



Letter About A Bad Team

Dear Pastor,

It is with fear that I write this letter. Yet to stay silent would be contributing to the hindrance of God's kingdom. First, I say how much I appreciate the on-going financial and prayerful partnership you have with my family in Peru. Without your care we would not be able to continue the work here!

Nonetheless, recognizing the possibility of risking our partnership and because of it, I want to express to you my concerns over the past months.

As you know two months ago, a request was made to us by the elders to host a ministry team here. To be honest, I never felt it was a request, rather a mandate. The elder expressed the church's disappointment in the camps this year and that it was the hope now of FCC to be more deeply involved in World Missions, so could we find something for a group to do?

I expressed that the timing wasn't good and that the church leaders here thought six months from now there might be a better opportunity. The response was, "some of us have vacation to use." Therefore, I agreed. However, as supportive as we are of having a church fully involved in missions, we are more concerned about the long-range spiritual development of the national church here.

The last 8 weeks, including the 12 days the team was here, have been difficult for me, my family, and the believers here. Why? The following are a few "highlights" of the last few weeks:

My wife and I had to delay our teaching schedule in the Bible College to arrange the housing needs and other logistics. We worked hard to prepare, only to have the group arrive with three more people than we were expecting. HEY, what's a few more?

We determined that renovation of the youth center would be a valuable assist to the ministry here and to the community. Therefore, paint and materials were ready. I informed FCC it would be a work project. In spite of that, I had to face this comment from one of FCC's elders, "I can't go back and say I painted, I have to lead somebody to Christ for the report!"

This attitude was prevalent among almost half of the 23 team members. We tried to explain the national church's strategy to them and the need for trust to be built especially in the tough community where the church is planted. Regardless of what I or Pastor Pablo said, they knew best.

Last comment, the nationals worked hard. They gave their time, food, and monetary resources to host the group. The overall attitude of the team was not gracious, but rather expectant. The FCC group seemed to expect this hospitality from the church members because they were the USA saviors come to help them.

Let me say here, 8 to 10 of the team were wonderful. They worked and apologized for the others, then worked and apologized some more. I saw God do neat things in their lives, while the others basically

seemed to think God was lucky to have them. Most of the center was complete. For that we are grateful. However, there has got to be a better way to make people world servants.

This letter is not being written to say we do not want any teams. It is simply saying FCC needs to rethink short-term missions. Aren't we called to serve? Aren't we called to submit? Pastor, in the eight years I have been here, I have learned to listen more than preach, serve more than guide, and pray more than talk. God has chosen to draw men through this.

Do we want another team? Yes, in fact next spring there is a holiday weekend when children in our barrios roam the streets. Is there a group who would be willing to come and assist the body here hold a weekend block festival. FCC's group would not be in charge. They may not have grand reports, but they could see God use them as they serve. We would want them to come here for two days of orientation prior to the festival.

If you think there are some behind-the-scenes people who could serve next spring, let me know.

Thank you for letting me express my feelings. Remember when your trip is over at home, the ramifications of it may last forever here! (Good and bad).

Desiring to serve humbly together,

Joseph



1400 NE 136th Ave, Suite 201
Vancouver, WA 98684
503.360.1865
soe.org



Contributed by CultureLink

For more information and resources, visit: <https://culturelinkinc.org>