

# Wayne Witherell

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- [ 0 : 0 0 ] This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia. It is our prayer that you'll be blessed by the preaching of God's Word. Well, this is going to be a very unusual night for you. We have a young man here, Brother Witherell.
- When is your birthday, Brother Witherell? July the 28th. We got him on, right? Can you all hear him? Okay, July the 28th, then how old will you be, Brother? Ninety. Ninety years old. Ninety years old. So, I would like you to meet them. You met them the other time. They were here, David Velasquez's grandparents. And David's a member of our church. And so, tonight, I'm just going to interview them.
- And you can listen. If sometime during the evening you think of a question you'd like to ask, write it on a sheet of paper, send it up here, and I'll ask that. So, Brother Witherell, tell us how y'all got saved. Both of you, if you would, share your testimony.
- Ms. Witherell, you don't have to tell us how old you are. I know you're only 45. Amen? Amen. Thank you. Why are you laughing, Brother Witherell? Oh, you got saved? No, I wonder why you're laughing when I say she's 45.
- [ 1 : 0 2 ] Well, she's only 39. Oh, smart man. Okay. All right, tell us how you got saved, Brother. Well, I was in a meat market.
- And I was working in Kroger Company. And this butcher looked at me. He had a cigar in his mouth. He wasn't smoking it. He was just chewing it.
- And he was a Christian. And he pointed his finger at me and said, if you don't believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, you're going to go to hell. It's like that, you know. And I thought to myself, I don't want to go to hell, you know.
- So I went over by myself and I had a cup of coffee and I sat in a corner by myself and I thought, well, I don't want to go to hell. And I don't want to. And he told me, I'm going to take my family with me.
- And at that time, well, we had a little girl. And I didn't want to be the bad guy and take my family to hell. So I just said, Lord, I don't know where you are or who you are.
- [ 2 : 0 1 ] I said, but I don't want to go to hell. And right then the devil got a hold of me. He started saying, you know, if you accept this and trust in the Lord, you're going to have to give up your smoking and your drinking and your this and that and the other thing, you know.
- And I got to thinking about it and it really weighed heavy on me. And I said, Lord, I don't care what I have to give up. And right then, boom, I knew I was saved.
- I just said, I just want to get saved, you know. And he saved me that morning, just like that. And I've been saved ever since. Amen. Ms. Rullo, how did you get saved? Is that microphone going to pick her up, Andrew, from there?
- Or does she want to hold it? Just hold that in your hand there. There you go. I was working in a secretary in a warehouse where they stored things.
- There was 12 of us in the office. And there was one lady in that office. She was 10 years older than me. She's a tall lady. She had snow white hair. My hair wasn't white those days.

[ 3 : 06 ] And she just had the sweetest smile you'd ever seen. And no matter what you asked her, she always smiled and said, yes, if you needed help.

She was there. Anything you asked. I never heard a crossword or a frown on that lady's face or anything. But every day at lunch, we all ate in a lunchroom.

And we all sit together but her. She'd sit over in the corner and read her Bible. And this bothered me. Now, all my life, I'd been to church. I was raised in the Church of England.

I'm a Canadian by birth. And I always went to church. I always had a Bible, but I never took it out except when I went to church. But she carried it to work every day.

And she sat and read it while she ate her sandwich. And this bothered me day after day until finally I couldn't stand it any longer. And I went over and very arrogantly said, just what do you see in that to read all the time?

[ 4 : 10 ] And she looked at me with that sweet, sweet spot and said, do you really want to know? I said, yes, I do. And for the first time in my life, now remember, I'd been in church all my life.

I'd been in Sunday school all my life. But for the first time, I heard about a personal Savior. I had never heard that before. And that lady is the one who led me to Christ.

Before the next five years were out, everyone in that office was saved by her testimony. Not anything she said, but how she lived. Amen.

Now, who got saved first? I did. Okay. And you were married to this heathen? It was hard. A guy trying to lead his family to hell. It was hard.

Was it really hard? Well, the week before I got saved, we were going to a Baptist church. And the pastor, of course, he kept on coming by the house and talking to me.

[ 5 : 12 ] But that night, that Sunday, he said, Brother Wayne, he said, when are you going to come down the aisle and get saved? I said, never. Three days later, I was saved.

All right. All right. All right. You don't ever say never to God. Amen. Okay. Okay. Okay. So, if there's something else you ought to say, just jump in.

But next, I guess, how did you reach the conclusion you should be missionaries? How did you all decide to go to the mission field? Either one of you. Well, actually, speaking of it, it was me that was called at first, you know.

But we were going to a Southern Baptist church. We'd been going there for years. And they were going to make me a deacon. But that night, this missionary came from Peru.

And he was looking for a helper. He was... First of all, it was a Southern Baptist church. And we had never seen a live missionary before that night.

[ 6 : 10 ] No. Anyway, this is the first one we'd seen, you know. And he was his own... He was an independent Southern Baptist missionary. He had his own mission board called Word of Truth.

