



SALUDOS DE BUENOS AIRES

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Dear Friends,

Service in the Kingdom has many blessing and challenges, no matter where you are in the world. Buenos Aires, Argentina is certainly not the exception.

Semesters' end and beginning.

In the latter part of July we have the equivalent of the Christmas break between semesters in the southern hemisphere. My coworkers and I who work with the Argentine Bible Institute for churches of Christ (www.ibica.org) are gradually becoming used to the increased level of activity teaching in a school places on ministry.

Last semester I taught first semester Greek, small group communication, and the Gospel of John. As so often happens when you teach, you learn even more. Because there are only a few students in the institute, it is possible also to share more with them and get to know them as brothers and sisters.

In the small group communication course we learned how small groups work and how to lead them. The fact that there were four students in the group allowed us to not only learn about small groups but to "do" one as well. Besides being exposed to communication theory within a scriptural context, students took part in a small group where we attempted to live out the "one another" passages in the New Testament. Gradually the students took on a progressively more participative role within these training sessions. One of the girls on her own initiative attempted to begin a young women's group in her congregation during the semester. Another student, a young man, who works with youth in another church of Christ, attempted to apply what he learned among the young people to whom he ministers. Like many first efforts, these did not meet with outstanding success, but I'm glad they happened while we were going through the communication class material. Failures at starting small groups are common and part of the learning process! I was pleased that students would attempt to begin small groups in their



Small Group Communication Class

congregations without my suggesting it. However, in order for their enthusiasm not to get out of hand, they were often reminded that any new ministry needs to be in submission to the leadership of the congregation to which they belong. May the Lord bless these Christians who want to serve more effectively to find ways to do so.

Concerning the other two subjects from last semester, how can I describe how much I learned by teaching the Gospel of John last semester? One example would be how Lazarus' resurrection in John 11.41-44, foreshadows the final resurrection mentioned in John 5.28 ("*the hour is coming when all those who are in tomb will hear His voice and come forth...*"). On the other hand, having to review New Testament Greek in order to teach it made me realize how much of the language I need to reinforce after studying it thirty-five (yes!) years ago.

My one remaining pupil in second semester Greek is presently the only institute student I teach this semester. This allows me to spend more time on evangelistic activities this semester, which just began this week.

New evangelistic efforts planned.

Since many of our contacts, and a number of our church members, come from our website, I've been spending more of my time recently preparing this ministry to have a greater impact than in the past. Fortunately, there are people more technically inclined than I to help design websites, do e-learning maintenance, and teach me some of the basics. Argentina is considered to be one of the countries in Latin America where more people are on-line, involved in social networking, etc. May the Lord open doors to proclaim His gospel clearly through this and every means possible (Colossians 4.3-4).

Internet outreach is one of the ways in which over the next three months I'm hoping to offer activities designed for non-Christians in the church building during the week. Please pray for me as I plan to start sharing groups for non-Christians, a class on "How to Study the Bible", and teaching "Revelation" once again. Please pray that these new forms of outreach can be rapidly implemented.

Thank you once again!

Thank you for material and spiritual support, especially those of you who are consistently praying for the church here and throughout the world. You are appreciated!

Sincerely in Christ,

Joel Banks