

Rio Grande

ISSUE 58 SPRING 2025

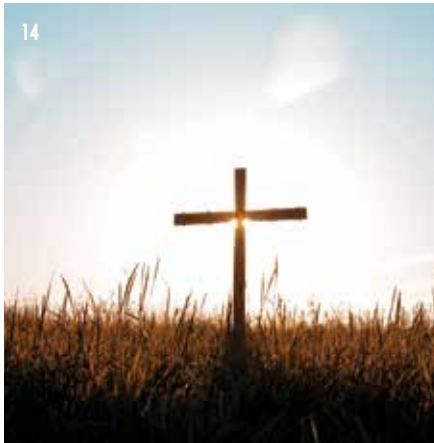
MAGAZINE



▲
RADIO
ESPERANZA
GIVES
HOPE TO
THOUSANDS

IN THIS ISSUE

SPRING 2025



on the cover

As a child growing up in Mexico, did Gerardo Lorenzo ever dream of directing a Christian radio station in Texas that sends the Gospel out around the clock? And who knew that people all over the world would one day be listening to God's Word via something called the Internet? No, it was all planned by our Heavenly Father. Praise Him with us as you read this issue of the *Río Grande Magazine*.

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TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THIS PUBLICATION:
Río Grande Bible Ministries or Río Grande = organizational name
Seminario Bíblico Río Grande or SBRG = Bible College
MLS = Missionary Language School (1955-2017)
ICS = InterCultural Studies (2017-)
Year = Graduated or last attended

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PURPOSE To make God's people aware of the needs of the Hispanic World and the role that Rio Grande Bible Institute serves to provide godly Christian leadership.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

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PRESIDENT'S CORNER

GOOD NEWS! "WE'VE WON!"

"His Royal Highness King Darius of Persia demands of you both earth and water!" declared the royal emissaries. Demanding earth and water was the historical practice where a conquering power would demand a symbolic offering of soil and water from a subjugated people, signifying their complete submission and recognition of the conqueror's authority over their land and resources. The behest for surrender chagrined the Greek city states surrounding Athens in 491 B.C., so "...the Athenians cast these heralds, when they made their request, down into a pit, and the Spartans had thrown theirs into a well; and the heralds were

told to take their earth and water to the King from there!"¹

But alas! Killing ambassadors was generally considered bad form even by the ancients! Darius was given the news, and his first question was, "Where is Athens?"² He then decreed vengeance on Greece, sending generals

Hippias, Datis, and Artaphernes to conquer them. The first encounter on the Greek mainland took place in August or September of 490 B.C., on the small seaside plain of Marathon, 26 miles northeast of Athens. Most of what we know comes from the account of the historian Herodotus, who wrote about it around 50 years later. Athenian general Miltiades took command of the hastily assembled army. Miltiades employed

some brilliant strategies, and at the point of victory, dispatched a messenger named Pheidippides, to inform Athens. He ran the entire distance, of about 26 miles, to Athens without stopping, discarding his weapons and even clothes to lose as much weight as possible, and burst into the assembly, exclaiming "we have won!," before collapsing and dying.³ The modern marathon was first held at the 1896 Olympic Games in Athens, Greece. The long distance race was based on the story of the herald of good news, Pheidippides, and received the moniker "Marathon" and the established distance of 26 miles.

Our commission in Radio Esperanza is also one of announcing good news to our listening audience. The Bible teachers and encouragers faithfully declare the heavenly messages of the revealed Word of God, with its faithful and accurate record of God's truth, His message of salvation by grace through faith, and the teaching of God's truth that leads sinners to faith in Christ and saints into the transforming life of walking in the Spirit.

Come and join me in the pages of this issue of the Rio Grande Magazine as we demonstrate how God is using some tireless, modern-day heralds to announce His royal proclamation.



Lawrence B. Windle



MORE THAN A RADIO STATION

Gerardo Lorenzo, Director, Radio Esperanza



WHAT IS RADIO ESPERANZA?

Located in Edinburg, Texas, Radio Esperanza is a non-profit, non-commercial station passionately dedicated to proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ and supporting the community in multiple ways. As a non-profit station, its commitment goes far beyond simply broadcasting programs. Radio Esperanza is a platform of support and real help for those in need of hope and direction, and has become a true ministry to its listeners in South Texas and North Mexico.

