

Rio Grande

ISSUE 62 SUMMER 2026

MAGAZINE

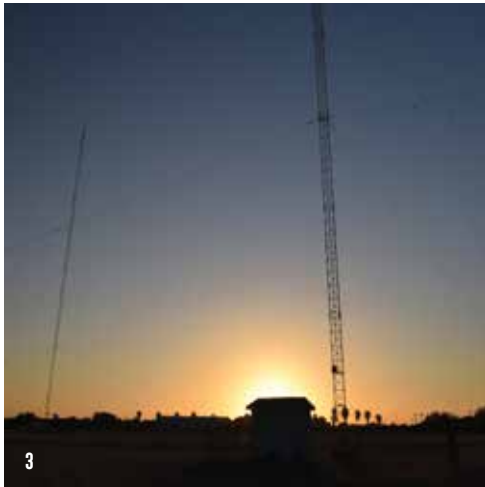
PODCAST

ENGAGING PEOPLE FOR
ETERNAL EFFECT



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SUMMER 2026



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TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THIS PUBLICATION:
Rio Grande Bible Ministries or Rio 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

on the cover Mario Sotelo has served at Radio Esperanza for many years. Now his son, Israel, a current student, is working with VP of Media Billy Jackson, to produce a new podcast called "I Hear You." They will welcome prayer as they determine the purpose and focus of this new project.

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LARRY WINDLE
President

BOB KRACHT
Managing Editor

ENID SANFORD
Copy Editor, Writer

DONNA ANTONIUK
Campus News

BILLY JACKSON
Photographer

CHRISTY BROKENS
Graphic Designer

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
This publication is sent without charge and is sustained by voluntary contributions. Send requests, cancellations, and address changes to Ministerial Advancement, Rio Grande Bible Institute, 4300 South US Hwy. 281, Edinburg, TX 78539, U.S.A., E-mail: RioGrandemail@riogrande.edu, phone: 956-380-8100, fax: 956-380-8256.

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RIO GRANDE BIBLE MINISTRIES
700 Dovercourt Dr.
Unit 31 #656
Winnipeg, MB R3Y 1X5
Canada
www.riogrande.edu

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PRESIDENT'S CORNER

YOU'LL KNOW THEM BY THEIR...GIRTH?

“This one doesn’t look like a cook!

Let’s go somewhere else to eat!” Dan remarked assertively. As with most cattle ranchers, he was convinced that you can’t buy cattle by merely looking at their pedigree, you also had to look at the animal itself to see if it

“Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.”

MATTHEW 7:16-17

measured up to the standard. Dan was well over 6 feet tall, a heavysset, rawboned cattleman, and he loved to eat. He applied his view on cattle buying to his eating with practical certainty. “You can’t tell a cook by his pedigree, you haf’ to look at ‘em an’ see if they look like a good cook.” When Dan looked for a restaurant, he always stuck his head into the kitchen and sized up the profile of the cook before agreeing to eat there.

What does a cook look like? What does a mechanic look like? What does an effective ministry look like? Jesus said, “You are the light of the world.” Our role is not only to be saved and heaven

bound; it is also to minister in such a way that others will be able to see the effect.

People often ask me, “How important is the ministry of Radio Esperanza?” Great question! Jesus gave us a very practical point of reference for discerning the difference between good ministries and bad ministries, effective Christian workers and ineffective benchwarmers: “Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.” (Matthew 7:16-17) Let’s pick up the “mirror” called the Word of God and take a long, hard look at the ministry of Radio Esperanza through the pages of this Rio Grande issue. How is the impact?



Lawrence B. Windle

HOPE EXTENDING THE MESSAGE OF

Gerardo Lorenzo, General Director

“WE NEED TO CONTINUE TOUCHING HEARTS BEYOND OUR BORDERS WITH THE WORD OF GOD.”

Radio Esperanza was born with a clear purpose: to share the Word of God with every heart in need of hope, salvation, and direction. From the beginning, its biblical programming and prayer segments have been the foundation for evangelizing the lost, edifying the believer, uniting churches, impacting the community, and training pastors and leaders. However, what God has started is not meant to remain static. Scripture urges us to move forward, grow, and extend ourselves. Isaiah 54:2–3

reminds us: “Enlarge the place of your tent... lengthen your cords and strengthen your stakes.” This call is not symbolic; it is a divine invitation to expand the reach of the message.

