

In my endeavor, “starting over” usually is accompanied by anxious anticipation and excitement. Although you rely on expertise of past experiences, the future always includes unknown and uncharted territories. We as a mission organization feel a sense of excitement, as well as a hint of trepidation as we enter into the next phase of spreading the Gospel into the Yucatan.

We face a great challenge as we prepare to go into Valladolid, Tizmin and the northeast area of the state of the Yucatan. Until we start and develop them, there are no churches there waiting to host our groups, as we are accustomed to. There are no groups from the villages to meet us at the airport and sing the welcome song before boarding the buses. We don't have ladies there waiting to prepare our meals or to make room for our hammocks. We are starting over in a new area.

Although Tizmin is a city as large as Shreveport – Bossier, it is a wealthy city by Yucatecan standards, and could be difficult to reach. It is however, in a perfect location to launch our efforts to reach the northeast section of the state. There are a few evangelical works in the city, including a small Baptist work in the center of town, near the market. I will be meeting with them in November to see if they will accept the challenge of starting new works.

I am already working with an evangelist that feels called to spread the Gospel to Valladolid. He has several small groups meeting in the city, and appears to be eager to work with YEA in the coming years. Since Valladolid is the size of pre-Katrina New Orleans, the challenge is great indeed.

Our next mission team to the Yucatan will be going to San Felipe and Cenote Azul. San Felipe is a town of 1200 families and has no evangelical church of any kind. We have a mission started there, and will be going to teach the new members and to hold crusades. We will need for you to be praying for us here, as we are working there the week before Thanksgiving. Our mission at Cenote Azul is functioning well, and ready to build.

The seminary is perhaps the most important tool that we have for reaching these new areas. We are not being obedient to the great commission unless we leave someone to lead and train the new converts. We need pastors and teachers to hold seminars at the seminary, teaching our students how to teach and lead others.

Perhaps one of the most effective methods of sharing the Gospel, is to meet some of the needs of the local people. In order to accomplish that, I have hopes of starting a medical division of YEA during the next year. Please join me in praying that God will raise up a person with a medical background to help organize and head this division.

I also feel led to challenge YEA to adopt, and work with an orphanage in Merida. The orphanage was once sponsored by the Salvation Army, but it now left to survive with the help of one or two evangelical churches. It now houses 67 boys and 39 girls, who need Christian love, and to see Jesus in the lives of care givers. We may be the best

opportunity of keeping these kids off the streets and offering them a chance of living productive lives for God.

Finally, I see a great need of starting a division of YEA in Texas. Not a separate organization, but a couple of meetings each year allowing the churches in Texas to participate in our planning and decision making activities. Several churches in Texas are supporting our efforts, and should be more involved in the planning.

Thank you for being a part of YEA. You are vital in spreading the Good News to the Yucatan.

Shelby