

## Sebastian Suy - Guatemala Student

Pastor Tomas Suy was one of the first Mayan Indian pastor's to join with the UPC of Guatemala. It was hard breaking into the Mayan Indian people as they were very stoic and culturally did not show or express emotion. So much so that in their dialects they had no word for feels such as joy, love, happiness, sadness and so forth. In the beginning we were able to show them the truth of baptism in Jesus Name and they understood the need to receive the Holy Ghost, but none of them could seem to break through to receive the Holy Ghost. It was not until they could break through emotionally that God was able to fill them with the Holy Ghost. Today if you visit their churches you can see faces filled with joy and smiles. When they worship they now clap their hands, dance with joy and get excited. This was unheard of in the beginning years.

Tomas Suy's son, Sebastian, felt a call to ministry. So Tomas called and asked if he could send him to Bible School. The problem was that his Spanish was not very good, as his primary language was a Mayan Dialect. Also, Sebastian was very timid. We welcomed Sebastian to come to Bible School. He traveled the 4 hours by bus to our school in Guatemala City. I will never forget the day I met him. He would not look at me. He sort of mumbled as he looked at the ground. His first semester of study was brutal. He had never really studied before and certainly not in Spanish. The results of his first tests and home work were consistently 10/100, 6/100, 12/100 and so forth. He was not responsive in classes and the constant talk among the teachers was 'what are we going to do about Bro. Sebastian?'

At the end of the first semester Sebastian came into my office in tears. His report card was in his hand and he was ready to go home. He said, 'Bro. Brad, I can't do it'. 'Look at my grades'. I already had looked at his grades and his highest one was 15 out of 100 points! He had failed every course in the semester miserably... on paper. He told me that it was impossible and that he might as well go back home and stay there and not continue his studies. He was crying and felt so defeated. I told Sebastian to look at me and asked him, 'But have you learned anything?'. He replied, 'Oh, Bro Brad, I have learned so much. I have taken it home and started to teach it to our youth'. He went on in animated tones to tell me that the youth have started street evangelism and they are reaching new young people and seeing them baptized in Jesus Name. He began to share of more dynamic youth services and of changes that were happening in the church because of what he was learning in Bible School. To me the most amazing part of it all was the whole time he was sharing this he had a huge smile on his face and he was look at me eye to eye... something he would never had done months earlier.

I told him, 'Bro. Sebastian, in your case, these grades mean nothing to me. You are learning and God is transforming your life and ministry and to me that is a passing grade.' I encouraged him to return for the next semester and promised him that we would work more with him and that he would be amazed at what God would do.

Sebastian did return for the next semester and continued on to graduation 2 and a half years later. When he graduated he had an average grade of 88%... without any 'mercy grades'. God had truly done an amazing work in him.

But the greatest surprise was what happened in his last year of Bible School. His dad, Bro. Tomas, had gotten disgruntled with the UPC of Guatemala and decided to turn in his license and close the church down. He got up one Sunday and told the church his plans. Everyone was devastated, but no one as much as Sebastian. Sebastian stood to his feet and told his dad that he could not close the church. God was giving them a revival in the youth and it was not fair. He said, 'if I have to, I will pastor the church'. The people in the church stood in applause and Sebastian became the pastor of the church. In the next few years the church tripled in size and two new churches were started in neighboring communities.

His dad, came back around and reentered ministry. Today, the dad is the assistant pastor to Bro. Sebastian! What a great testimony to the grace and leadership of Bro. Sebastian Suy. Bro. Sebastian is now a Presbyterian of his section and has a Bible School extension in his section with over 25 students enrolled. He happily teaches students and can share with them first hand the transformation that can be wrought in their lives.