Today, God is opening a door of opportunity to bring Radio Esperanza’s programming to regions where thousands of Hispanics live without access to a solid, biblical, and Christ-centered Christian station. He is also opening doors to strengthen stations that need content that is faithful to the Word. We are facing a decisive moment—a spiritual and strategic turning point.

Radio Esperanza has proven to be a reliable platform with credibility and a life-transforming message. But every healthy work must move in three directions: **consolidating** what God has given, **evaluating** progress, and **expanding** toward what God has for the future. This 2026–2030 expansion plan responds to that call. Its purpose is clear: to multiply the reach of the Gospel, develop new partners, and establish a network of regional and national ministerial impact.

THE CURRENT LANDSCAPE

The current situation confirms the urgency. The Hispanic population is growing rapidly in the United States and many other countries. The spiritual need is evident.

Technology—such as the internet, apps, and social media—allows us to break geographical barriers. God has opened strong relationships with leaders and station networks. There is even

a real possibility of acquiring a new station in West Texas. Several stations have requested support from Radio Esperanza in programming and training. All of this indicates that the time to expand is not in the future... **it is now.**

The challenges are also real: limited resources, media competition, and cultural changes. But these challenges do not cancel the mission; they make it more urgent. Therefore, this plan is not optional: it is necessary to obey the mandate to take the Gospel further.

STRATEGIC PILLARS OF EXPANSION

THE EXPANSION WILL DEVELOP IN THE FOLLOWING STRATEGIC AREAS:

TERRITORIAL EXPANSION

Following the model of Acts 1:8—advancing from local to regional, state, and national levels through new stations, repeaters, and digital platforms.

MINISTERIAL ALLIANCES

This will allow us to multiply impact without duplicating efforts.

TRAINING & DISTRIBUTION

Following 2 Timothy 2:2. It is not enough to broadcast; we must train communicators, announcers, technicians, and leaders, and provide biblical content to other stations.

DIGITAL EXPANSION

Fulfilling Psalm 19:4: “Their voice goes out into all the earth.” The goal is to have a global audience without geographical limits.

REGIONAL PRESENCE

Through events, conferences, and ministerial tours, taking the message beyond the radio signal.

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

will require both faith and strategy: strengthening radiothons, developing monthly partners, and uniting pastors, churches, entrepreneurs, and professionals.

A LASTING LEGACY

This plan is a call to step out of our comfort zones, invest in the eternal, and manage a greater expansion with excellence.

Finally, we remember the legacy of the generous

believer who donated everything necessary to purchase KESO 92.7 FM in Port Isabel. His desire was simple and profound: “May Radio

Esperanza continue winning souls for Christ, even after I am gone.” His vision transcends his life. He envisioned souls, families, youth, and generations transformed through the power of the Gospel. His sowing continues to bear fruit. His faith still speaks.

Now, the question is: **Are we ready to continue that legacy and extend Radio Esperanza beyond our borders?** The answer is known only to God and to you.



↑ REDEFINING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RADIO AND ITS AUDIENCE

"SEE YOU ON THE RADIO"

By Sol Palacios



The new radio community where broadcasters and listeners interact.

→ **TODAY, SOCIAL MEDIA HAS ESTABLISHED ITSELF AS ONE OF THE MOST FAR-REACHING PLATFORMS IN THE WORLD.**

Millions of people engage with content every day in digital spaces that do more than inform. They connect, entertain, and build community. Platforms like Facebook and YouTube have reshaped the way audiences interact with content, allowing it to reach people instantly across geographical boundaries and cultural contexts.

In this landscape, Radio Esperanza has taken an important step forward by embracing these digital tools as part of its communication strategy. What was once an exclusively audio-based medium is now enhanced through live video streaming, allowing audiences not only to listen to programming, but to see it unfold in real time. This shift creates a richer, more engaging experience for listeners who are now also viewers.

This transformation goes beyond a simple technical upgrade. Live streaming is redefining the relationship between radio and its audience. Those who tune in are no longer passive listeners; they become active participants. They can watch what happens inside the studio, see the hosts, and experience the atmosphere that was once limited to those physically present.