WHAT IS ITS PHILOSOPHY?

The philosophy of our Christian radio station is that the Gospel should be shared, not only in words, but lived out by actions that show God's love in practical and accessible ways. This truth is reflected in the many community events it organizes to help families, pastors, and churches. From evangelistic events to edification and support activities, Radio Esperanza acts as a bridge to unite people with spiritual and material resources, promoting Christian values and extending a helping hand to those who need it most.

Personal contact with people is extremely important because it reflects its mission to be a close, compassionate, and accessible voice for the community. As a non-profit Christian radio station, Radio Esperanza personnel not only want to broadcast messages, but also seek to genuinely connect with people, understand their struggles and needs, and offer them spiritual and emotional support in a practical way.

This direct contact allows the station to hear first-hand the concerns of the community and respond with sensitivity and precision, tailoring its content and events to address specific problems and provide words of encouragement, guidance, and hope.

In addition, face-to-face contact strengthens the relationship of trust between our personnel and its listeners, making Radio Esperanza more than a source of information. It also becomes a helping hand and a solid support in times of difficulty.

By becoming actively involved in the life of the community, the radio staff show God's love in a practical and authentic way, making the Gospel message come alive and feel real and present in every event. It is this personal contact that allows Radio Esperanza to fulfill its mission to help, edify, and evangelize--inspiring people to experience a life full of faith, joy, hope, and purpose.



Behind the scenes.

**THE
PHILOSOPHY OF
OUR CHRISTIAN
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A STATION WITH MISSION AND HEART: OUTSIDE FOUR WALLS

The Radio Esperanza team is not confined within the walls of the station. Each worker, from the administrative staff to the announcers, receptionists, etc., is actively involved in the community.

With an attitude of service, they see the needs on both sides of the border and bring their support to where it is most needed. Not only do they transmit a message of hope, but they also live it, and become active examples of faith in action.

In short, Radio Esperanza is much more than a radio station: it is a ministry with purpose, a voice of hope, and a resource of love and service for all.

Its philosophy of giving and serving the community with love and humility continues to transform lives and bring people closer to the timeless message of Jesus Christ. Amen!

TANGIBLE RESULTS

The benefits that Radio Esperanza brings to the community are vast and transformative. Thanks to its proximity and knowledge of local needs, the station's workers respond to concrete challenges such as the lack of emotional, spiritual, and material support in times of crisis. Its evangelistic events help many people find new hope in God, enabling those who are searching for peace and purpose to find answers and comfort.

Radio Esperanza's impact is manifested in visible results: families restored, people finding new direction in their lives, and communities strengthened through the message of faith. In addition, the station supports local pastors, giving them a platform to share their prayer time devotionals, and reaching thousands of people who might not otherwise hear the Gospel. This collaboration strengthens the work of the church in the region and fosters a network of support among congregations and believers.

RADIO ESPERANZA IS MUCH MORE THAN A RADIO STATION.



THE STATION SUPPORTS LOCAL PASTORS, GIVING THEM A PLATFORM TO SHARE THEIR PRAYER TIME DEVOTIONALS, AND REACHING THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE WHO MIGHT NOT OTHERWISE HEAR THE GOSPEL.



FREED *from* DEPRESSION

Dalia Lorenzo, Programming and Automation

In mid-September, I was at Radio Esperanza's front desk, chatting with the receptionist, when I noticed through the glass entrance door, an elderly woman with a young man.

They were talking to each other. They looked very anxious and also very sad, as if they were trying to come in, but could not bring themselves to do so.

I finally realized that they were in need and went out to greet them. When I asked if they needed any help, they said, "yes."

The young man mentioned that his mother-in-law was a Catholic and a frequent listener to Radio Esperanza. She was the one who recommended that they go to the station, thinking that they could be helped there.

The twenty-seven-year-old man suffered from anxiety and considerable depression. When they began to explain their problem, I asked them to come into the conference room where we could talk.

After talking for almost two hours, I invited them to accept Jesus as Savior and Lord—and they both accepted Christ!

They were looking for a Christian church to attend so that the son could socialize with more young people, so I recommended the church that my husband and I attend. Both the lady and the young man have been attending church faithfully for more than three months now. The man has continued to get counseling and has become involved with more young people in the church. He feels better, now has a good job, and their lives have changed in a wonderful way. Thank God!