And he was looking for a helper. And he wanted somebody... I guess he was looking for a 19-year-old that would do everything he wanted done, you know. So, anyway, he says, I want somebody to come.

And he had a big truck with a platform on the roof of it. And he'd go around from village to village. And he was showing all these slides all night. And these Indians were looking up at him.

He was on the roof of the truck. They were in their ponchos and he was looking up. And God started speaking to me and says, go to Peru. Go to Peru. And I says, me?

I says, I'm 42 years old. He says, Moses was 80. And just things like that went through my mind. You know, I don't know. I couldn't really guarantee that a voice came to me.

- [ 7 : 13 ] But I knew that God was speaking to me. And so I made excuses all during the night. I was saying, well, Lord... He said, go to Peru.
- He kept on repeating, go to Peru. And I says, Lord, I'm not a preacher. And he says, that's all right. I'll make you one. And then I said, Lord, I owe too much money. We owed about \$3,000 in hospital bills and things.
- We had gotten loans and everything like that. And he says, that's all right. I'll sell your house. We've been there about 10 years in the house. And I think eventually I sold the house for \$3,000.
- Pay off the bills that we had, you know. And I went on and on. And God said, go to Peru, go to Peru. And I said, Lord, I don't know. I don't have any money to live, you know.
- That's all right. I'll support you. And I just said, finally, at the end of the service, I mean, after about an hour or so of talking, he preached and was showing these slides.
- [ 8 : 15 ] And I just jumped up. I said, we're going to Peru. And I went up front. I was a, what do you call it, a counselor.
- And when, you know, when people come forward, I was supposed to be, I would stand up in the front normally. And I went up to the front. I got up to the pastor. I said, we're going to Peru. And he says, oh, boy, we just get them and we lose them.
- They wanted me to be a deacon and all that sort of thing. So anyway, the missionary said to me, he says, are you sure that you want to be a missionary?
- I said, well, yeah, God just called me. He said, well, if you can do anything else and be happy doing it, you better do it.
- That's just the missionary wanting to help her. He looked at me, 42 years old. He said, I'm not going to be able to do anything with him, you know. So anyway, it ended up we lived with him for a while.
- [ 9 : 18 ] And they had a house that was supplied by a church. So I quit my job. I worked for about two or three months yet because I told my boss, I said, oh, I'll work for you another two or three months.
- But we lived in his house with him, rent free. And I went around with him for a while and he got support. It was supposed to be a team effort, you know.
- I was going to go with him and work on the roof of his truck. And I was an artist and he was, so I bought some paper, 500 sheets of art paper, and I was going to do these chalk drawings on the roof of his truck.
- Well, it so happened that after about six months of working with him, we finally went to Peru. It was the day that we went to Peru.
- He went and got a loan on his truck. And he says, I'm going to buy my tickets. So he went and bought his tickets. And we got down on our knees and prayed and I said, Lord, we're not going to buy it.
- [ 10 : 20 ] We're not going to take a loan out to go to Peru. I said, God, if you called me to go to Peru, you're going to pay the way. I said, I don't have any money. And so he said, you can stay here as long as you want.
- And so we settled for that. And we decided to stay in the house and wait for the Lord to supply the money. And that later on that afternoon, he came by and he says, here's your tickets.
- He says, I'm not even going to tell you who paid for them. He said, but here's your tickets to go to Peru. So I said, thank you, Lord. And that's been the story of our life ever since. Thank you, Lord.

Because God started supplying us. Add something to it. Microphone. Microphone. Sorry. Sorry. He surrendered March the 17th.

On October 25th of the same year, we were in Peru. We had no support. We did not know the language.

[ 11 : 20 ] We had nothing. But God said he would supply. And we believed him. And we went. There was five of us. We have three daughters.

Okay. So tell us what you did when you got to Peru. Where'd you live? How'd you pay the bills?

Tell us all about that. Well, we first lived with Tom Pace. You know Tom Pace? Yes, sir. He's a missionary in Peru. And a good one.

And they kept us for two weeks in their house. And then finally, we saw there was a Chinaman. He stayed in the Methodist house. Well, we stayed in the Methodist house.

They had a dollar a night. Well, we had \$25. That's what the deacon gave us before. He asked me if I'd had any money at the airport. And I said, no, I don't have any. He said, here's \$25.

[ 12 : 16 ] So that's how we arrived in Peru. No promise of support, but \$25 in our pocket. And so we got this Methodist house in for a dollar a night.

And there was about 10 rooms in that house. They're for their missionaries, you know. And there was about five beds in every room. And put five mattresses on every bed.

They were like this, you know. They'd keep on adding the mattress. But it kept on going down, you know, like a swayback horse or something. But anyway, we stayed there for a while. And finally we found out this Chinaman had a house, a nice house.

So we went and told him, look, we don't have any money right now, but we'd like to take the house. He said, that's okay. Pay me when you can. So it was \$100 a month. And we got a \$100 check in the mail.

