

Latin American Region
February 2-5, 2008
Carnaval



Global *Prayer Initiative*

PRAYING FOR LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES

Suggestions for the leader:

This guide provides information for an hour of prayer broken into five-minute segments. Read each item and pray for the specific requests mentioned. Include names of workers assigned to reach the Latin America region. Remember our Lord's command to ask the Lord of the harvest to send forth laborers into His harvest (Matthew 9:38). Your prayers can pave the way for workers yet to be appointed—people God is preparing to hear and answer the call to missionary service. Apply these requests to those future workers as well.

Using this guide will enhance group prayer as well as individual intercession. Read each item, but avoid taking too much time to explain. The evil one is pleased when believers spend more time talking about prayer than actually praying. The power of God flows in response to the united prayer of the body of Christ. Involve everyone in prayer.

Make as many copies of this guide as needed for your group.

Praying against Spiritual Strongholds in Latin America

1. Sensuality

Latin American cultures typically accept sensual expression to a greater degree than the mainstream population of North America. The Carnival celebrations represent the most uninhibited display of that spirit. Personal holiness and sexual purity as taught in the Scriptures are contrary to the cultural norms of much of Latin American culture, creating conflict with the gospel message. New converts must be disciplined effectively to reject this cultural influence.



Pray for:

- believers to resist the temptations to sin
- protection of the moral integrity of missionaries and national pastors and their families, particular targets of Satan's strategies to discredit the gospel and those who preach it
- discernment by believers of lifestyle choices that will honor Christ in the face of worldly temptation
- the courage and boldness of missionaries and national pastors to teach and practice personal holiness
- national believers to hunger and thirst after righteousness

2. Spirituality

The various people groups throughout Latin America have a belief system reflecting a mix of Roman Catholicism, spiritism, and pagan religion. Overcoming these erroneous beliefs in order to understand and embrace biblical truth is extremely difficult for the lost people our missionaries are trying to reach. Accepting and responding to the gospel depends on the understanding of biblical truth. Those who come to Christ must wrestle with the conflict they experience between what they were raised to believe and what the Bible teaches.



Pray for:

- lost people to face the inability of human effort to satisfy their spiritual hunger
- national believers and churches to demonstrate the truth and power of God in their personal lives and ministries

- believers to have opportunity to witness to those who are searching for God
- clarity for those presenting the gospel so that the message is not distorted by erroneous beliefs prevalent in the culture
- the Holy Spirit to open the minds of those who hear the gospel to receive it and believe

3. Secularism

Especially true in Uruguay, but to some degree throughout the region, the influence of the atheistic worldview is a significant influence in resistance to the gospel. Spiritual issues are generally considered irrelevant to modern life. God is more ignored, than vehemently denied.



Pray for:

- those who live by a secular worldview to find no peace or satisfaction
- God to provide undeniable evidence of His existence and claim on their lives
- Holy Spirit to open minds to believe the gospel

4. Government policies

Relationships between the governments of Latin American nations and the U.S. are subject to tensions that affect practical matters for our missionaries, such as getting visas to allow them to go and come from the field. Within each country, socialism and even more extreme philosophies vie for political power. There is a growing tendency in Brazil for legislation to endanger religious freedom on various fronts.



Pray for:

- the authorities in Latin American countries to govern justly
- favor of the authorities towards evangelical Christianity
- doors of opportunity for believers and missionaries to bless their communities, adding credibility to their witness and increasing influence for the gospel

5. Economic issues

Inflation is high throughout much of Latin America. The fluctuation in the value of the American dollar also affects the stability of missionary financial support. For national believers and churches, the financial challenges are daunting to construct and maintain church buildings and support their pastors with a livable income. People commonly work multiple jobs, requiring many hours, to make ends meet. This limits their time for church involvement.



Pray for:

- God's protection of the economies of Latin American countries so the gospel will not be hindered by economic hardships
- wisdom for believers who are trying to balance multiple jobs with family needs and church participation
- provision of financial needs to accomplish God's purpose in believers' lives and in the national churches

6. Children and youth in crisis

Drug use is prevalent in Latin America where powerful drugs are cheap and widely available. Multiplied thousands of orphaned and abandoned children live in Brazil's streets and are treated as a menace by local officials. In many cases these young people survive by stealing and prostitution, and escape their misery through alcohol and drug abuse or suicide. Uruguay has one of the highest teenage suicide rates in South America.



Pray for:

- FWB efforts to rescue children from the streets and turn their lives toward wholeness
- children and youth in our churches to resist the temptations of sin and find satisfaction in a close walk with Christ
- strength of FWB youth to resist peer pressure to participate in questionable and sinful activities
- those coming out of dependency and abuse to experience healing and deliverance

- wisdom for missionaries and national pastors as they lead the churches to respond to the needs of their children and youth as well as those outside the churches

7. Moral decay affecting family life

Free Will Baptists in Latin America face the challenges of disintegrating family values traditional to their cultures. Marriages, even of believers, are threatened. Those in roles of spiritual leadership are particular targets of Satan's efforts to thwart the advance of the gospel and the establishment of churches.



Pray for:

- marriages of missionaries and national pastors to be strong and whole
- children of missionaries and national pastors to be faithful to the Lord
- wisdom for missionaries and national pastors dealing with family problems of church members
- deliverance and healing of those coming to Christ out of broken families

8. Time required for relationship-oriented ministry

Winning the trust of individuals in order to share Christ with them requires much time. Evangelism that produces lasting fruit typically is done through relationships. This means the process is slower than in North America. Winning people and discipling them as believers is a long-term effort demanding significant time from our missionaries and national pastors, making numerical growth in our churches slow.



