

INFORMATION AND TESTIMONIES
OF THE WORK IN GUATEMALA

Bro. Teague

The Catholics gave us a lot of trouble for some time. They would beat up our ministers, break out our windows, destroy lanterns and in remote areas, where the Catholics had not been able to establish, the Brujos or Indians' original religions gave us trouble. Many places they were mixed, the Catholic and Indian religions together, so much you could not separate them. For example it was published in the Time Magazine of an up roar in Orintepeque, about twenty minutes ride from our house, how they had to call the army to stop a fight between an American priest from New York and the natives because he tried to get them to take out their god of crops and god of first born out of the Catholic church. The natives rose up against him and began to stone him. He ran in the church and they would not let him out till the army came and took charge. So some of the people came to us asking what was the difference between their gods and the Catholic gods such as Guadalupe (Mexican god); Black Christ (Guatemalan) Catholic god and etc. We took advantage of the opportunity and told them there was no difference. That Jesus Christ, who Mary gave birth to and declared Him Saviour of the world, was the only true saviour, mediator and living God. Soon we had several churches in that area and I recieved tables of gods and then later the Spiritist and Brujos began to accept the Gospel and we had burnings of Catholic gods in the streets and even got to the place in Chicquemula, we had over one thousand Christians in the street at one time. Jose M. Enriquez, Baltazar Chaca, and others were telling the public in Quiche dialect that they too had been Catholic and Brujos and etc. but now it was time to worship the True and Living God. The people could not do a thing because the Alcalde was a Church of God man. Many of the plice in that town were members of our church.

So what we did we soon got what we call "Personajudica", our church registered and accepted with the Guatemalan Government with the governments protection and with freedom to preach and practice in Guatemala as we did in other nations, our church doctrines and practices as long as there were Guatemalan members of our church interested and active in our services. Then we got copies out to our preachers, workers and members. That stoped the Catholic open persecution. And soon from Rome came orders to treat Protestantes different. Soon we had Priests going out of their way to greet us and make friends with us. This put me to think of what happened when I got the Baptism of the Holy Ghost in the 1946 General Assembly in Birmingham, Alabama. It was prophesied that I would be used of God against the Catholic.

In 1957 I took my family in a Jeep pick-up camper down to Guatemala to help Bro. McCall and we made a trip into Belize together. Early one morning without the colored pastor knowing me or having had time to talk to him, he came calling me stating he had a vision that moring and that God had called me to work as a missionary and was going to use me and told me word for word, like the experience I had recieved when I got the Baptism of the Holy Ghost. He said he and I were traveling to open up new missions when all at once a big, big snake appeared in front of us. He said I grabed his arm and pulled him back and got a big club and pow, pow right on the head of that snake. Then he said that snake represents the Catholic church, God going to use you to break it's power here in Central America.

You ask me to give reasons why the phenomenal growth of the work in Guatemala during my stay there. I think another reason was because God always went befor to prepare the road and once we started a mission or church we would not stop until they were established. If possible with a church building and departments organized. Some places we even started with a building first. Then revivals and Daily Vacation Bible Schools and etc. until the work built up. I did my best not to allow division or trouble to step in. Many times I would back up, releave pressure on holy standards, take the blame for troubles until God revealed the truth to them. In ten years as overseer we never lost a complete congregation or property except one in Canton Vasquez. We lost that because another American lost patience and got mad when they got mad. They took the building and all that they had built on the land they had given. I did not want to go to the law to get it back when I came in from U.S.A. after furlow.

On one occation in order to teach the Assembly of God a lesson when they was trying to start churches in our area in Cajola, and to assure our ministers and the ones in U.S.A. who gave the money for the roof that not just any one could interrupt and take over in our churches. The Assemblies tried to take over a building and congregation in Cajola where I DID NOT HAVE A TITLE.