We had a deacon in our home church that was a bank manager. Director. And every so often he would send us \$500.

[ 13 : 22 ] Nothing regular. We never knew when. But we would catch up on all our debts every time he sent us some money. So that's the way we lived for the first while.

He's the same guy that gave us \$25 at the airport. And he was a good fellow. He actually helped us when we went to the church there.

He was a deacon. And he used to take us Sunday nights to his house and go through the Bible. We didn't know a whole lot about the Bible. But he helped us a whole lot.

And we kind of got a basic training, you might say, there, you know. But I wasn't a preacher. So we got to get the language. Yeah, we had to get the language.

And this same, this Chinaman, we got the house. And then we went to, there was another Chinaman. He was married to an American woman. And he had a, what do you call it, a typing school.

[ 14 : 18 ] And so he had these girls doing the typing. But he said, I'll give you one of these women. Juana Pignatelli was her name.

And we didn't know any Spanish. And she didn't know any English. So we had a good time for about three or four months with her. He gave us four grammar books.

And we went through the four grammar books with her. And she had one word that we, when she would say the words, Vyje.

I was trying to figure what Vyje was in the valley. You know, but she didn't say it. She just had a different way of saying it. She came from Trujillo. And that's the way they spoke there.

They spoke that way. Vyje, everything with two L's was a J. But anyway, we went through that. And then we left that. And my wife stayed at home with the kids.

[ 15 : 14 ] And they taught, she taught them at home. And I went to a Catholic school to get some more language. I went about three or four months.

And that was pretty rough. They were pretty strong and pretty exact, everything. And I studied there for a little bit. And then we finally, I figured I had enough to get by with.

And that really I did. Tom Pace and I went out one day. We were visiting in the church. We stayed in his church for a while. And he was talking to this Peruvian.

They were talking away. And they were gibbering. And I was nodding my head just like I understood. And he later told me, he says, I told the guys, if you didn't understand a word I said, I was so embarrassed.

I thought I was being part of the conversation even though I didn't say anything, you know. So anyway, that was our first experience with language.

[ 16 : 11 ] We started our first mission work. People were very, very good there. I mean, the Peruvians themselves, they knew we were trying. And so they tried to help us.

When we were doing the language study on Fridays, there was a lady in, we went to Lima. We were living in Chosica, but we go to Lima for school.

And there was a missionary there who knew a lady who was a beautician in her home. So on Fridays, I'd go by there and she'd do my hair.

And there was the living room of her home. And when I'd sit under the dryer there, ladies, was the years when you used dryers. And while I'd sit under there, her husband every week would bring different things from their house out and would show them to me and tell me what they were in Spanish and have me repeat them.

And all the time I was under the dryer, he was giving me a Spanish lesson of what they had in their house. Years later, when our oldest daughter got married up in the mountains where we ended up, they came up to the mountains and they brought all their beautician things.

[ 17 : 26 ] And their gift to us was to do everybody in the wedding party's hair as a wedding gift. But it was the same one that did all those years before to help us out. Amen.

It was really interesting. Okay. Where did you get your Bible training and how were you trained to do the ministry? Well, I sent away a friend of ours paid to get all the books, the Old Testament, New Testament books, from Moody Bible Institute.

And they sent them to me. So that's what I did. I studied and studied and studied and went through all the books, went through everything that they did. And I bought this book, what do you call it?

The Plan of the Ages. The Plan of the Ages. It was about that long, you know. And being an artist, I took that book and it was in English.

And I redrew every picture on that. And I made it bigger, but that tall, wider. And I redid the whole thing from Genesis right through Revelation.

[ 18 : 34 ] And I translated it from English to Spanish. And I found several errors at the people who had done it there. So as I was studying, I went through that.

And that's what I taught on for the first year, I think it was, when I started the church. And I just taught Plan of the Ages and went through the whole thing, you know, just a little bit by bit.

And it was good. The people enjoyed it. And it helped me a lot with my Bible training. So as I was studying through these books, but I never went to college.

But I just did my own study and I had to do it. It was a hard, hard thing, you know. But as I preached, I found out that I was learning as I preached, you know. I was learning things I didn't know before.

But consequently, I had to study. I had least word studies in Greek. And I began a Greek scholar, you know, almost. I thought I was. I'd come out. I thought, everybody thought I was really smart when I would come up with a word.

[ 19 : 35 ] Tell them all about the Greek. This is what this means in Greek, you know. And so anyway, that's one of the ways that I learned how to be a preacher.

So God called me to preach six months after I got to prayer. And one night I was with the pastor that we were with. And he wanted me to change my picture that I was drawing.

And I had it all planned out to do a picture on the roof of the truck. And he came up to me and said, that's the last minute. It just kind of irritated me.

You know, you can get irritated as a missionary. It's not prohibited, you know. But I got in the flesh a little bit.

But that same night, God spoke to me and said, I want you to preach. God just spoke to me just like that. So I told the guy, he says, how do you know God called you to preach?