“YOU
NEED
TO BE IN
RADIO!”

In our first year on staff at Rio Grande, Barb and I were asked to go on tour with a student music team. We traveled many miles, introducing people to the ministry of Rio Grande. At Moody Bible Institute in Chicago, we were introduced to WMBI, Moody's radio ministry. The student trio who traveled with us was asked to sing and to allow WMBI personnel to record their music to share with their Spanish listeners.

One of the men who had visited RGBI and knew about the school's ministry, suggested, "Why doesn't Rio Grande get a radio station like Moody has? It would be a great recruiting tool for the school."

That sounded like a great idea to us. Eliseo, a Rio Grande staff member who was also with us, was very interested in radio and immediately became excited about the possibility as well. However, when we returned to campus, we were reminded that Rio Grande Bible Institute was an educational institution and not a radio ministry.

Thus, the enthusiasm for radio was dampened for several years. Then Hardy Hayes came to the Rio Grande Valley to be the manager of KVMV, a local Christian station. Their programs were broadcast 50% in English and 50% in Spanish. However, he felt that it would be better to minister in 100% English rather than switching between the two languages.

He concluded that the Rio Grande Valley, with a population of

more than 90% Spanish-speakers, should have a Christian radio station totally in Spanish. An FM frequency was available as an educational station, so Hardy encouraged our leaders to apply for it.

Once again, the Rio Grande leadership insisted that we were an educational institution rather than a radio ministry. But because Hardy Hayes persisted, at last, permission was given to make application for the FM frequency.

In the summer of 1981, our application was sent to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) for approval. Rio Grande now had a new president, who was not aware that another group in the Valley had applied for the same frequency. If they were approved instead of us, our application would be canceled.

As the time came for the FCC to make their decision, our lawyers asked, "Why didn't you tell us that there is a request for our frequency to be cancelled? We don't have time to prepare our case to defend you." Gordon Johnson, our new president, responded, "Well then, I guess that the Lord doesn't want us in radio."

But, to our surprise, the FCC decided in our favor and granted us the license to FM 88.5. President Johnson, who initially had been skeptical about going into radio, became a strong supporter of the ministry. Almost immediately, many of our Hispanic staff offered to help operate the station. Friends at World Radio Network assisted us

in getting a transmitter and tower, and we began broadcasting on February 6, 1983.

Radio had a humble start at Rio Grande, but just three years later the ministry, which was now called Radio Esperanza (Radio Hope), would get a major boost in outreach. An AM radio station that began in the 1940s was given to Rio Grande! Overnight, KRIO switched from playing rock and roll, to gospel music and Christian programming in Spanish. The response from listeners, especially from Mexico, led us to inquire where the listeners were located. Then we began to fill a map with pins showing where Radio Esperanza was reaching. We soon realized that this station could be heard deep into Mexico and, at night, even in some places in Central America!

Radio Esperanza's outreach has continued to grow, with two more FM frequencies reaching the huge city of Monterrey, Mexico, and along the Mexican Gulf Coast. The stations spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ 24 hours a day, with live programming in daytime and computer programming to keep the signal going through the night and on weekends.

In addition to the three FM and the one AM frequency, Radio Esperanza can be heard over the Internet or with an available app. We praise the Lord for the testimonies that we receive of lives that are transformed by finding Radio Hope.

RADIO ESPERANZA SPREADS THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST 24 HOURS A DAY

FOR THE KINGDOM

ENGINEERING



ENGINEERING

FOR THE KINGDOM

The Radio Engineer & His Ministry

Tom Van Gorkom, Director of Media and Radio Engineer

When you listen to a radio broadcast, you probably don't think much about what it takes to deliver the programming to your radio.

It's just there for you...until it isn't. It takes more than turning on a microphone or playing music to get that programming to your ears. A lot of hard work and expense are involved in a radio station, along with the people to perform all the necessary tasks. It's a team effort.

My part as the radio engineer is mainly technical, with a bit of legal and financial management thrown in, because of all the equipment costs, service subscriptions, and federal regulation compliance.

Nowadays we depend heavily on computer networks for storing, editing, routing, playing, processing, and transporting audio to the transmitter sites. The transmitters also must be monitored and remotely controllable, to record operating data. So the radio engineer must be a network engineer too, or have experts to call on.