The owners had promised to give us the land with a clear title so we built and over two years later when something happened between the pastor and this family, they called the Assembly to come. This family had the key to the door so they opened it and used the chapel. After we warned them and talked with the missionary they still continued and even changed the lock and took down our Church of God sign. So I went and talked to the owner. He said let us go to the authorities and I will make you leave our property. I said O.K., but I am going to ask you for the building the church people of this area and U.S.A. helped to build. At first the authorities was on his side, but later they gave us 30 days to remove it. So I took fifteen students, the pastor, and district pastor one day to help take it down and move it to a lot on the main road, where the owner of the bus line gave us for the church, now that this family acted as they did and did not fulfill their promise. The day we went to work, the owner came out drunk and ordered us off his land. So this time before the authorities we showed the permit and paper work promising to take the building off in less than 30 days. The authorities still had the nerve to ask me to forget the building and build another so I had to get rough with them. I told them that if they were afraid of this drunk and his machete I could go to higher authorities and get help. No, no, they said we will take care of this situation. So they ask the man to leave us alone that we were doing as was agreed. So we went back to work and soon the drunk came again and calling to me "Gringo", What are you doing on my land, come down off that roof and etc. One of our pastors, Joel Martinez, stepped up to him and tried to calm him down but he raised the knife to strike him when others grabbed him. Then the police took him back just a little and let him go asking him to leave us alone. Then we found out the assemblies wanted us to leave the walls up so all they would have to do is put on the roof again. But we left the land level as when it was given us and went and built on the new lot where we had a clear title.

On another occasion I had to take a stand in San Miguel for our faith, our church and our brethren. One student pastor worked and evangelized in San Miguel, a place where they spoke the Mam dialect and where the Presbyterians had established a Bible School close by, called San Juan Ostuncalco. They had worked close to 70 years and were never able to penetrate. God used this Joven to enter with signs and wonders. A boy was healed and an old lady was healed of a large tumor after being left to die in a little building in the woods. Well the story is this: When this pastor had 18 ready for water baptism, he came the day before to my office stating that they had this woman in jail. He said it was nothing but religious war. I asked him if he was sure and he said he was positive. So I went to the Governor and he sent a police with us in the Jeep. Upon arriving, the police told the Mayor our mission and immediately he became nervous and began to say he had fear of this act of putting this woman in jail from the beginning. About that time the Judge entered and as soon as he caught the trend of the Mayor's talk he cut him off and began to tell us that her being in jail had nothing to do with religion. Only that this woman was trying to force her daughter to go with her and had slapped her and etc. But, Guatemala had freedom of religion and the act of placing this woman in jail was to demonstrate the Catholic power and get the public to look down upon the Evangelicals or force them out of town. Well the policeman looked at me, just as much as to say, well let us go for that is all there is to it. But I felt the power of God from head to foot and felt lead to ask permission to talk to this woman's boys, who, had her put in jail. They called them and when they came in they were wet with sweat from dancing and so drunk they could hardly counsel it. They began saying we all had the same God and etc. even though they were selling strong drink just outside their church door and dancing all around the public square, while one Indian family after the other as they came to town to attend their fair or fiesta, would go into a church where they worshiped and bowed down to gods formed by some of their own hands. Yet they were saying we had the same God and etc. While they were talking I felt lead to talk to them this way. I asked the judge if he knew Mazariego and if he had had any trouble with him in the last two years. He said yes, he knew him. He was born and raised here in Panoramá, Canton of this district. Then I asked if he knew another brother that was with us, and he grinned and said yes, last year he occupied the jail here during the fiestas. So I ask the brother when he was saved and he told me about six months ago. Then I ask the judge if they had had any trouble with him in the last six months. He said no. So turning to the two young men that kept saying we had the same God, I said you see when God does a work in our heart there is a change. Now if this woman was beating her daughter trying to force her to go to church with her, we are sorry and will do our best to teach her that now as a Christian the beating, striking one another must stop.

But if you young men told a lie about your own mother and sent her to humiliate her and her religion, I want you to know God is not pleased with it. And if she is not free to receive her Baptism in water tomorrow this investigation will continue. She was let out that very day and the next day when I baptized her in water she called out in a loud voice in the broken Spanish, "Free from Jail and Free from Sin". Everyone rejoiced and now we have four churches in that area where they said the Evangelicos won't enter here.

I could mention others like when we entered into Triunfo where Casiano Bonillo pastored. We arrived there one day with the pick-up to haul materials for the construction. But notice what happened that day. Men, women and children came out to help. We cut down the brush and cleared the lots, dug the footer for the foundation, hauled sand and stone enough for the construction. Then with the loud speaker we invited people in for service that night. The Catholic people asked our people, will you help us build a Catholic church now like you have helped this American? They answered no, they were tired of worshiping dead gods and that is the very reason they were now working for Jesus, a Living God. We started up the electric light plant and lighting up the place and started services. Stones began to fly and about the same time the people began to pray. The power of God fell and one lady dancing fell in the pile of sand and in came several men stating if we could not maintain order they would help us and some of our men grabbed them and lead them back out and we went on with the service. That night Francisco Son got hit in the arm with a stone, Bro. John Weik, a visitor from Hereford, Arizona, U.S.A. got hit, I got a Jeep window broken, but many souls got blessed and many heard the Gospel and a real Victory was won, for we have several churches in that area now.

