

TUNNELLS TO ARGENTINA



**“And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will
make you to become fishers of men.” Mark 1:17**

July thru August 2020

Greetings from the Tunnell family!

Deputation and Spanish language school during Covid.

As many of you know, Covid made deputation come to a complete halt for our family in March. We were 3 weeks into our 3 month schedule for Kansas, Texas, Florida, Oklahoma, Nebraska, and Colorado. Our plan was to be at 50% of our needed support before attending Spanish language school in July. While we had to return home and shelter in place, God was still working. This time gave us the opportunity to prepare for the move to language school. One thing Deirdre has been working diligently on is pairing down all our household items to just what we will need in Argentina. She has itemized our totes and has a running log of what is in each tote and the approximate cost for each item. This is something we will have to have for customs when we ship our household items to Argentina. This also allowed us to bring only what was essential to live 11 months at Spanish language school. The move to Edinburg, TX July 7th was bitter sweet. Leaving our home church, family and friends is hard but learning the Spanish language is necessary to the success of our ministry in Argentina and this will put us so much further ahead for when we arrive in the country. We loaded up that morning and started our journey to the Rio Grande Valley.

Rio Grande Biblical Institute

Our time here at RGBI has been an emotional roller coaster but in a good and challenging way. There is a completely different culture here in the Rio Grande Valley and here at RGBI. Obviously this is because we moved to a Latino community 20 minutes from the border of Mexico and 95% of everyone on campus is from Central or South America and very few speak English because it is a Spanish seminary. Thankfully, we have an awesome support group: our home church, our missions partners David and Kelsi Martin, mission mentor Bruce Martin, family and friends, the teaching staff and seminary administration. Bruce Martin, a veteran missionary, sent Deirdre and me an email concerning culture shock and at the end of this letter I want to share it with you to explain some of what we are experiencing here at language school. I believe this will help you, our prayer warriors, to have a better understanding on how to pray for us and other missionaries who are undergoing the same culture shock.

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Rio Grande Biblical Institute Schedule - continued

Another change our family has undergone this year is placing our children in a private Christian school with Abeka course materials. This is a huge answer to prayer. We came to this decision based on the need for Deirdre and I both to take classes at the same time and there was no way we could take classes and homeschool the kids at the same time. The Spanish course load is just too strenuous. The children, Brielle, Brandt and Sterling have been doing online classes on campus here with a tutor RGBI has provided for three weeks and then they will start face to face classes at Harvest Christian Academy on September 21st. Claire is attending the campus daycare where her teacher Mrs. Mine is teaching her Spanish. Mrs. Mine is a wonderful blessing as she takes Claire and two other language students' children on field trips in a red wagon to the outside garden and grass area teaching the kids the Spanish names for things. We are settling into the routine of classes, homework, course projects, tutor sessions, getting the kids to school, and speaking the language. One of the requirements of this program is that the seminary students and campus staff cannot speak English to us, so it really is forcing us to learn the language. While it is frustrating, we know it is necessary. Thank You for your prayer and support of our family as we make our way through language school and onto Argentina.

In Christ, The Tunnell Family

Language Shock

Language shock is one of the basic ingredients of culture shock. Because language is the most important communication medium in any human society, it is the area where the largest number of the cues to interpersonal relationships lie. As the newcomer comes into a whole new world where he knows no language at all, he is stripped of his primary means of interacting with other people, he is subject to constant mistakes, he is placed on the level of a child again. Even after weeks of study he is unable to discuss much more than the price of a pound of potatoes. He is unable to display his education and intelligence, the symbols which gave him status and security back home. He meets intelligent and educated people but he responds to them like a child or an idiot because he is not capable of any better response. The language learner has the uneasy feeling that people are laughing behind his back — and they are. His study is tiring, boring, frustrating. Nothing seems to go logically or smoothly, because logic is identified with familiar ways of talking and thinking. It is based on his language and academic tradition. Many an overseas American who started out to learn a language has ended by rejecting it. The pattern of rejection sometimes means less and less study; the development of more and more English contacts. Sometimes it means illness, and genuine physical illness.

Myron Loss, Culture Shock

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Prayer Requests:

- Please pray that God will continue to bring us into contact with the churches He desires to partner with us and support our ministry in Argentina.
- Pray for the people of Argentina and that God will continue to prepare their hearts to receive the Gospel of Christ.
- That God will continue to prepare men's hearts to surrender to the ministry and be trained to plant churches in Argentina and in other countries.
- While at language school that we will learn the language quickly.
- That we will be able to schedule churches for our continuation of deputation after school in 7 months.
- Pray that Baptist Churches and our nation will recover.
- Pray for Argentina's recovery economically and spiritually.
- **We would ask you to continue to pray for the churches we have visited, as they prayerfully consider partnering with us in ministry for Argentina.**
- Pray for David and Kelsi Martin as they prepare to return to Argentina in September or December depending on the countries determination on international travel.

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