The spiritual aspect of this work cannot be ignored. Jesus warned that there would be opposition to the work of the Kingdom. As an engineer in radio ministry, I must be alert to the darts and roadblocks of our spiritual enemy. Sometimes these come in the form of failed equipment. How do I discern when it's spiritual interference? I pray first and then note anything unusual that can't be logically explained.

Once when I changed the external air filters on a transmitter, for no apparent reason it shut down. I pushed the reset button. Nothing. I turned the breaker off and back on. Still nothing. I put my hand on it and declared that it belonged to Jesus for the Gospel and that Satan had no right to touch it. The transmitter turned on and operated without failure for years after that!

To someone new, being this kind of radio engineer might sound like a daunting task. It was for me. I had no previous radio experience like

this, but my wife and I have always sought to follow Jesus' prescription in Matthew 6--by making his Kingdom first in our lives and laying up treasures in heaven. It's not about our preferences, career, or salary. We asked God for two things before agreeing to serve in radio at Rio Grande Bible Ministries: 1) to see how this role would serve His Kingdom, and 2) for a clear confirmation that we were to do it. He answered positively to both, and we came.

Then the next step of God's supernatural provision happened: He gave me wisdom and ability to do things I had never done before, arranging for me to learn just one system at a time instead of many all at once. What a blessing!

I've now been the radio engineer at Radio Esperanza for almost 12 years and I'm not getting any younger. I get tired at times, but the many listener testimonies of changed lives by the gospel-centered programming of the radio station encourage me to keep going. I enjoy being able to improve the quality of our broadcasts



▶ TOM, DEEP IN HIS WORK.

and systems. I enjoy the variety of tasks and technical challenges. I have seen God provide exactly what we need--often just before we needed it--even very expensive things! And our staff members don't just sit behind microphones. They counsel listeners, lead them to faith in Jesus Christ, and coordinate outreach events with local churches. It's far more than a job. Treasures are being laid up in heaven!

Our radio signal covers a large potential harvest of souls, and I'm going to need someone to train and replace me in the next few years. Such a person must first be motivated to serve Christ's Kingdom, believing that God has called them into this kind of work, and be willing to raise their own financial support. Technical skills and experience are important, but one doesn't need to be an expert in all areas of radio engineering before learning on the job. Could God be calling you or someone you know to join us?



▲ RIGHT THERE! THAT'S THE PROBLEM!

AUGUST 1, 2024 - NOVEMBER 30, 2024

HONOR & MEMORIAL GIFTS

IN MEMORY OF

CAROL ANDERSON
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Mr. & Mrs. Gary Williams

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Helen Robinson
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Mr. & Mrs. Gary Williams
Mr. & Mrs. Lawrence Windle

RIO GRANDE BIBLE MINISTRIES
CAMPUS NEWS

**DÍA DE LA RAZA/
COLUMBUS DAY
CELEBRATION**

Our campus-wide Columbus Day celebration took place this year on the Saturday before the holiday. For this event, participants wear the colorful clothing traditional in their countries. The students from each country get together to create a presentation about their homeland and cook delicious specialty dishes of their land to share with everyone present. The day culminates with a parade to the “flagpole circle” on campus, where the students from each nation represented by our student body raise their flag while singing their national anthem.



VOLUNTEER TEAM

In October, a volunteer work team visited campus from a church in Maryville, TN, to assist Radio Esperanza with studio updates and computers, and to get to know the ministry of RGBM. Some of them also painted rooms in the college music building. They were impressed with the reach of this ministry and enjoyed interacting with students and staff, hoping to return next year.

LIBRARY STORY TIME Our campus library debuted a bilingual story time this fall for the children of students and staff. Two of the students who work in the library have been presenting stories, songs, and crafts centered on a different theme each week. The first week the children learned the Gospel message of the “wordless book.” Subsequent weeks’ themes included God’s creation of the world, followed by several weeks of focusing on “God Made Me”—God made my hands for helping and serving, my mouth for praising, and so on.