One time in Cruz de Piedra, they cut a young man's thigh wide open while they were on the way home from church. And once they rolled big stones that three of us could hardly move out of the way in order to get the Jeep out. Another time one attacked Simon Minches while crossing the river. They went end over end up and down in the water until all at once the man let go and came up down stream yelling "ya no, no mas."

Another time they refused to let us bury a believers body in their cemetery but under the shower of stones we did it. Then God later worked it out that I, a Church of God missionary, received and dedicated the first cemetery and later dedicated a water system. That is when we thought we were getting places and doing things when we started taking the place of Catholic Priests in a Catholic dominated country.

On one occasion we were invited up in the mountains next to the Mexican boarder where one family accepted Christ. We worshiped in a split railed, grass roof building about 10 by 10 feet. We ate one tortilla and drank a little broth of goat meat that had been cooked. We ate this three times a day, slept in the cold, damp pine needles after walking several hours up the side of a mountain and crossing the river several times. After a few days we learned that they had burnt down the little building they had sacrificed to build for us and had killed the young man who took the first missionary into their area, that they had not even allowed Catholics to come in. When I got back up there they showed me the piece of hat on top of his grave that the machete cut off and told me they could not find pieces of his head much larger than one inch in diameter in the area where they just chopped and chopped his head. Now we have a church there and some of the very ones who burned the church and helped kill the man who invited us there are leaders in that church. Many stone gods are unattended and many a turtle and chicken can live longer with out their blood being offered to some stone god.

From this extreme in new missions established to arguments and troubles in the old churches is what we had to contend with. But God did the work and we held our people together and advanced at the same time. For several years we used new souls and missions to cover up unreal reports. Many were reported as members but were not married or baptized in water or officially instructed concerning the Church of God and forming a part of the great body working together Internationally. I married over 200 in this process before our district pastors started to do it. One night in Chiquemula I married twenty-one couples. And the next day we had over a thousand in the streets testifying and Praising God, teaching their neighbors and friends what a friend they had in Jesus.

Well it was not very long till they worked hard for Jesus regardless if the missionary was there or not. And many times I found out if they did call me to help settle a problem, it was best just to set there and listen and let them talk it out and come to a decision and when they ask me what I thought, just say I agree with your decision. Sometimes when I felt lead of the spirit of God I would speak up. I remember one time when they called me stating a pastor had been fighting and hitting his wife. I had visitors from the states at the time, Bro. Williams, Bro. Carroll, and Bro. Wolf, my brother. We had listened to them and even sinners came to the door stating that man (preacher) was a liar. About 12 P.M. when the preacher would not confess and it seemed useless to continue, I said to the bretheren with me in English, let us plead the Blood and go because were just waisting time and strength. We started to pray and the power of God fell, I started talking in unknown tongues and my brother who knows no Spanish started interpreting the unknown tongues in Spanish stating "Satan works in this house and you know the tools he is useing, nor did I find in that day when I said you who are guiltless cast the first stone". At this the pastor fell on his face on the floor and began to ask forgiveness. Well I thought that was the end of it but less than a month later this same pastor was traveling with an 18 year old girl and leaving his wife and children at home. So I took my secretary and we went to investigate. We found Ifraim Moreda's wife in another home and Bro. Minche's wife told us about the fight they had in her home. When I found her she did not want to come out of the dark room to talk, but when the lady of the house ask me to drink coffee (burnt corn) I took advantage of the oppertunity and said while you fix it let me go get Francisco Son and Ifraim who are waiting outside in the Jeep and we will all drink coffee together. So when the lady left the room I gave the ministers wife the COME sign and she got up and followed me outside, where I could see two black and blue eyes where she had been beaten. So I ask her for the truth and right now she broke down and told me. Then her husband started yelling at her to shut up. I told him it didn't make any difference, I was just a man, but God who has all power and understanding knew already what he had done and what he was thinking. I told them to get their things and come and stay with us in the mission home for one week and if they did not straighten up I would have to revoke his ministry. They went home with me, but trying to convience me they were married while in sin before they knew God. Now that years had passed and all, God had showed him this 18 year old who could sing, go any where he wanted and all in all would be much better for him than his present wife. Well, the next day they left while I was down town. Later he wrote asking me to forgive him that he had got a job driving a truck but was in an accident and now in the hospital with his head out and busted upen from his nose up over the top. I wrote him pointing the way out of sin but he never returned to God as far as I know.

