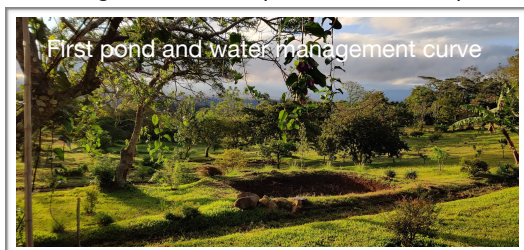


The birth of Jesus was a wonderful event. A sweet baby born to live a full human life and teach us to love and shatter the darkness and hate for all races, in all the World, even thousands of years after. He ultimately gave his faultless life to the torture of death on a cross, beating hell and establishing total authority over all the universe, and destroyed even the darkest spiritual forces. Christmas reminds us of the hope of abundant life for all who believe and obey but the knell of eternal death for all who don't. It's that serious or we wouldn't leave home to make disciples whose obedience and multiplication is the constitution of the church.



Helping the Latina church send disciples to countries around the World brought a new kind of community. Families returning from Iraq, Mali, Yemen or Northern India would say, OK, they now see what I had taught them, a practical understanding of self supporting or sustainable cross cultural disciple making in measurable and manageable terms. A need still to address is that missions sends out disciple makers and often without the support they need. This is where I conceived the Discipling the Nations school to create an international community first strengthening the faith by the Word with a 40 study through the Biblical common framework then to network in continual materials and support development, strategy and prayer, keeping in touch and together in the task. The DNA school is currently on pause to develop a new supportive economy and base for its projection. Our December missions paycheck was \$300 CDN just so you know it's necessary to adjust the strategy.

If I could distill a degree in International Development and 40 years helping to develop sustainable multiplication of disciples in some of the hardest places I would say, "Do what you can with what you have." Missions work may initiate like the Holy Spirit moving over the face of the deep then someday be an overflowing harvest. I'll expand the agricultural metaphor. The first step on our finca (farm, but not exactly) was to put in a terrace curve and a pond



First pond and water management curve

about 1/3 of the way down the slope to manage the water that flows in sheets in the rainy time. Then I had to install a 1" pipe through the center with axial lines for drip irrigation for the dry months. All to get trees rooted in the contours for permaculture. Then after a couple of changes of seasons and a few classes in organic agriculture, I needed the tractor and shovel to make new trenches, ponds, move some trees to more appropriate places and replace others but not necessarily with the same kind. No wonder Jesus used examples from agriculture to explain His Kingdom. Sometimes the spiritual soil is too wet and fills with fungus or

grubs so the roots rot or get eaten. Then a few months later they dry out and without emergency water could die. Sustainable change takes seasons doing what you can with what you have. Seeing a new ecosystem with plants and trees, soil with minerals, organic matter and natural micro-organisms takes work. Comprehending human, cultural and spiritual factors in missions is necessary so the church doesn't die but sends down roots, produces fruit and eventually transforms society.

While the trees mature I need to build on the finca to get rental cash flowing and provide places for people to work to support the cause of making disciples of all nations. To be clear, this finca does not detract from missions but integrates me with the community in a way completely outside supported foreigners usually never experience. It's the example the Apostle Paul gave us when making tents. God is able to supply all our needs richly in Christ Jesus while we do what we can with what we have so that others without connections to foreign funds keep their eyes on God and their hands responsibly working and disciples sustainably reproducing. The Kingdom is beginning when friends bring specialty coffee from their fincas, or food they prepared, send greetings on cell phones and invite visits. There are open doors refreshingly absent of the usual us/them distance or tricky expectations. I see the light and warmth of a new community with wonderful opportunities to share Jesus' love. It took seasons to see not only how depleted the spiritual soils in Costa Rica were, how sick was the vineyard, how dependent the CR church was on toxic imported chemicals BUT RATHER to see that God has instilled in nature the capacity to regenerate a natural, thriving permaculture spiritually as well as physically.



Merry Christmas!

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2022

Sandy saved her teaching money to go back to Ontario these few weeks to be with family and help care for her Mom after a hip operation. We miss her. Admittedly she was a bit melancholy leaving. Christmas is the most wonderful time here with friends and the glorious days of mists, blue skies, rainbows and Xavi pointed out, "Clouds!" Sandy wrote that she tried walking out in Canada today. She lasted 5 minutes and is still trying to warm up, chilled to the bone. Scary she said. I sent her a reminder of how cozy it is here so she doesn't get her mittens stuck on something and miss the plane back.

Merry Christmas dear friends,

the Polsons

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