[ 20 : 34 ] I said, well, how did you know? I was a little smart aleck at that time. But, you know, I just kind of resented the fact that he said that because I knew that God would want me to preach.

His ministry, he went through the pueblos in the mountains. But there was no follow-up. He'd go to this pueblo. The people would all come out.

They'd look at the movie. They'd listen. They'd watch his chalk drawing. And our daughters sang a trio. And they'd listen to all this. And people got saved. But we never went back to the same pueblo.

So there was no follow-up. There was no way these people could grow. This is not right. And this really bothered us. We didn't leave a preacher. They needed help.

It would be different. I mean, like, Paul in the Bible went back to places he'd been. But Ernest never went back to where he'd been before. And this really bothered us. Okay.

[ 21 : 36 ] So tell about that. Why don't you first tell how long did you do the trip? And there's something about you living in a house that didn't have windows. And you hadn't told that part. So I want to hear that part. I'll let you do that.

Well, after we left Ernest, we went up the mountain to live. We'd finished our language and everything. And we moved up to One Kyle. That's at 11,000 feet of altitude.

We'd go up 17,000 feet over the top and down into the Montaro Valley. And that's where we lived for the next nine years.

And, of course, we had no money. We had no support. This was still our first term, all of this. And so there was a lady there who was building a house.

She lived across the street and she was building a house. She had the outside. Now, it was adobe. Adobe is mud. It's mud bricks.

[ 22 : 32 ] And this is what the outside all was. But it had no, it had a roof but no ceiling. It had no windows, no doors, nothing. Just the walls up. And she said, I'll let you have this free if you would finish it little by little.

And we said, oh, sure, we'll finish it. We didn't have a dime. Oh, yeah, we'll finish it. But it would give us somewhere to live. So that's where we live now. You still have no support.

No support. Because we didn't get, this was our first term, so we had no support. Except for once in a great while, somebody would give you, like this deacon.

Would they have something in it? The bank president would send \$500 every once in a while. So we had shipped our things from the states. He omitted that.

We packed everything up. He built crates. And our home church said, go and buy all the lumber and charge it to the church. The church will pay for all the lumber.

[ 23 : 33 ] So he did, and he built crates. And we crated everything and shipped it. And it had to be paid for by the time it reached Peru. So we got and prayed.

And by the time it got to Peru, it was paid for. We don't know how. And when we got there to get it out of the aduana, you had to pay. Customs. Yeah, the customs.

Oh, I'm sorry. That's all right. I'll translate for you. Don't worry about it. And so there again, when we went to tell them we didn't have the money for that, and they said, oh, don't worry.

It's already been paid for. So God just smoothed the path everywhere we went. And to this day, we still do not know where it came from.

But it came. So we had all this. And we had ping pong tables. You'd get by two and put them together, you know, here in the state. Well, we had taken them with us because our kids like to play ping pong.

[ 24 : 34 ] Well, that's what we used for doors in that house. We'd put them up against the doors. And then we had no electricity in the house. So we put candles, and we'd just stick them in the mud walls.

And we had no water. And we had no bathroom. We had another room out in the yard. And so we called that our pink room.

And we put a pink cord across it. And on it, we put a sign saying, occupied and not occupied. And I had brought a toilet seat, excuse me, but from the States in my packing.

And so we put it on a garbage pail, and it was in the pink room. And so after we'd been there a little while, then my husband went out and got some pipe and brought it from the street and piped it in and stuck it through the wall.

And I put a table underneath and a bucket, and we had water. So that's how we lived there at that time. We froze. It was so cold up in the mountains, it's cold.

[ 25 : 44 ] And it was freezing. I taught school. I taught my three and the other missionaries four. So I had seven with gloves on and earmuffs, and we just froze.

It was really cold. And then finally, my husband said, this is it. We've had it. So we had to go. Now, a missionary's favorite place to go is the post office.

And you always have a postal box, and that's the best place. But when you don't have money, you don't get to go there very often because you can't get in. We, oh, by the way, we had no car.

For the first seven years we were there, we had no car. We walked. And so we finally, a missionary came by to see us.

He was leaving the field, and he came by. And he said, I haven't got much, but here's \$5 I've got. And he gave us \$5 in proving money.

[ 26 : 47 ] And he said, and I can give you some advice. He said, do your own work and love the people, and you'll be a success.

That was the best piece of advice he could ever have given us. And so with that \$5, we went into the city, to the mailbox, and there was a check for \$100 that had come from someone in the States.

So we went house hunting in the city. And we found an apartment. And for months we hadn't had a bath. The first place we all went was to have our first bath after many, many months.

Brother Withold, did she complain a lot? No, never. Tell the truth. No, she really didn't. You're afraid of her, right? And the kids didn't complain. The three girls didn't complain. In fact, they didn't even know we didn't have any money.

They just, well. We never told them. We had people come to our door like, you know Anna Bradley? Anna. Amen. Missionaries in Ecuador? Yeah.