Another occasion when God worked a miracle to get me out of trouble and bring justice and truth out, is when about a year after an accident involving a minister's son, another minister in sin tried to use that accident to get me out of the country befor they were accused and found guilty. Here is the miracle. After the accident I was worried and upset and so one day while buying a truck to haul sand and stone for the three story Bible School we were constructing, I ask the owner (a wealthy man and law student) what would he suggest in a situation like this. He said what you need is a good lawyer and when we fix the title to this truck I will present one to you that will help you. So he did and all he said to the lawyer was when my friend here comes to discuss an accident with you I want you to consider it and help him. That is all that was said until about a year later when I got a letter from V. C. Hargrave, my Superintendent, stating someone had wrote a letter telling them to get V. E. Wolf out of Guatemala in less than 90 days or he would have that so and so and so put in jail. So Bro. Hargrave said you better investigate this because they seem to be in earnest to hurt you. Well he didn't send me the letter so I did not have the least idea who wrote it or what city it was sent from or anything. But we had a consel meeting announced for the next day and after the business was taken care of and we were about to pray, I requested prayer and told the brotheren about the threat. Then while we were praying the power of God fell and my hand hit the table hard and I said these words, "I have dought in one of you". When I looked, one head turned and the man showed troubled. So I asked Don Chema (Jose Maria Enriquez) to stay that night and help me investigate this. He said with pleasure even though he was 80 some years old and could have used the rest. The next morning this same man who turned his head at the conference table was out side in the street pacing up and down and finally rang the bell but refused to come in. On this, Don Chema, a former army official in the Guatemalan Army, gave him some straight instruction and some good christian advise. But all the man asked Don Chema to do was to stay out of this investigation.

He refused and stayed with me. We went to the Parents of the boy killed in the accident to see if they had changed their mind and was blaming me for the accident now. They said no. That God knew it was an accident and now that their son was gone, no one could bring him back-- but they had doubt in one of the conslers. We brought the parents back to Quezaltenango to talk to this same one that showed guilt but we had no proof. In the same trip we went to the lawyer (where we regulated the title for the truck) and he told him when his friend came to talk about an accident to hear him). The parents declared the truth and the whole story about the accident and the lawyer just walked the floor looking at his secretary, a 60 some year old man, until I said maybe you Catholics don't have this trouble but we have a minister coming up for an adultery trial and we think he has something to do with trying to get me out of the country using this accident, the only thing I can think of he could use, to force me out of Guatemala. Oh, he said I understand, and turned and told his sec. to write up a document declaring the truth about the accident and their missionary and have these parents sign it. Then if any more trouble came from this to call the law or bring them in to him and he would find out their motives and etc. because a short time back two ministers came to him asking what could be done to an American that had been involved in an accident like these parents have just declared but that they had changed the story. There was the miracle. God sent me to the same lawyer that these ministers had gone to to try to get me out of the country.

