

The Greatest Problems Facing the Church in Guatemala

By Bob Young

I sat down with a group of brothers in Guatemala and asked them about the greatest challenges facing the churches in Guatemala. Here is what they shared (in no particular order).

- The beliefs of the people (both within the churches and among the population)
 - This is not a reference to doctrine. As the brothers explained, this is cultural, referring to beliefs that are based in long-standing cultural understandings, traditions, and superstitions.
 - This causes conflicts between the gospel and the traditions.
 - It causes misplaced focus.
 - The solution is in an understanding of the cultural reality and practices.
 - The solution is not just in more Bible study
 - There is a need also for cultural studies and the ability to integrate the two.
- Lack of Biblical evangelism (that is, evangelism as it is generally done is unable to confront the traditions of the people, the result is many things that are confused and confusing)
- Focus on numerical growth, lack of spiritual growth
- Lack of knowledge
- Lack of a solid understanding of the faith, lack of a solid faith
- Materialism (I have grouped these, the next three items are related)
- Love for the things of the world, love for this world
- Selfishness
- The economic crisis in the country
- Lack of love within the church
- Lack of participation (especially among the women)