

Chapter 24

Mexico

— By David Wilson —

In 1983, I was invited by Operation Mobilization (OM), a like-minded missions organization, to lead teams out in evangelism at their campaign in Juarez. The fields were ripe for harvest. In 1986, OM asked me to train and mobilize church teams in Mexico City. It was immediately after a massive earthquake that left collapsed buildings and many dead. Open-air evangelism was supposedly against the law, but after stopping me, the police directed us to an even better location in the downtown plaza. One officer encouraged me to continue preaching the gospel. Crowds immediately formed, and the response was almost always too much for our small team to handle.

Some of us prayed for God to one day give us the man to be our pioneer evangelist for OAC Mexico. In 2004, Paul Adams, of OAC-USA, took a team to Mexico. He had found Steve Montgomery, a missionary, on the web, and through Steve, found and trained Misael Hernández on the sketchboard. In January 2005, I flew to Mexico with Paul and spent time doing ministry with Misael. Our Overseas Ministries Board reviewed his application for staff, and he was accepted as an intern evangelist. He was sent to an English language school and then to David Proaño in OAC Ecuador for more training. I kept returning to work with Misael, and each time, we saw several thousand reached in public high school assemblies and open-air film and plaza meetings. God wonderfully provided for a new truck through a foundation in Germany and all the film equipment through an adult Sunday School class at our church.



MISAEI MINISTERING THE GOSPEL IN A SCHOOL USING THE SKETCHBOARD



*CHIP WELTON WITH A CANADIAN TEAM
PREACHING IN A SCHOOL*



*DAVID WILSON PREACHING IN
GUADALAJARA WITH MISAEL TRANSLATING*

The area we worked in was known by some as the 'Circle of Silence' as it refers to six least-reached states in Mexico, including Guadalajara, where less than two percent are evangelical believers. In one home where two women invited Steve and me to enter, we were shown a large statue of the Virgin Mary in the middle of the house. "She cries blood, and her expression changes when she cares for our problems," we were told. But after sharing the gospel and the way of salvation only in Christ, Steve was invited back for another visit. People were open to the gospel.

In 2012, the International OAC Conference was held in Guadalajara, and Misael organized the accommodations, church services, and open-air outreaches. It was a good success and an encouragement to our OAC staff from around the world.

Eventually, a second branch was opened in Chihuahua with Eleazar Martinez as the leader. Eleazar trained some good teams and still goes out into the open air regularly. But he felt led to leave our staff after a few years to work with another mission.



MISAEL SHARING THE GOSPEL OUT IN THE OPEN AIR USING A BLACKLIGHT ON THE SKETCHBOARD

While the ministry in the schools was very good, the government finally banned all religious programs for students. The OAC branch was moved to Guadalajara, where the open-air meetings in plazas were tremendous. Over time, however, it became more difficult to find places where the police would not stop the meetings. Misael began focusing more on training churches in evangelism, which proved to be his dominant gift and true calling. Then, in 2020, he felt led to take an extended secondment to another mission in the US, where he is presently exercising his gift as a pastor. With no staff now in Mexico, the branch has been closed, but we are thankful for the years of good ministry God gave us in His providence.