One of these same ministers, an ordained minister, his daughter got pregnant and I found it out when I ask the girl working for us how the Sunday School was going in San Cristobal. I ask if this former Bible School student was helping them and she snickered and turned in such a way that I told my wife she better find out what was wrong. She found out that the girl was getting too big out front to come out to Sunday School. So we went to see the girl but the ordained preacher said she was too sick to come out. Another trip with a district pastor, Juan Merida, she refused to see us and soon after Jose Cruz Figueroa came by the mission asking for financial help as his daughter had a tumor. I did not give him money or speak up just then, so he went to the Superintendent, Bro. McCall in Guatemala. He took him or gave him money to go to the doctor. The next thing we knew over the radio program and every where our church people were saying pray for Don Cruz daughter as she had a tumor. About that time Bro. Ingram, the founder of the Church of God, came to our house and I took advantage of the opportunity. I took him to visit Cruz Figueroa. They knew each other well for years and were great friends and when they had talked about old times and Bro. Ingram had given him his hat and suit coat and was about to pray and leave, Cruz said I want you to pray for my daughter as she has a tumor. I stepped up and looking him straight in the face ask, "A live tumor or a dead one." Cruz hung his head and said, "You may have a point there". I don't know if Bro. Ingram did not understand or if he understood so well that he did what he did. But when we prayed for her Bro. Ingram put his hand on top of the girl's stomach and began to pray. His prayer just died out and he pulled me up to my feet and when we were traveling down the road, he said Bro. Wolf, I'm getting too old for this sort of thing. When you get back you can check on them. When I got back in a few days my Sec., Francisco Son, said, "well the tumor is born and it has been buried." Helen and I went right over to San Cristobal to Don Cruz house and the maid there took us right to room. As soon as she saw us she began to cry and later told us everything. Who the father was, how and when the baby was born, and how her own father and the woman helping would not cut the cord until she threatened to scream and holler and get the neighbors. But they had waited too long. The baby had colored and died in a short time and then to top it all off, this ordained preacher sent his uninvolved 17 year old son to sneak into the cemetery at one or two in the morning to bury it without declaring a birth, death or nothing. We prayed with her and encouraged her all we could to be strong and seek God and what was right from here on. We went back and waited on the father of the baby, Doroteo Augilar. When he came in I got him to tell us and Francisco Son wrote it all out on the typewriter as he talked and then we had him sign it. In the trial he told the truth and his license was revoked and he served his 5 years. Now he is back active in God's work. But she changed her story on the day of their trial from what she told the wife and I.

Jose Cruz Figueroa began wearing a beard and one day after a counsel meeting I said in a joking way, Let us take up an offering and buy Don Cruz a razor. They all laughed but he got mad. Later during a session several months later one of them brought it up in the meeting--what should we do about the appearance of our counselor, the beard was now hanging way down. Cruz got mad and looked at me and said, Bro. Wolf if I shave off the beard, you got something else to pick

or ask me about? I warned him we were in session and it would be written down. Did he still want me to answer that question? He said yes. So I ask him how he as an ordained man could continue to stand up at a pulpit and try to teach others, how could he pretend to serve God and be one of us, knowing your daughter was pregnant and you asking all to pray for your daughter who had a tumor, then when it was born stand there and not let the handmaid take care of the new born baby until it died and then how could you involve your then age son and contaminate his conscience for life by sending him out in the middle of the night to crawl over the wall and bury it? How could you as a minister refuse to tell and declare the truth about the birth, death and burial to the law? How can you live with yourself much less try to preach? He did not say a word but the other men really got after me for not telling them long ago. So I told them you have it now and to discuss it and help me. They worked with Cruz the rest of the afternoon and finally came to an agreement to let me appoint a committee to go to the authorities and find out how and if we could report the truth and be not have to go to jail. They came back at the next session stating there was no way. So they ended up giving him 30 days to cut the board off and start straightening up. The day before the meeting, Don Chema came to my house and said, "Bro. Wolf, if we are going to do a good work with Cruz why not go all the way and declare all his evident faults." I ask him what he was referring to? He told me about his 12 year old girl he had to the secretary of the church after his wife died and he took me and presented me to the girl. When I saw the girl I saw another one in his house now that they were big with this same womens features and easy to tell she was their daughter. So I ask Bro. Jose M. Enriquez how is it you never told McCall about this and now I've been here several years and you never told me about it? He said yes, yes I know and the next day in the session we ask Cruz about it. He said Bro. Pullin had put him in discipline for it. So I said just a minute and went in and pulled his file and showed the bretheren how he had reported faithfully each month and that his ministry was never interrupted. We read scriptures and worked with him all day but finally he said I'll wait the judgement of God. So his ministry was revoked. The bretheren appologized for getting after me for not telling them something for several months when they kept a secret for over 12 years. So we realized what can happen to a man who tries to cover his sins, he tells more lies and even reports 85 messages preached in a month. I joked with our young preachers asking when ~~you~~ are you going to go to work. Here you have radio programs, teaching school, preaching in school chapel and local churches, doing secretary work and only preach twenty to thirty some messages each month. They answered, but we are telling the truth Bro. Wolf.

Well, soon after that we had a real revival, a Holy Ghost revival in our ministers meeting. Many seemed to change and work more in earnest for God. I could go on and on telling these sad experiences. But let me also tell you there was always enough good and souls saved and victories to off balance the bad.