Pray for:

- open doors for missionaries and national believers to share Christ with their acquaintances
- opportunities for missionaries and national believers to build relationships with lost people
- protection of the testimony of believers so they are credible witnesses to their lost acquaintances
- the Holy Spirit to prompt questions and openness to the witness of believers

9. Lack of biblical stewardship

The personal financial hardship many Latin Americans face is often cited as a reason for believers to not tithe or give offerings. The resulting low financial base hinders the ministries of our missionaries and national churches.



Pray for:

- courage and conviction of missionaries and national pastors to teach biblical stewardship
- the faith of national believers to be strong enough to practice biblical stewardship
- a Spirit-given generosity to fill believers
- God's protection for those who practice biblical stewardship

10. Small churches

Many of our mission churches find the responsibility to be self-supporting financially difficult, especially in economically struggling areas. The need to support a full-time pastor, maintain property and buildings, and underwrite ministry expenses slows progress of smaller churches to attaining self-supporting status.



Pray for:

- God's provision for mission churches to become self-supporting
- wisdom of national churches in handling their finances
- God's protection of members' personal finances as they seek to tithe and give offerings
- wisdom of missionaries as they mentor national churches in the area of finances

11. Influence of "health and wealth" teaching

Existing evangelical churches in many areas of Latin America are suffering from an onslaught of the prosperity gospel. Many people have been swayed by this errant doctrine. Our missionaries and national pastors battle this influence, much as many North American FWB pastors do.



Pray for:

- national believers to discern erroneous doctrine when they are exposed to it

- boldness and clarity as missionaries and national pastors teach biblically sound doctrine
- wisdom of missionaries and national pastors to embrace biblical truth without rejecting the dynamic of the Holy Spirit's ministry
- biblically sound demonstration of the presence and power of the Holy Spirit in the churches and believers' lives

12. Lack of trained workers

The need is great for additional missionaries to expand FWB church-planting efforts throughout Latin America from FWB churches in the States. National pastors and church planters are needed to minister in their own countries as well as cross-culturally. Theological and pastoral training of national workers is a priority of our Latin American missionaries.



Pray for:

- the Lord of the harvest to thrust workers into His harvest in Latin America
- national believers to answer the call to full-time pastoral and missionary ministry
- God's protection and provision for those pursuing missionary appointment to Latin America through FWBIM
- the theological and pastoral training programs led by our missionaries to be effective in preparing national workers
- God's protection and provision for nationals who answer the call to ministry

Prayer Requests from Missionaries to Latin America

Brazil

1. Our churches have camps and/or retreats planned during *Carnaval*. Pray the churches will be successful in drawing people, believers and non-believers, away from *Carnaval* and to the influence of the Word of God.
2. Pray for the spiritual growth of believers as they participate in these local retreats.
3. Ask God for more missionary church planters.
4. Pray for more Brazilians to answer the call to pastoral ministry.
5. Ask God to grant greater success in evangelization.
6. Pray for church members to resist proselytizing from the "megachurches."
7. Pray for a greater level of cooperation among our Brazilian churches and leaders.
8. Pray plans for the organization of vibrant regional associations of churches will stimulate a unified and thriving national association.
9. Several churches and regions have Bible training institutions or programs. Ask God to use these to deepen understanding of the Word.
10. Pray God will hinder the growing tendency of lawmakers to enact laws that endanger religious freedom.
11. Pray for successful efforts to translate materials about FWB doctrine and history into Portuguese.
12. Ask God to stem the influence evangelical churches are suffering from the onslaught of the "health and wealth gospel."
13. Pray for the families in our churches. They are facing a lot of stress and many couples have separated.
14. Pray for adequate support of Brazilian pastors. Many have to supplement their income with part-time or full-time jobs outside the church.
15. Pray lay leaders and preachers in our churches will be faithful to their responsibilities.
16. Pray the Brazilian church will have a burden for cross-cultural missions.
17. Organized crime, especially in large cities, is flourishing. Pray for protection of church members and missionaries.
18. Pray for the purity of church members. Ask God to help them be a light in the darkness.
19. Pray for new converts who have a history of

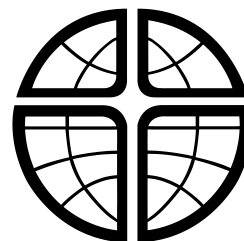
- celebrating *Carnaval* to resist temptation.
20. Pray for believers and churches to be protected from demonic activity.
21. Ask God to give safety of travel to all those attending the retreats and camps during *Carnaval*.
22. Intercede for the personal holiness of believers during this time, in spite of extreme and unrelenting peer pressure.

Panama

1. Pray the Church will rise up and be a counter balance in the cultural degradation that *Carnaval* brings.
2. Pray for Christians to be salt and light in a time when the cultural pressure is to compromise one's faith.
3. Pray for new Christians who are especially battling the pull of *Carnaval* to be strong and find help in their mentors.
4. Pray for leaders to be strong in pulling the churches together during this time of testing.

Uruguay

1. Pray for the Lord's blessing on and effectiveness of the Family Camp to be held during *Carnaval*.
2. Pray believers living in the middle of this society will be lights in the darkness of sin surrounding them.
3. Pray for more to answer the missionary call to Uruguay.
4. Pray for more to answer the call to pastoral ministry in the Uruguayan churches.



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