

The Brown Report

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"A Larger Life" *

Some of you may be aware that I have had on my heart the wonderful small but growing Christian community in Uruguay, South America. Only 5% are Christian with no religious preference for the other 95%. It has been reported that Uruguay has the second highest suicide rate in the entire world! I began travelling to Montevideo, the capital city of Uruguay, in February of 2000 while I was attending First Redeemer Church in Cumming, Georgia, a Southern Baptist Church. At that time I was on the missions committee at the church and I was assigned to work with OM, a worldwide mission organization. For many years I continued this work and it was a great experience for me. I learned much.

However, in 2007, I left First Redeemer Church and began doing mission work independently but I still continued to travel to Montevideo, Uruguay. In 2014, I established a 501 (c) 3, a non-profit ministry organization, called Asado Ministries, Inc. This organization has been approved by the IRS and has the status of a non-profit religious ministry. The establishment of this organization allows me the freedom to be the bridge between folks that have funds to give and those Christian organizations who need it in Montevideo, Uruguay.

I have travelled to Montevideo, Uruguay on 22 separate occasions since February 2000. My last trip was in April 2015. On this last trip I met with pastors, Christian missionaries, ministry organizers, church leaders and others to discover what their needs are as they seek to grow their Christian community in Montevideo.

The picture above shows a 25 seat new Hyundai bus that Asado Ministries, Inc., my missionary organization, was able to provide the funding for and it has been given to the Iglesia Christiana Evangélica Arrieta, a wonderful Christian church in Montevideo.



Pastor Dumas Vallejo and his wife Elba, Iglesia Christiana Evangélica Arrieta - Uruguay

Let me tell you a short story of what the Pastor, his wife, his two children and his daughter-in-law do as leaders of this church. Pastor Dumas Vallejo is a fulltime Customs Agent (and fulltime Pastor) and his wife Elba, are the two primary church leaders. About three miles from their church location, in downtown Montevideo, is a terribly poor neighborhood called

Sur America. Many of the children living in this community do not have fathers. Many of the mothers are drug addicts or prostitutes. The grandmothers take care of the children. Dumas and his wife, their son, Gaston (a professional architect) and his wife, Alejandra (who is finishing her studies to become an attorney in Montevideo) travel to this terribly poor neighborhood and "rescue" these children

by bringing them to church on Wednesdays and Sundays.

We saw firsthand the dedication exhibited by these folks as well as other church members, as they bring these children by bus from the poor neighborhoods, to feed them physically and then to feed them spiritually at least twice a week if not more often (because there are events that are specifically designed for children either during the week or on Saturdays). Because of their dedication and personal sacrifice it moved us to want to do something for them. They were using a dilapidated 15 year old bus that was constantly costing them a lot of money to fix.

When we came back to Atlanta our hearts would break as we told this story to others. We felt something needed to be done. A few days after we returned from Uruguay, we heard a Christian song on the Fish radio station (104.7) by Matthew West, called "Do Something" that I commend to all of you listen to. The lyrics are as follows:

*"I woke up this morning
Saw a world full of trouble now
Thought, how'd we ever get so far down
How's it ever gonna turn around
So I turned my eyes to Heaven
I thought, "God, why don't You do something?"*



The children and teenagers from Iglesia Christiana Evangelica Arrieta-Uruguay

Well, I just couldn't bear the thought
of
People living in poverty
Children sold into slavery
The thought disgusted me
So, I shook my fist at Heaven and
Said, "God, why don't You do
something?"
He said: "I did, I created you".
"If not us, then who
If not me and you
Right now, it's time for us to do
something
If not now, then when
Will we see an end
To all this pain
It's not enough to do nothing
It's time for us to do something"

This song was our anthem and a call to action.

We felt the Holy Spirit called us to do something. It took us one year to collect the funds, but in February 2015 we were able to wire the funds to the Iglesia Christiana Evangélica Arrieta for them to purchase a brand new 25 seat Hyundai bus.

The picture you see above represents some of the children from these poor neighborhoods attending children's church services after they have been fed a warm and substantial breakfast by the adult church members.

This last trip was quite heartwarming as we travelled with these children to and from their neighborhoods on the new bus. As a result of this last trip we have identified 13 projects that we

would like to help with in Montevideo. Some are expensive but some are not. Some involve connecting people in the US with Christian mission and/or social work in Uruguay. Other projects involve financing.

We hope that as we develop a quality DVD presentation that I will have opportunities to meet with different people, churches and foundations to explain the struggles of the very small Christian church in Uruguay and that others will feel called by the Holy Spirit to donate (and receive a tax deduction) for the work that needs to be done. As we continue to take these trips to the same place, it allows us to require a high degree of accountability for the recipients of the donations.

Will you join us in helping in this work? As Matthew West said in his song, "We're never gonna change the world by standing still." Our website is being developed now for this brand new organization, Asado Ministries, Inc.

*The title to this article has been taken from the brand new feature length movie "A Larger Life", written, produced and starring attorney Bill Lundy.

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About Tom Brown

Tom has been handling workers' compensation and disability claims since 1979. He is a founding member of the Workers' Compensation Claimants Lawyers (WCCL) and an active member of the Georgia Trial Lawyers Association. He helps to change injured workers' lives by fighting for the best medical care possible, which ultimately produces the best settlement for the injured clients he and his team represent.



Tom attends many seminars every year on many different subjects to stay current in his respective fields of practice. Over the past 18 years, Tom has organized and presented seminars exclusively for those lawyers who specialize in workers' compensation.

Tom and his wife also travel to Uruguay, South America, to help build and strengthen struggling local churches. He has been to Uruguay 22 times in the past 15 years and loves this work. He has made many wonderful friends over the years.

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