Social media has proven to be a powerful asset for Radio Esperanza. Beyond live broadcasts, these platforms have become essential for maintaining an ongoing connection with listeners. Through them, people share prayer requests, send greetings and express encouragement and blessings, strengthening the programming, and fostering a genuine sense of community where every message matters and every voice is valued. At the same time, this interactivity has become a defining feature of this new stage, enabling real-time engagement through comments, reactions, and shares. As a result, each

program becomes a shared experience, transforming communication from a one-way transmission into an ongoing dialogue between the station and its audience.

One of the greatest advantages of this format is its reach. Through live streaming on digital platforms, Radio Esperanza can connect with audiences around the world without the traditional limitations of radio signals. Today, the station has built a community of over 62,000 followers on Facebook and more than 3,000 subscribers on YouTube, reflecting the steady growth of its digital presence. At the same time, the accessibility of mobile devices allows people to tune in anytime, from virtually anywhere, significantly expanding the impact of each broadcast.

Amid this growth, it is worth noting that, as part of Rio Grande Bible Ministries, there was already a strong foundation in content streaming through the Bible college, where chapels and conferences have been live streamed for over a decade. While this work belongs specifically to the Seminary, that experience has played an important role in helping shape and strengthen the development of live streaming within the radio context.

However, what truly makes this approach meaningful is not just the technology itself, but the opportunity to open the doors of the ministry. Through live video, Radio Esperanza invites people to step inside the radio environment. The goal is for them to see what happens behind the scenes, to meet the team, and to feel included in each broadcast. This level of transparency builds trust, fosters connection, and creates a strong sense of belonging.

Live streaming also offers another key advantage: longevity. While content

is experienced in real time, it can also be replayed later, extending its lifespan and allowing new audiences to engage with it at any moment. In this way, each broadcast continues to fulfill its purpose well beyond its original airing.

Ultimately, the integration of radio, social media, and live streaming does more than expand reach. It also reshapes how the message is shared and experienced. Radio Esperanza is not simply adapting to a trend; it is embracing an opportunity to connect in deeper, more meaningful ways.

In an increasingly digital world, where audiences are searching for authentic and engaging experiences, radio is finding new ways to remain relevant and impactful. Today, every broadcast becomes an open door—an invitation not only to listen, but also to see, to engage, and to belong. And through every interaction, every message, and every connection made, Radio Esperanza remains committed to its mission: **bringing a message of hope** to every heart hungry for the truth.



TODAY, THE STATION HAS BUILT A COMMUNITY OF OVER 62,000 FOLLOWERS ON FACEBOOK AND MORE THAN 3,000 SUBSCRIBERS ON YOUTUBE.

FOLLOW ALONG



facebook.com/radioesperanza



instagram.com/radioesperanzaoficial



youtube.com/@RadioEsperanzaTV

PEACE FOR THE PRIEST



THE JOURNEY OF NICOLÁS CABELLO

By Gerardo Lorenzo

A STORY OF GRACE, RESTORATION, AND DIVINE PURPOSE

From his earliest years, Nicolás Cabello, who was born in Mexico City, suffered a pain that scared his soul. When he was just three, his father walked away, leaving a void that would become a deep, festering wound. Growing up without guidance, a role model, or a father's affection, Nicolás became angry and rebellious.

In his teens, he sought refuge in alcohol. What started as an escape soon became a chain. By the time he was a young man, he had already seen the inside of a jail cell—not because he was malicious, but because he was a broken person. Yet, in the middle of that darkness, Nicolás talked to God. He begged for help, pleading for a way out of the abyss.

Seeking Answers in the Church

With a desire to change, he turned to the Catholic Church. A priest took the time to listen and walk alongside him. That act of kindness changed everything. Nicolás felt that his soul's true calling was to serve God, so he studied to become a Catholic priest. He was determined to help others as a priest had helped him.

A New Chapter in the Rio Grande Valley

In 1972, a door opened that would rewrite his future. Despite speaking very little English, he soon moved to the Rio Grande Valley. He quickly became a beloved figure in the community—active, tireless, always ready to serve. He visited the most impoverished neighborhoods, organized social aid, and hosted programs on secular radio stations. Although his life looked complete, he was facing a spiritual drought he couldn't shake.

He was busy serving, but he lacked peace. He was full of activity, but without fulfillment. He had religion, but was missing a personal relationship with Jesus.

The Cry for Transformation

One day, at a church in Weslaco, Texas, Nicolás attended an event filled with Scripture and song. Afterward, he went back to his room, shut the door, and fell to his knees. From the depths of a weary heart, he cried out: "Lord, come into my life. I want to live for You. Give me a new life."

