

**Preparing for spiritual rain in Spain:
Mission couple reaches out to students, pastors and seekers**
By Kenneth D. MacHarg
LAM News Service

Seville, Spain (LAMNS)—You don't have to be a rocket scientist to be a missionary, but Edwin Kerr says that it sure helps.

Edwin, who serves with his wife Carolyn in a diverse ministry in this historic Spanish city, is a former NASA scientist who uses his background and knowledge to speak on university campuses for Christ.

“In my presentations, I show that 20th century discoveries prove that the creation story given by Moses is absolutely right,” Edwin explains. “The sequence of events, the appearance of light and darkness, the three days necessary for the formation of the earth are exactly confirmed. And, the first light has been photographed by NASA scientists, and it is perfect, just as God said” he added.



“Occasionally people are dissatisfied to learn there is scientific evidence that God does exist,” says Edwin, who is from Falls Church, Virginia. “They attack with the same old questions. After one presentation, a doctoral student told me that the next day there was absolute fury among the students because they couldn't trip me up.”

Edwin has lectured at universities throughout Spain as part of his ministry to confront students and professors with the Gospel. His web site, *Three Modern Discoveries and the Creation of the Universe* is found at <http://members.kconline.com/kerr/cosmos/>.

The Kerr's ministry dates from 1975 when Edwin taught physics on the faculty of the University of Costa Rica. Out of that work, an opportunity came to spawn an outreach that has extended itself to 5,000 people over 30 years.

“I told a severely depressed professor that Christ could make a difference in her life,” Edwin says. “I prayed that God would work a miracle within a week. God did do the miracle, she was delivered from her depression and began bringing people to Christ.”

“Within two years, she brought 100 to the fold. The movement continued to spread, eventually to over three countries and to places where we couldn't keep track of it. We had a movement of evangelism and primary discipleship.”

Edwin isn't the only lecturer in the family. Carolyn, who also holds an earned doctorate degree, lectures on topics related to psychology as a means of evangelism. “I do presentations dealing with depression, anxiety and taking care of your kids, she says.” While invited by churches and local groups, the couple often offers their presentations in public arenas such as city halls and public libraries.

“We present a message that is reasonable, that a secular professional would present, but from a Christian point of view,” Carolyn says. “We do this as a help to whatever ministry invites us and

is able to do the follow-up. Some people are prepared by our conferences, but they don't change until someone from their own area invites them to receive Christ."

Carolyn, who is from Cedar Falls, Iowa, also addresses social issues from a Christian perspective on the airwaves as she presents a weekly call-in program over a local Seville radio station. "This is preevangelism," she says. "We talk about current issues such as domestic violence, child abuse and depression. We vary the menu with lighter things like motherhood or the value of humor."



"We are up front about being believers in Jesus," Carolyn adds. "But, we do not mention our local church and we don't get into Protestant-Catholic issues."

The couple reaches out in other ways. Carolyn offers professional counseling to missionaries and Spanish pastors while Edwin has served as an officer with a local pastor's fellowship.

Flowing from their academic backgrounds, Edwin and Carolyn are conducting a study of the dynamics of evangelism in Spain. "Spain is a difficult place to evangelize," Carolyn says. "Spaniards are extremely traditional."

"The controlling factors here are fear and shame," Edwin says.

Pointing out that Spain is the only country where persecution lasted for 450 years, Edwin says that the oppressed have adopted the same attitudes as the oppressors. "The oppressor says you are no good, not worth anything and people begin to think that," he explains.

"We have met attitudes among evangelical church pastors and leaders that hark back to the dictatorship of General (Francisco) Franco," Edwin says. "Nobody knew who might be denouncing them to the secret police. People remember that the general sent troops onto the campuses because of unrest. Twenty-seven years later many Christians are still hiding in the catacombs."

Edwin says that religious liberty has been guaranteed by the constitution since 1978. "People must always conquer their liberty," he says. "The Israelites freed from slavery in Egypt took 40 years getting up the courage to win. Do we have to wait 40 years for the Spanish church to recover? If so, then we are a little more than half way through the current generation, and after them, the church should begin to flourish."

As to shame, Carolyn says that, "General society is suspicious of any religious manifestation that is not Roman Catholic. The dictatorship of Franco made being a Catholic a test of loyalty to Spain."

"In one town, we got permission to do a concert in the public square," Carolyn remembers. "During the concert, believers were going to be distributing literature. But, only one person actually distributed the material, and that was the pastor. The factors of fear and shame came in here. They were afraid of what may happen and they felt ashamed of who they are and what people will say of them."

"Most people here are converted by friends and neighbors who give personal testimony," Carolyn says. "But, that is the type of evangelism that they cannot do because they are afraid of how the other person will react."

In spite of the difficulties, the Kerrs say know that the Lord has called them to Spain. “We ask the Lord to show us what He is doing and we cooperate with that. We are saying that we are here to promote the awakening that the Lord is going to bring to Spain,” Carolyn says.

Latin America Mission works in partnership with churches and Christian agencies throughout Latin America and supports missionaries and projects in many Latin countries as well as in Spain. LAM is seeking to place new missionaries throughout the region. The U.S. headquarters can be reached at Latin America Mission, Box 52-7900, Miami, FL 33152, by e-mail at info@lam.org, or by calling 1-800-275-8410. The mission’s web site may be found at <http://www.lam.org>. LAM’s Canadian office is at 3075 Ridgeway Drive, Unit 14, Mississauga, ON L5L 5M6.

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