

# GAMBOA UNION CHURCH, GAMBOA PANAMA

PTY 2299 BOX 025207 MIAMI, FL 33102

Pastor Bill Wilbur cell 507-6600-5200 [bill@gamboaunion.com](mailto:bill@gamboaunion.com)

**JANUARY 2009** I first met Rosaura thirty-three years ago when we first arrived in Gamboa. She was trying to sell baskets and she did not know Spanish very well to tell me the price. She is from the Wounan indigenous group which are found mostly in the area of the Colombian border. Some had migrated to our area and lived about a mile up the Chagres River which feeds the Panama Canal. Rosaura cannot read or write, does not know what day is her birthday nor how old she is....but she was the first believer from her village, loves the Lord and spends a long time each day in prayer. Let me tell you some of her story....it is really miraculous.

About thirty years ago Rosaura was pregnant and came into the village of Gamboa looking for work. She stopped at the home of Fina who let her use a room down stairs by the car port. Rosaura literally had to be taught everything in a home including using a stove to boil water. She had lived in a grass hut all her life in the jungle, getting food from the forest and fish from the river which she cooked over an open fire.

Fina is from Panama and married to a retired U.S. serviceman and is bi-lingual. Since Fina did not speak Wounan, the only way she could communicate with Rosaura was in Spanish of which Rosaura knew very little. This arrangement took a lot of patience on Fina's part. Fina had recently given her life to Christ and was filled with the Holy Spirit. Every morning after Fina's husband and five boys would leave for work and school, she would go to her room, kneel down and spend time in prayer. Rosaura watched all of this for some time.

One morning, Rosaura asked Fina what she was doing. When Fina explained that she was praying, Rosaura asked to join her, which she did. Keep in mind that broken Spanish was the only way they could communicate. Well, after awhile Rosaura said "I can hear you speaking in my language telling all these wonderful things about God." Fina was so excited because she did not know any of the Wounan language and here she was praying the language that Rosaura could understand.

A few weeks previously, Fina had asked God to fill her with the Holy Spirit like she had read about in Acts 2:1-13. She had had an experience much like that in Acts and had been praying daily in an unknown language as she gave thanks and praise to God. Now, here was Rosaura actually understanding what she was saying.

The story does not end there. Because of this experience, Rosaura came to believe in Jesus Christ and took Fina to her village that she might share with the people there. It took time to win the trust of chief by helping with the tasks in the village. Soon the entire village opened their lives to Christ and the chief took Fina to other villages more distant. As the years went by eight churches were built in remote village areas and presently Rosaura's whole village of thirty people is part of our church life here in Gamboa.

What about the baby Rosaura was carrying? He was named Alex and later completed a Discipleship Training School program with Youth With A Mission and then completed high school. He married one of the YWAM staff from Oregon, enrolled in the university here, is on YWAM and they have a baby girl.

In December I officiated at an Embera wedding held in our church with traditional tribal dress and music. Tulio and Norelia had been together over six years, had two children, but now that they had

come to know Christ, they wanted a Christian wedding. Tulio was a warrior in the movie, "End of the Spear."