[ 27 : 59 ] Well, her mother used to send stuff to us. She'd send a dozen eggs with her daughter. And Anna said, I thought you folks were rich. She'd tell her mother, those are rich Americans, mama.

And the mother said, you just give that to them. She knew. For some reason or other, she just knew. And as we, she'd bring to the front door and give us the eggs.

And at the back door, somebody would knock and say, we come to visit. So we had somebody, we had some food to feed them. You know, we had some eggs. And it was the funniest thing I ever saw like that.

But they did that. You know, people would come to visit you and they'd expect you to feed them. And of course, we, the Lord provided in such different ways, you know. And it was weird.

But I'll tell you one thing that, that we did from the very beginning. I mean, this is from day one. Before when the day we were called. Was, we didn't even know where Peru was.

[ 29 : 02 ] We didn't go as a survey trip to see how it was before we decided to go there. We just, just said, okay, Lord, you said go. So we're going to go.

And by faith, you know, I think the word faith in that particular case is the best thing in the world. We live by faith. We didn't, we never once doubted that God was going to supply.

No, it was rough. There was times when we, like, like when, when that couple came by and gave us \$5. Susan, our daughter was, the oldest daughter was laying on the bed.

She was sick. And my younger daughter, Lucinda, she came to me, Dad. She said, do you believe in prophecy? I said, yeah. So she had written a little note and put it in her Bible.

She said, she opened it up. She said, go home and preach to the Americans. Because she was getting a little bit, you know, hungry. So I said, that's when I decided we were going to go into town, you know.

[ 30 : 05 ] Well, we got some money. We bought a big bushel basket of oranges, beautiful oranges in Peru. And, oh, they were so good.

And then a box of tuna fish. And this is what we ate for three months, oranges and tuna fish. Don't ever invite me for tuna fish at your house, please.

It was all right. It wasn't that bad. But, you know, God is so faithful. When we decided to start a church, and, of course, you've got to have a building.

After we'd moved into town, we looked for a building. And we found a building on the main street with a great big glass window across the front.

We thought, and out front, the bus would stop. That was the bus stop right there. And we thought, ooh, everybody will stop. Everybody on that bus will be able to look in the window. They'll be able to see us in curiosity, and they'll come in.

[ 31 : 09 ] This would be great. And the man said he wanted \$60 a month. We still had no support. And we said, well, we got to pray about it, but we like it.



But we'll ask the Lord about it. And once again, when we left him, we went to the post office. There was a letter from a girlfriend of mine in our home church.

I opened the letter, and it had been posted two months before. And I opened the letter, and a check dropped out for \$60.

And she wrote the letter and said, when I was having my devotions this morning, God impressed me that you needed this amount of money. Two months before we needed it.

And she said, I'd like to know why. But she sent it. So I wrote back and told her. And then she said, after that, she said, from now on, until your church can pay its own bills, I will send the rent every month.

[ 32 : 22 ] Amen. God provides. Amen. I painted it. They had a big place, a space about that big across the whole front of the building.

I put big 17-inch letters, you know. Primera Iglesia Bautista de El Tumbo. First Baptist Church. Of El Tumbo. You had to say El Tumbo because that's the way they put it, you know.

And you could see that thing for a mile often. Every time the bus would start off from there, it was right at the end of town, you know. And they'd take off their muffler.

Because in the city, you couldn't have, you had to put that little cap on the muffler. And then they would take that off, and boy, they'd start off there. They'd roar up the streets, you know, that bus would.

But we had a lot of people come to that church. And every time the bus stopped, they could look. We had all our services wide open so that people could see. We started the church with a vacation Bible school.

[ 33 : 28 ] Okay. And in the daytime, we had vacation Bible school. And then at night, the kids brought their parents with them so that they could meet us. And we had 70 children the first week we opened the church for vacation Bible school.

I've got to kind of rush this because we've got about 19 minutes. But, Brother Willow, did you have a good job before you became a missionary? Yeah, I had a job with Kroger.

Actually, I was working for another company before. But I went to Kroger, and I got a job. And I was a maintenance man. And I used to do their scales, their food machines, their lights and ballasts, everything they had in the store.

I was a maintenance man for them for years. And I had my own business, you might say. I did it on a contractual basis every. I worked four days a week. And then I went Friday and picked up my check, you know, for the week.

And then took my family out on Friday. So it was a good job. And I was making \$450 a week at 1968. And that was good money at that time, you know.

[ 34 : 35 ] And we finally were doing so good. And then I left that job and went down to nothing. You know, so it was kind of hard at first. We had a brand new house and a brand new car and a good job.

First time in our lives we ever had any money, you know. But then we just said it's worth it to go to Peru. Now, your kids got bitter and didn't want to be in the ministry, right?

Well, you want to tell that story then? All we have, as I said, three daughters. They're all married. The oldest daughter, Susan, is in Venezuela today with her husband.