That moment changed everything. God answered the cry of a sincere heart.

Awakening and Radio Esperanza

Nicolás listened to Billy Graham on the radio, and every verse he quoted felt like cool water on parched ground. He also discovered Radio Esperanza and was particularly struck by a program called "My Favorite Promise," where listeners shared their favorite Bible verses. That was the bridge God used to bring him home. He met the station manager, Javier Salinas, who led him to personal faith in Christ. Later, he was discipled by Professor Wilson Campoverde, a graduate of Rio Grande Bible Institute.

A New Foundation

Nicolás eventually enrolled at RGBI, where his faith was fortified, and his pastoral calling took a definitive shape. God also blessed him with a family. Javier Salinas officiated at his wedding, and Wilson Campoverde preached the service. A new, beautiful story was being written.

After graduation, he was called to pastor La Roca Church in North Edinburg, where he served with unwavering faithfulness and love.

Faithfulness Through the Valley

In 2024, his beloved wife, Rosita, passed away. It was a profound loss. After years of dedicated ministry, Nicolás retired from the pastorate, and God led a young man whom Nicolás had mentored to carry the work forward.

A Legacy of Fruitfulness

Today, Pastor Nicolás Cabello's life stands as a powerful testament to these truths:

- God transforms our deepest wounds into joy.
- God has a specific purpose for every life.
- God turns the abandoned into the adopted.
- God takes the broken and uses them for His glory.
- God uses ministries like Radio Esperanza and Rio Grande Bible Ministries to bring light into the shadows.

This is more than just one man's biography. It is the story of a God who rescues, restores, and calls us by name.

PODCASTING



FOR THE GREAT COMMISSION

THE WORLD OF COMMUNICATION HAS EVOLVED AT AN ACCELERATED PACE.

From the earliest printed media to radio, television, the internet, and now social media, each era has introduced new tools that connect people and allow messages to travel farther and faster. Amid this constantly changing landscape, the mission of sharing the gospel has not slowed down. On the contrary, every advancement has opened doors to carry the good news to more hearts, more places, and more contexts. Today, thanks to the rise of digital platforms, sharing a message of hope is literally just one click away.

Among all these tools, the podcast has become one of the most significant phenomena of recent years. You may already be familiar with this format—or perhaps you still wonder: what exactly is a podcast? Simply put, a podcast is audio content—or audio accompanied by video—available on platforms that let you listen whenever you want, however you want, and from wherever you want. This flexibility sets it apart from traditional media: you can pause, fast-forward, replay, save episodes, and adapt your listening habits to your own schedule and daily routines. It is a personal, intimate, and accessible medium.

But beyond convenience, the growth of podcasting is supported by concrete data. According to

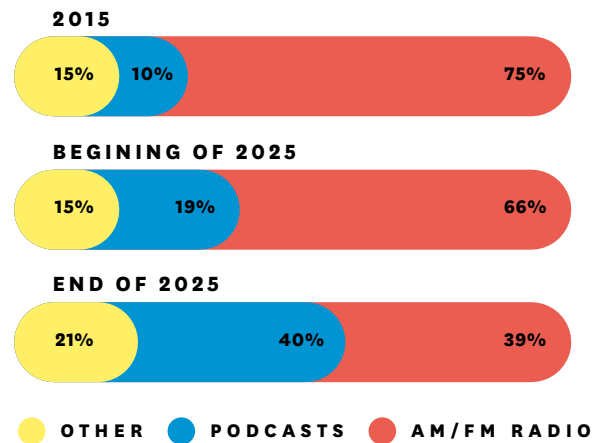
Edison Research's *Share of Ear*[®] from the first quarter of 2025, within the universe of ad-supported audio, AM/FM radio represented 66% of daily listening time, while podcasts already reached 19%—a number that continues to rise steadily each quarter. In contrast, radio has shown small but consistent declines.

The real revolution, however, is taking place within spoken-word audio. In 2015, radio dominated this segment with an impressive 75% of listening time, while podcasts accounted for only 10%. Ten years later, the landscape has completely shifted: by the end of 2025, podcasts climbed to 40% of spoken-word listening time, slightly surpassing radio, which fell to 39%. This crossing curve is more than a statistic; it is clear evidence of how habits, preferences, and the ways people seek content have changed.

