

What can my church do? (cont'd)

Communications

- Develop a newsletter to communicate the needs of Hispanics in North America.
- Initiate specific ministries to encourage isolated Hispanics to become believers using CDs, MP3 players (iPods), and radio for spiritual growth.

Mobilization

- Coordinate visits of former missionaries to Hispanics to assist in strategic advances.
- Encourage any SBC missionaries with the International Mission Board to spend part of their stateside assignment working among Hispanics in North America.
- Encourage churches currently supporting itinerant evangelist to direct some of their effort toward Hispanics.



www.peoplegroups.info

If you cannot locate this people group in your community, find them online at

www.peoplegroups.info, a site sponsored by the North American Mission Board, SBC.

What are their needs?

The Hispanic community desires to have a more personal experience with God. We need to reach out to them and teach them that they are able to experience that relationship through Jesus Christ. They need to know that they can go directly to God with their problems or to ask for forgiveness without have to go through a priest. It is important that those trying to reach the Hispanic community for Christ fully understand the Hispanic culture and communicate with them at a personal level.

What is keeping the gospel from them?

The vast majority of Hispanics claim to be Roman Catholic, which ties them to many traditions and beliefs. Even if the person is not an active member of the Roman Catholic Church, they are not very open to the idea of leaving their religion, and in many cases are scared of what their families and friends might do or think. In the Hispanic community, keeping the traditions and rituals is very important, so when a person decides to make a decision of faith to follow Christ, they are looked down on and in many cases their families turn their backs on them.

Information may be updated by writing peoplegroups@namb.net.

© 2010, North American Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, Alpharetta, Georgia. All rights reserved. The North American Mission Board grants permission for reproduction of this publication for educational purposes. Alteration of this publication is strictly prohibited. This publication may not be sold for profit. All other inquiries should be addressed to: Permissions, North American Mission Board, 4200 North Point Pkwy., Alpharetta, Ga. 30022-4176; or e-mail permissions@namb.net.



Hispanics of North America

Who are the Hispanics?

Hispanics are made up of many groups that come from a variety of countries (e.g., Spain, Central America, South America, Mexico, the Caribbean, and other areas). Some groups refer to themselves in terms of their national origin (e.g., Salvadorian, Colombian, and so forth), while others, especially the second and third generations, may refer to themselves in terms of their dual heritage (e.g., Mexican-American, Cuban-American, and so forth). The overall term “Hispanic” refers to people who have a common cultural heritage and a common language originating in Spain.

A large number of Hispanics in North America are bilingual; 46.1% of Latino adults are more comfortable speaking Spanish than English. There is a large difference among the Latino younger than 18-years-old, with 50.3% predominately speaking English even though a language other than English is spoken at home. There is also 31.3% of the younger generation that speak only English at home.



Population in the United States:
45,500,000 (est.)

Languages spoken by Hispanics:
Spanish and English

Top 5 locations with highest populations of Hispanics in the United States:

1. California
2. Texas
3. Florida
4. New York
5. Illinois

What is their heritage?



The Hispanic race is composed of people from a variety of countries so the heritage of each may vary, but most of them are descendants of Spanish explorers coming to North, Central, and South America, and the Caribbean in the 1400s. In the Hispanic culture, family is very important. Lifelong friendships are also very valuable to them. Hispanic

peoples migrated to the U.S. for many reasons, but for the most part they were looking for a better life for their families. In some cases, they were fleeing violence and the government of their countries.

“Hispanics encompass a wide variety of people from different origins.”

What are their beliefs?

Hispanics encompass a wide variety of people from different origins. The religious background of Hispanic Americans is the product of three major historical factors: (1) the presence of the folk religions of the native inhabitants when the New World was discovered in the 1400s; (2) the impact of the Roman Catholic Church brought by the European (mainly Spanish) explorers who combined colonization and conversion; and (3) the impact of the modern “renewalist movement.” In the United States, 70% of Hispanics say that they are Catholic, 23% Protestant, and 6% have no religious affiliation. A minority among the Roman Catholics, about one in five, are charismatic. Among the Protestants, 85% are born-again Christians and belong to Evangelical or Pentecostal churches. Among the smallest religious groupings, less than 4% are Hispanic Jews.



What can my church do?

Endvisioning — beginning with the end in mind

- Identify the layers within Hispanics to understand the generational gaps between first and third generations.
- Identify existing resources useful in working among Hispanics to include them in a strategy for using or developing those still needed.
- Spend time walking among Hispanics looking specifically for things you find that can be celebrated and actually facilitate a bridge to church planting.

Prayer — focusing on the people as well as calling out workers to the harvest

- Conduct an annual day of prayer and fasting for Hispanics of North America.
- Identify and become a part of existing prayer networks.
- Begin to prayerwalk among the largest pockets or concentrations of Hispanics in your community.
- Enlist church members to develop a prayer strategy for working among Hispanics.
- Implement prayer teams in “concentric circles” based on trust frequency. It could work like this:
 - ◇ Develop a team of at least 12 who will pray daily for Hispanics in North America and the work that is being and will be done among them.
 - ◇ Develop a network of at least five to seven churches who will pray weekly for Hispanics in North America.
 - ◇ Develop a plan among association or state convention prayer coordinators to pray quarterly.

Networking for Evangelism — identifying relationships

- Christian love is unknown to Hispanics, so intentional acts of kindness are appreciated, especially in times of need, loneliness, and transition.
- Invite a Christian sport player or team (soccer, basketball, and/or baseball) to conduct a training camp as a way to connect with the families of Hispanic communities.
- Assist those who are working with the Hispanic immigrant families, starting with food pantries and ministries such as The Migrant Farm Labor Center.

Starting Small Groups — that can become churches

- Ask persons of peace from among Hispanics if they would like to conduct a short series of meetings to discuss spiritual things.
- Be intentional about making disciples who know how to witness and start new small groups.

Leadership Training — identifying and equipping

- Invite new church leaders, especially pastors, to parachurch-sponsored training events.
- Train church members to identify and equip new leaders to lead their own church’s ministries.
- Mentor Hispanic church leaders so they can help their members defend their faith.

Scripture

- Distribute Bibles in Spanish in print and audio formats.
- Learn to use a Spanish worldview oral Bible among those with an oral learning preference.
- Work closely with radio programmers to develop appropriate material for Hispanics in North America, especially contextualized chronological Bible story sessions. Try to avoid duplicating efforts for resources that already exist.

(continued page 4)