She's a missionary. She's been there over 30 years. Her, she has. Probably the largest church in Venezuela. By far, by far. And a Bible institute with 100 students.

They have, they had three sons and a daughter. Their three sons are missionaries in Venezuela. Their daughter is married to a pastor in Venezuela.

- [ 35 : 39 ] They have 10 grandchildren and they're all there, all serving the Lord. Our middle daughter is David's mother. And her and Julio are over in Spain.
- And, of course, David and Fabi and their children. And then their oldest daughter is in Florida with her husband, serving the Lord in a church down there.
- And then their other daughter is still single. But she teaches. She plays the music in the churches. She teaches. She's looking for her husband. No, grandpa's looking for the husband.
- And our youngest daughter is married to a preacher here in just the other side of Atlanta. And they have three children. Their son is in a singing group called Veritas, which means truth.
- And there's five fellows that go around and they sing. That's their, that's all their work. The five of them, they're all married.
- [ 36 : 45 ] And then the girls are and her, one of her daughters and son-in-laws are youth pastor and that. So they're all in the Lord's work today.
- We have 19 great-grandchildren. And they're all in the Lord's work. They all speak English and Spanish. Okay.
- So tell us how the church ended up in Peru and why you left Peru. Well, we left mainly because we felt that we accomplished what we set out to do, you know.
- What did you, what did happen? What did you accomplish? Well, we got the church up to 285 people in the church. And we were starting to build a building.
- We had bought the land and built a beautiful big building. It was 400 square feet of the building itself. Huh? They were in the building before we left. Yeah, they, we finally got the building finished enough that they could get in it before we left.
- [ 37 : 46 ] But we felt like we were just through with Peru. And we had, we got a Spanish, a Peruvian pastor who was a big, tall fellow called Gigante.
- Giant. Giant. And so anyway, we, we left the church and we supported the pastor for the first year. We paid his salary, you know. We, we built, when we built, we built them a church, their own church.
- They had their, and it was debt free. And we built a two bedroom apartment in the church for the pastors so that, because they, they don't have a lot of money and to support a pastor in that.
- So at least he wouldn't have to pay rent or anything. So. Now hasn't that church started other churches? No. Yeah. There's eight other churches in that town today that all of the preachers came out of that church that we started.
- Anna Bradley is one of the ones that came out of there. Okay. Brother John Pearson has a very strong connection to Ecuador and knows the Bradleys. Yeah. Okay.
- [ 38 : 52 ] So you're, why, where are you going to go and why? When you leave Peru, where are you headed? We went to, we were going to go to Venezuela at that time, but I couldn't get in.
- That's when we decided to go to Spain. Why did you decide to go to Spain? Well, because we couldn't get into Venezuela and we wanted to go to Spain. We wanted Venezuela first, but, but we went, I went there on a survey trip.
- You still got a spark there, you know. I couldn't get in. And, but, so we, we prayed about it and we said, look, Venezuela. But, but we went off. We went to a conference in Canada at the People's Church and Oswald J. Smith.
- And there was a man on the platform from Spain. Franco had just died. He was the dictator of Spain. And he had died a couple years before.

And this man was there and he was putting out a Macedonian call. He said, please, come and help us. We need you.

[ 39 : 56 ] The doors are open and we couldn't get into Venezuela. And we were at that conference. And so we left the conference, went home, packed our bag and left for Spain.

How quickly is that? That literal? Within a week. We were in Spain. Betty, stop complaining. I don't, I don't believe in waiting around for a lot of things.

That's obvious. It always irritates me when I hear, like, you watch the news and they talk about this and that. And they say, well, it's going to take about a month, maybe three, four months.

I think these guys are sitting around in a meeting and they're trying to decide something. I think I could decide overnight. But they take several months.

So that's why we want to be a missionary now, not yesterday. My wife and I are bored, stiff, living in Chattanooga because it's not Peru.

[ 40 : 58 ] It's not Spain. It's not Venezuela. We're strangers. We weren't meant to be here since God called us to go someplace.

And I don't think it really matters where you go. There's openings everywhere. You know, all you have to do is you just have to spin a wheel and say, well, I'll go here, there, there, anywhere.

There's a door open everywhere, you know. We got a. No, I wouldn't go someplace where they're killing people right and left. I think, I think, I think it's very, I think it's foolish for a missionary to go someplace where he knows it's almost inevitable he's going to die, you know.

Because, I mean, God can't use a dead missionary. Well, that's true. That's true. Amen. We got an email two days ago.

And up in Newfoundland in Canada, there's a guy sent a letter. We got an email asking for help. They need a pastor desperately.

[ 42 : 00 ] They have a deacon, and he's the one who's holding the church together. And he said, we need a pastor or someone who will fill in until we can get a pastor.

But please, we need help. We had to really pray hard about it. We're having a hard time because he's asking for help. They're going to give you \$500 a month and a free house.

And a place to live. And we've got an apartment and everything all furnished. I think you've got another 20 years in here. But we, we've gone through this the last couple of days.