Faced with this reality, we at Rio Grande Bible Ministries recognize that we cannot remain outside these new spaces. We understand that the mission of communicating hope must be present in every format where people are listening. That is why we took the step of creating our first podcast, *Between Brothers*, launched over two years ago—in both English and Spanish—with a very clear purpose: to share real testimonies of how God continues working in the lives of ordinary people. Stories that remind us that the Lord is still transforming, restoring, and guiding lives; stories that create connection, understanding, and comfort for those who listen.

Today, we continue to grow. We are currently producing a new podcast specifically aimed at English-speaking youth, challenging them to listen and

DAILY LISTENING TIME OF AD-SUPPORTED AUDIO:



respond to the Lord's call. New generations consume content differently, and we must meet them in the spaces where they already are. We will continue to seek the Lord's will and provision for entering these spaces.

We live in a world filled with words: words on social media, words in the news, words in opinions that come and go. But in the midst of so much noise, there is one truth that rises above all others:

"Lord, to whom shall we go? You alone have the words of eternal life." - John 6:68

Platforms change. Formats evolve. Strategies adapt. But one thing remains unchanged: the message. The message that transforms, enlightens, strengthens, and saves. Here, in the media division of Rio Grande Bible Ministries, our commitment is to be present in every possible channel—radio, video, social media, podcasts—because we firmly believe that, although media evolves, the gospel remains the word that brings life.

DECEMBER 2025 - MARCH 2026

HONOR & MEMORIAL GIFTS

IN HONOR OF

LARRY DICK'S BIRTHDAY
Dwight & Bonnie Johnson

KEITH & OLIVIA HEPPNER
Gail Higgs

IN MEMORY OF

A FRIEND
Jennie Biedekapp-Walker

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Mr. & Mrs. Orlin Anderson
Joyce Diede
Mr. & Mrs. Glen Guhde
Mr. & Mrs. Ronald Heath
Ethel Johnson
Mavis Knoepfle
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Priscilla Hanson
Mr. & Mrs. Burl Penny
Helen Robinson

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Mr. & Mrs. Glen Guhde

LINDA DAVIS
Katherine Roberts & Loy
Arbaugh

MAX DEETHARDT
Nick & Pat Daum

REV. MICHAEL DOWNEY
Colleen Downey
Sheri Koch

EDNA FRIESEN
Leo & Eva Reimer

DON GRABER
Avant Ministries

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MIKE HARRISON
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Adelle Bottom
Tad Davis
Colleen Downey
Kenneth Drake
Dorothy Ekberg
Pam Friesen

Mr. & Mrs. Charles & Grace
Hulstedt
Delores Jeske
Nolan Jeske
Tricia Jeske
Evelyn Johnson
Mark & Judy (Kracht) Keck
Sheri Koch
Mr. & Mrs. Kenton Lee
Mr. & Mrs. M.E. Long
Mr. & Mrs. Charles Mellenbruch
Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Pelphrey
Mr. & Mrs. Gerald R. Rudolph,
Jr.

David & Sue Severing
Wright City Baptist Church

DR. GORDON JONSON & GRACE JOHNSON
Colleen Downey
Rev. & Mrs. Keith Jeske
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas White

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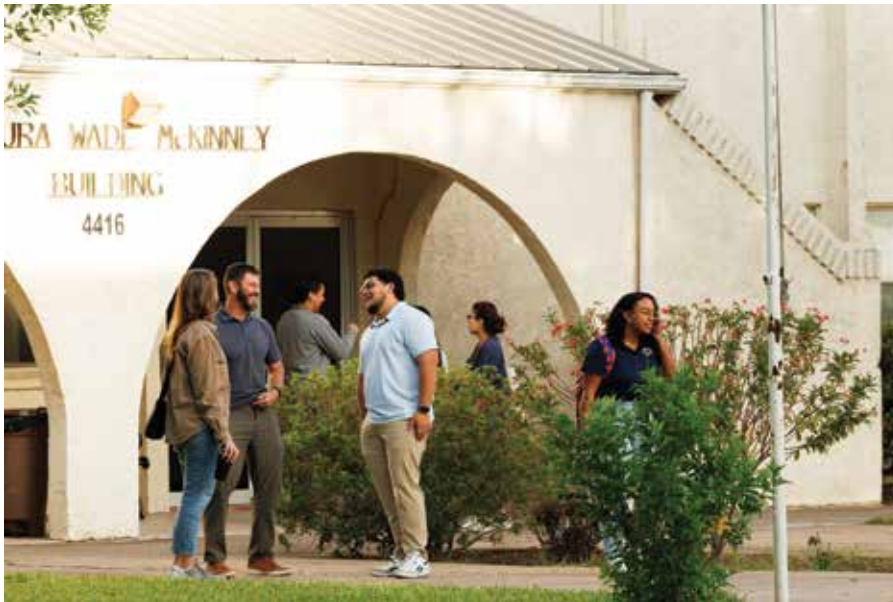
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RIO GRANDE BIBLE MINISTRIES CAMPUS NEWS