MISSIONARY CONFERENCE

2024 ▶ In late October, Rio Grande Bible College held a missionary conference with the theme “Commissioned by Christ: Your role in the remaining task.” The keynote speaker, who presented five sessions on this theme, was Julio Moromisato, a member of OM Latin America and the executive director of Comhina. A number of mission agencies sent representatives to the conference to interact with our students and present workshops. Some of our graduates go on to serve with an agency they first made contact with at one of our missionary conferences. The conference was open not only to our students and staff and members of their local churches, but was available to a worldwide audience via an online connection.

FAITH, DECISION, PREACHING

Dr. Lawrence Windle, President

SALVATION IS AN INFORMED EVENT!

The Apostle Paul shines the light clearly upon numerous theological truths about salvation in Romans 10:8-17, and He begins by explaining that response to the Gospel requires understanding. "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith which we preach):¹¹ This quote is from Deuteronomy 30:14, in the Valley of Decision. Moses called all Israel to decide about entering into a covenant with God, laying out the blessings on one side of the valley and the curses on the other. Moses explained, "... those things which are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law."¹² God does not arbitrarily require

man to follow what has not been revealed, but rather what has been revealed. Their condemnation, if they fail to keep what is revealed, is just and right.

Paul quotes this as he emphasizes that God deals with man on the basis of man's response to God's understood revelation. "11 For this commandment which I command you today is not too mysterious for you, nor is it far off. 12 "It is not in heaven that you should say, 'Who will ascend into heaven for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?' 13 "Nor is it beyond the sea, that you should say, 'Who will go over the sea for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?' 14 "But the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may do it. 15 "See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil."¹³



Moses uses the Hebrew word *dabar* (rb'D') for “the *word* is very nigh...” It means the spoken word, the utterance, the communicated word, the word spoken out loud. This spoken word was faithfully declared to them, and it was their responsibility to respond to it. Paul translates the Hebrew using the Greek equivalent of the “spoken word,” *rhema* (r'h/ma), as opposed to the written or officially recorded word *logos* (logoj). His point is that man is responsible to respond to God’s faithful expression of truth, whether written or otherwise communicated through His messengers, and the effective convincing of the Spirit. Not irresistible, but God ensures that man “gets it,” that it is clearly understood. Man’s ill response will not be due to a lack of clarity on God’s part.

Salvation is a volitional event.

The message is near and understood, and, “9 ...if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.” Everything about verse 9—the context of the

Valley of Decision, the explanation, and even the grammar usage—emphasizes the volitional response of the individual.

Paul uses the subjunctive tense in the first part of verse 9. I will illustrate: If I were to ask you what your favorite color was when you were five years old, could you tell me? If I were to ask you what your favorite color is now, would it be the same? If I were to ask you what your favorite color will be ten years from now, could you accurately predict it? That series of questions is posed in a hypothetical, theoretical sense. Notice that I said, “If I were to...” That gives the idea that I haven’t done so, but if I did, you might give me a response. This is the subjunctive.

Paul says: *If you were to confess with your mouth* (contingent) and *were to believe in your heart* (contingent), *you would be saved* (solid outcome). This is understandable. It comes complete with a historical event to illustrate it...the Valley of Decision. God requires man to respond.

To *confess, homologeo* (o`mologe,w), comes from two

Greek words: *homo*s (the same as) and *logos* (a word formally decreed or declared). It means to formally and officially say the same thing as He says about our sin, confessing and agreeing with Him.

SALVATION IS A SURRENDERING EVENT.

He continues “and believe in your heart”. Believe, *pisteuo* (*pisteu,w*), means to believe in, have faith in, entrust. The belief is qualified by the phrase, “in your heart,” *kardia* (*kardi,a*). Similar to English heart, it refers to both the physical heart muscle, which is the center of blood circulation, and also to the spiritual heart. In this context, of course, Paul is referring to the spiritual, namely the seat of the intelligence, will and character, or perhaps of the sensibilities, affections, emotions, desires, appetites and passions. The complete response of the inmost being...believe in your heart.

Salvation requires understanding, a volitional response, and a conscious surrendering to Him.



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Radio Esperanza is a crucial tool and integral part of Rio Grande Bible Ministries.

Its signal reaches across the border into Mexico, proclaiming the Gospel to the lost. God has used it for decades, and we trust, will continue to do so for many more years. Please consider how the Lord might lead you to give to this important outreach, or to any other part of Rio Grande Bible Ministries.

For more information or to give:

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