We're just really struggling with it, you know, whether to go or not. But we've got other plans that I think supersede that a little bit. And we're supposed to be going to Spain at the end of the years.

Okay. Now, I've got to get through. You've got two countries to go. So you get to Spain. You're in Spain. What did God do in Spain? Well, we went to Al-Quala de Inaris.

[ 43 : 01 ] And we went there for a little bit. Worked in a military church there. Torajon, I should say. We went there. We worked in the Torajon for just a little bit.

And we met Sammy and Maritza, which are a couple that were, they were not married. But Sammy had already been saved in the church there, in the military church.

And Maritza, she was led to the Lord by my wife that night. She went to the church. She came forward. The first night we were there, they asked if I would talk. They asked my wife to go down because she spoke Spanish.

Maritza now speaks perfect English. But at that time she didn't. So she went down and let her to the Lord that night. And, of course, we took her home. And she lived with us for a little while.

And she said, they said that they had an apartment over in a certain town in Akala. And so we went over there and started church.

[ 44 : 01 ] The apartment was empty. And they weren't married. They weren't married. So the apartment was empty. So we started the church in that apartment. And it wasn't very long. It wasn't too long. We had about 21 people in the church.

And then we moved to another area. There was a big building there. It had been communist headquarters during the Civil War and all that.

And there was bullet holes all over the front of the building and everything. But we asked the guy, it was four people in the family that owned the house. I said, how much do you need? And they said, we need \$30,000 for the building, for the church.

And so Sammy had another apartment way down in the south of Spain. He had an apartment down there. And he says, I think what I'll do is sell that apartment.

It's a bad space anyway, a bad place. I'm not talking about bad. I'm talking about it was just rough. And so he said, so he gave his tithe.

[ 45 : 06 ] And that was the down payment on the building. And in three years, we had paid \$30,000 off just in that little church. We moved over into that building. And I redid the front of the building.

I tore down all the, made the windows. Knocked walls out and that because it was a house. And so we made it into a church. So there's a man in Alabama that got saved there.

I'd like to make the connection. You want to tell about that? It's Alberto. Alberto. And he came. Well, after we'd been there a couple years and going, that's when Andrea, David's mother and father, came to the field.

That's when they started. And they came to help us until they got their feet on the ground, so to speak. So they were in the church, too. We were growing in that.

And then Alberto and his wife. And at that time, they had two boys. And they came to the church. And so Andrea led Alberto's wife to the Lord.

[ 46 : 08 ] And then her husband followed after that. And today, they've got a tremendous work in Alabama, Spanish work. Really good.

And their boys are in Spain. And they are back in Spain. And they work together in the south of Spain. And they've got a good work now. Brother Puente goes to Alabama and leads Vicente Garcia, who is another one of our missionaries.

And he leads him to the Lord. And Vicente is working with Keith Shoemaker. And that all started with a young couple who jumped off a pier, basically, at 42 years of age.

Why did you leave Spain? Why did you leave Spain? To tell you the truth, I wish we had never left. After we had left, we left Alcalá.

Then we went to Guadalajara and helped a missionary. He was struggling to try and get a church. Guadalajara. Spain. Spain. And we helped him get his church going and everything.

[ 47 : 13 ] And when it was going good, then we went to the south of Spain. And tried to get one done. But it wouldn't work down there. And so we thought, well. How long were you in Spain?

Fifteen years we were in Spain. How long were you in Peru? Eleven years. Okay. Then we went to Venezuela. Finally. Of course, our daughter and son-in-law were there by then. The oldest one.

And the doors had opened. So we were able again. So we built a camp. He was 70 years old when we left Spain. And we thought, well, time to retire.

But we'll go visit our kids in Venezuela first before we retire. So we went down there. And our son-in-law showed us land and that. And he said, we need a camp so bad.

So we took our retirement money and bought the land. And so then we went back and built us a house on the land. And then we built the camp. Last year, there was 4,000 people went through the camp.

[ 48 : 19 ] This is a, it's not like here. Everybody goes to camp in these countries. Next week will be Carnival. And the men will have their camp because it's always three-day holiday.

And all the men, just men, will go to camp in our camp. That's our Mardi Gras. People get lewd and crude and pretty ugly in some of the countries.

But there, the Christians all go to camp. But then there's camp for women. In the summer, they have four different weeks because there's so many women that go. No children allowed.

No radios. No magazine. Nothing. Nothing from outside. They just go and study the Bible there.

And there's so many that come that we have to add another week every year because there's more and more. They need their husbands at home to mind the kids. Yeah. And then we have children's camp and we have teens camp and we have college students.

[ 49 : 24 ] It's an all-year thing because Venezuela's hot all year. Because you're near the equator so they can go all, you can use it all year. So the Lord bless there. But then Satan's always got to put his head into things.

And one night, on a Saturday night, I had had my bath and I was sitting out in the other room.

