills, and dependability landed Fabio a high-paying accounting job, which filled his physical needs, but the desire to minister consumed him.

At age 20, Fabio began a weekly live youth broadcast on Jesus Is My Friend Radio. (His future wife's brother accepted Christ after listening to the teen program.) He sang in churches and was often invited to sing in Christian concerts with Ricardo Rodriguez, Rene Gonzalez and Karl Berhar—until he became uncomfortable with some of their music choices. When Missionary Antonio Inestroza invited Fabio to sing in evangelistic crusades, he agreed. They started churches in unreached areas by setting up a tent and having nightly services for three weeks at a time. “Sometimes we walked mountain paths with no roads just to reach a few houses with the Gospel,” Fabio recalled. “We worked full-time every day and held crusades at night.”

At age 22, Fabio made his final break with the music industry. After he won a regional Christian singers' competition (think *America's Got Talent*) and produced an album of his own songs, opportunities with Univision and Enlace TV enticed him.

“God made his will very plain,” Fabio revealed. “God told me, ‘I don't want a singer who preaches; I want a preacher who sings!’”

During the last two decades, Fabio graduated from Landmark Baptist College in Haines City, Florida, pastored the Spanish church at Bible Baptist Church in Bradenton, Florida, planted a church in California, and returned three years ago to pastor the Bradenton congregation again. Considering all of his life experiences, Fabio Betancourth is uniquely qualified to be the director of CRI's Spanish Division of Ministry, specifically the master Spanish station, *La Luz Latina* (“The Latin Light”), where his wife Claudia and his three daughters are also involved in singing, producing, and “running the boards.”

And to think—it started with a child-sized guitar.

LOCAL CHURCHES MULTIPLYING LOCAL CHURCHES

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507 State Street
Hammond, IN 46320
219.228.2850 | fbmi.org

SERVING UNDER
First Baptist Church
219.932.0711
fbchammond.com

SERVING WITH
Hyles-Anderson College
219.365.4031
hylesanderson.edu

The dedication of *La Luz Latina*, CRI's Spanish master radio station, will be held at the Bible Baptist Church in Bradenton, Florida, on Sunday, July 18, 2021, at 6:00 p.m. EST. Officiating the bilingual event will be Pastor Fabio Betancourth, CRI Director George Zarris, and Technical Director Gene Sharp. The service will be broadcast on multiple media outlets across the world, including public radio and television stations in Choluteca, Honduras—Pastor Betancourth's hometown. All friends of CRI are invited to attend the celebration or to listen online at www.laluzlatina.com.

UKRAINE (Vizhnytzia), Europe

God Before Business

Testimony from Broadcaster Paul Dudka (unedited)

God is doing amazing things here in Ukraine. People are getting saved every Sunday. Fifteen new visitors last week. I just signed new contract with local TV business channel that reaches three millions people. Gospel will be preached for thirty minutes every Saturday at 8 p.m. and Sunday at 2 p.m.; however, bonus is daily three minute program before local news. WOW!!! Who could believe it!!! God before business!!!

Thank you, Christian Media International directed by Eddie Wilson, for financing this opportunity. (Update: I just received first phone call from viewer who saw my second program on business channel. Ragik lives a few villages away from church. I will meet him this week to explain salvation. Praise God!)

PHILIPPINES (Catarman), Southeast Asia

Are We in Trouble?

Testimony from Missionary Layne Jones

The chief of police just came to our church with eight other officers. What could they possibly want? Are we in trouble because of COVID restrictions? No! They have been listening to *The Lighthouse* 104.5 FM, our Christian radio station, and they want us to teach a Bible study every Wednesday at the police station. (By the way, I witnessed to the police chief.) What a joy to be in the Philippines!

Thank you for partnering with us to reach the world.

George Zarris

Christian Radio International