CORNERSTONE PROGRAM Starting this fall, Rio Grande is offering Cornerstone, a one-year program in Bible, worldview, and life designed to give recent high-school graduates a biblical foundation before heading off to college. For more information or to apply, please scan the QR code or email admisiones@riogrande.edu ▼



RADIO ESPERANZA VOLUNTEERS

Radio Esperanza relies on volunteers to carry out its ministry. There are presently 18 volunteers. Thirteen help at the reception desk with tasks like answering phones, greeting and directing people who arrive at the Radio Esperanza offices, praying with people either on the phone or in person, counseling, and assisting at special events. Another five are radio announcers who also promote the school and are available for special events like the Radiothon. Steve Biggs, a winter volunteer, has also helped immensely in his role as assistant engineer to Tom Van Gorkom.



FOUNDER'S WEEK

Each year in February, we recognize God's faithfulness to Rio Grande during Founder's Week. This year was extra special because we were celebrating our 80th anniversary. We kicked off the time of remembrance with the dedication of a memorial stone on campus, followed by a conference week at Bibleville, where Dr. Windle was the speaker each evening.

PASTOR'S CONFERENCE

During March 18-21, the students served in various ways at our *Shepherding the Shepherds* Pastor's Conference. The speaker this year was Dr. Miguel Nuñez, a well-known pastor and author, founder of Wisdom & Integrity Ministries, and council member of the Gospel Coalition who speaks frequently at conferences throughout Latin America and the United States.



THE WORD IS DYNAMAMITE

Larry Windle, President

In 1845, Christian Friedrich Schönbein, a professor of chemistry at the University of Basel, was boiling nitric acid and sulfuric acid in a flask on his wife's stove when the flask broke. He grabbed his wife's cotton apron, the nearest thing, to mop up the mess. He hung the apron in front of the fire to dry, and it instantly went up in flames! The two nonflammable acids mixed to form a volatile compound. Ascanio Sobrero, working from Schönbein's discovery, combined the two acids with the colorless, syrupy liquid known as glycerin, an alcohol obtained from vegetable and animal fats. He reported that when a drop was heated in a test-tube, it exploded with great violence. Nitroglycerin was born.

In common inventor fashion, he wanted to know what other effects it had. "A trace of it placed on the tongue, but not swallowed, gave rise to a most violent, pulsating headache accompanied by great weakness of the limbs." It directly affected the blood vessels to the heart.

Alfred Nobel stabilized it with diatomaceous earth in 1866, inventing dynamite (from the Greek word *dunamis*, meaning power), and marketing it for use in mining and construction, earning a fortune. Using his fortune, he established an award to give special recognition to great inventors called the Nobel Prizes.

WHAT IT IS GOD'S WORD LIKE?

The same Greek term that Nobel borrowed to name his earthmoving invention of dynamite is the word that Hebrews 4:12 uses to describe the impact of the Word of God...it is living and powerful (*dunamis*). The best description of the what the Word of God does comes from the Bible itself. It distinguishes itself from all other literary works by explaining that it was given by God Himself—literally exhaled by God, reflecting His full nature." The Psalmist explains that it is right and true, never wrong or false. Its truth will never go out of date, because it is eternal. It is efficient, it will always have an effect, never returning void. There are no errors or flaws, and its truth will protect its followers. It stands as the opposite of moral filth and evil, and can be engrafted into the believer, producing salvation and fruit that pleases God and is not tainted by sin.