My husband was in having his shower and four terrorists came in to our. They held us for four hours with guns and machetes.

They destroyed the house inside. They took everything that they could carry and what they couldn't, they smashed. They took our car. And we had a young couple.

We had a little house we'd built for the young couple to live in so that we would have someone out there to help. You know, we wouldn't be all by ourselves out there.

[ 50 : 25 ] And they had them up there with us. And they had a little baby, six months old. They wouldn't even let her feed that baby, change its diaper, anything. They were as ugly and they were young.

They weren't older people. They would be their late teens. And then they tied the men up before they left. And then they wanted me and the other lady to go outside.

And I said, no, I'm not going out. Anything you got to do, you're going to do right here, right in front of them. And so they left me alone. But all the time they were doing this, my husband was there praying out loud for them to hear as he talked to God so they would know.

So we found out after they had just killed a lady before they came to us. In a pharmacy. So God kept us safe that night.

But they came back three times more and our grandchildren ran them off. And so finally the police came and said, you're going to have to leave because as long as you're here, it's not going to be safe.

- [ 51 : 32 ] So we left Venezuela. Two years ago we got a notice from the police saying they're all dead now that wanted you. You can come back now. How long were you in Venezuela?
- Ten years. So 11, 15, and 10. Trent just texted me that Todd Wiff, I think it's Todd, right?
- Wiff, his wife's brother got saved at their camp. So one of our people that come to our church, the wife's brother got saved at the camp in Venezuela.
- And Todd's wife's Venezuelan. Brother Witherall, why don't you just take a minute and speak to everybody. It's 8 o'clock time to quit. But why don't you just, there's a lot of young people here.
- Tell us what we ought to do right now. Take a couple of minutes. Well, don't be backward about anything. I mean, I just suggest that if God is speaking to you and you really feel like he's mean business, you know, God usually does.
- [ 52 : 41 ] But I think that you should take it serious, you know. I mean, I wish, my wife and I wish that we had been 19 or 20 years old and called the missionaries.
- Because we would have had a lot more time to do things, you know. Because we feel real bad that we were so old by the time we started. And you wear out after a while, you know, when you get to be 90, almost 90 years old.
- You just don't have the same get up and go that you used to have, you know. So I suggest if you're going to do anything, do it while you're young. Because you've got the whole world ahead of you, you know.
- And I just really and truly believe that there's a lot of work to do. And if I was, right now, we would go anywhere in the world if we were a little younger. Because some things we just can't do.
- I can't, for instance, I can't be a pastor of a complete church anymore. Because I can preach. I can handle the adults.
- [ 53 : 40 ] But I'm no good with kids. You know, I mean, I can't do all those things that I used to do. And, of course, if I hadn't been for my three daughters and my wife, I wouldn't have made it anyway.
- Because they did a whole lot of things that I couldn't do. You know, they did a lot of work for them. Our three daughters were out there on the street when we first went to Peru.
- They were having sessions with kids on the street. Just out where they'd built a table out there. And they were playing games and a whole bunch of things. Right away, they were just anxious to do something, you know.
- And I would say also, if you're a young married couple and you've got kids, put your kids in the ministry. Don't put them aside and have your own ministry.
- There's a lot of people that made that mistake. When we were in Puerto Rico, there was a couple there. The kids didn't even know a word in Spanish.
- [ 54 : 43 ] And they were growing kids. They were getting up. And they wouldn't let them play with anybody. Man alive, our kids played with everybody. Look, they married two Peruvians.
- I guess they had to play with somebody. But they really and truly, I wouldn't trade a thing that we've ever done. I think that God is just really blessed.
- And it's really nothing we've done. I feel like I have sometimes wondered, why, God, did you ever choose me, you know. But the Bible does say that he chooses the weak.
- And he's not looking for capability. He's looking for availability. He's looking for people who are ready to go and do. You know, he doesn't want people just to, well, I'll think about it.
- Don't think about it. Do it. You know. I think I saw a sign up here. You had that. Do. Do something. That's right. It's over there on the wall. Amen. We'd like them to.

[ 55 : 44 ] Do, do. And that impresses me, too. Amen. And your church seems to be a real going church. Amen. Ms. Willerle, why don't you last words for the ladies?

Microphone. I have a lot of, I've talked to a lot of young women over the years when we're on furlough and things like that when people would come and women would talk to me and they'd say, well, but my parents are getting old or, but to take my children into this.

You know, if God can take care of your parents before you were born, they can take care of them after you've left, too. And if you're, if they, he can take care of your children here, he can take care of your children no matter where in the world you are.

Amen. Amen. Don't just wait. We sit, the two of us, we're alone. All our children are serving the Lord around the world.

I wouldn't call them home for anything. Because they're, I know where they are. I know what they're doing. And someday we're all going to be together.

[ 56 : 57 ] Amen. This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia. For more information, log on to [www.visionbaptist.com](http://www.visionbaptist.com) where you can find our service times, location, contact information, and more audio and video recordings.