THE POWER IT WIELDS

The animation of Scripture refers to the doctrine that the Bible is "living and active, and sharper than any double-edged sword," wielding Spirit guided, divine power to change lives, convict hearts, and reveal truth. It signifies that Scripture is not a stagnant text but a dynamic, life-giving word. Jeremiah describes it as a consuming fire that is able to melt the hearts and reasonings, and as a hammer that breaks the rocks in pieces through its repeated use.



It boasts Spirit power that results in the New Birth. Peter calls it imperishable seed, reflecting Jesus' own parable of the Sower, planting the truth of the Word with Spirit effect. It not only leads to salvation, it also provides complete assurance of salvation. When believers doubt their salvation, a good, long soaking in the reservoir of God's Word penetrates deeply.

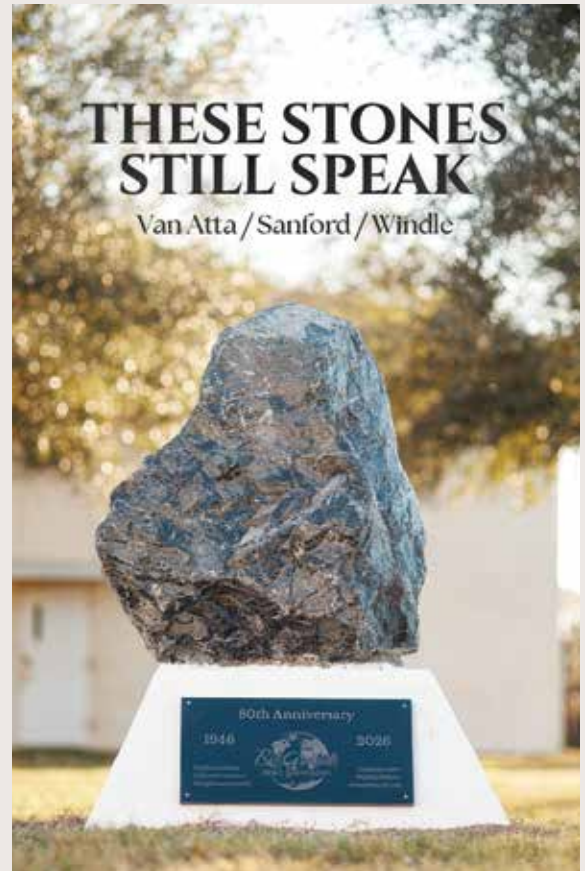
THE EFFECT IT HAS ON MANKIND

The Word inevitably has an effect on mankind, often leading to understanding, and at times leading to salvation. But also, it affects the believer with equally profound impact. James likens it to a mirror that penetrates the illusion of self-deception and frees people to walk in truth, blessing their pathway. We note that it is useful for teaching us about God, for correcting bad conduct, and for instruction in how to live." It is even listed as a powerful cleanser for washing the evil from the youthful lives. It is spiritual food for the soul that is required for abundance of life. It pronounces blessing both to the listener and to the one who applies it.

The Bible provides light so that walking feet don't stumble and shows what path to walk upon. It brings understanding as it is "unfolded" or studied, and grants deep understanding to the simple-minded. Its truth provides a firm foundation for a life with purpose. The thrilling effect of its presence in the mind is that it produces springs of living water that flow out from the innermost being, providing the well-irrigated effect of God's truth on all of those who come in contact with it. Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." He goes on to say, "If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you."

USE OF IT

O beloved believer, learn to use the Sword of the Spirit with all your might! "I should think that it does not require any great education to learn how to use a hammer. I do not know, it may, but it seems that to use a hammer aright, one has nothing to do but to strike with it. 'Oh,' you cry, 'there is a very obdurate man there!'" Strike at him with the Word and watch his illusions crumble!



A NEW BOOK
about Rio Grande
Bible College, titled
These Stones Still Speak,
is now available in
English or in Spanish.
President Larry Windle
added seven new chapters
to the former book
to bring it up to date.



**TO ORDER, GO TO
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THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO READ ABOUT HOW THE LORD IS WORKING THROUGH RADIO ESPERANZA.

Through the Lord's provision and grace, we can reach across borders to those where we cannot physically go with the gospel message of Jesus Christ and minister to the hearts of many in difficult situations. Praise the Lord that we consistently hear testimonies of those coming to Christ through this ministry. Please pray for those in leadership and those working daily to broadcast the message of hope to many who desperately need to hear the gospel.



TO RECEIVE MORE INFORMATION CALL ROBERT ALLEN, 956-380-8125