



FREEDOM TO LEAD INTERNATIONAL®

MARCH 2026

The Rest of the Story

Before there were on-demand streaming services, podcasts, and AI, there was Paul Harvey's "The Rest of the Story." He would take well-known history and spice it up by telling "the story behind the story." As he painted vivid images with his words, he invited his listeners into "the rest of the story," a very important story to tell.

As a follower of Christ, I have often viewed the story of the Last Days – as described in 2 Peter chapter 3 – from my perch of safety as the Day of Victory, justice for the righteous, and ultimate defeat of our Enemy. But lately I've been checked to think of this story from the point of view of God the Father, the rest of the story. Because in this same text, He waits patiently because he wants everyone to come to repentance, not wanting anyone to perish. His heart grieves as people are destined to perish. He is our Father of compassion.

I'm beginning to get a better understanding of God's compassion, the rest of the story. At times, sharing the gospel in our culture is not easy. I admire Jesus-followers who regularly venture into difficult and dangerous places in order to bring good news to people who have never heard before, but then I get irritated when those I encounter are calloused to the things of God, others openly hostile, and others just quietly dismissive. Witnessing injustice day in and day out just makes me angry, and not the good kind. Compassion for the millions from a distance is one thing, but compassion for the one in front me is quite another. I have come to realize that the only way I can make it in the long term is by being *consumed* with the conviction that God loves lost people every bit as much as He loves me, without condition and without limits. Over the years, I've learned through trial and error that I don't minister to statistics; I am called to reach people, all for whom Jesus did not consider His life too high a price to pay.

I am coming to grips with "the rest of the story."

My friend Hugo gets it.



**Support
Freedom to Lead's
Work in Developing
Leaders Like Hugo**

freedomtolead.net/donate



[read Hugo's story on the next page]



Hugo is a Colombian national missionary I've known for about 3 years. He is one of some 25,000 leaders around the world who have been through *Freedom to Lead's* program. While recently sharing a meal of arepas and plantains with him, Hugo shared his heart towards some of the most remote tribal groups on the planet.

Most of Colombia is either mountains or jungle. There are no roads in the jungle, so to get there he has to take a tiny prop plane that lands on a tiny landing strip, hoping it doesn't crash into one of the mountains. Then he paddles down the Amazon River in a canoe for eight hours, sometimes for multiple days.

Hugo and his team bring the gospel to these forgotten people who have no other access to the outside world. Because of their efforts over the years, a church has been established and brand new believers are being brought to faith. Hugo is also providing *Freedom to Lead's* program in this remote tribal group to raise up leaders who will carry this community of new believers forward.

One exercise Hugo does with the leaders is called "Remember Your Leaders." This is taken from Hebrews 13:7-8. It is an effort to remember the ordinary people in our lives who have influenced us through Christ-centered character. He then has them build a memorial thanking God for His gift of giving us these leaders. After Hugo went through this exercise with them, they looked around and said, **"But we have no leaders. We have nobody who has gone before us because we are the first."**

Rather than feeling discouraged at this reality, the leaders responded, "No, these verses actually *motivate* us. We are now *compelled* with renewed passion to share the love of Jesus with others in our tribe, because we are now aware that **if we don't, the gospel will die with us, and the people will perish.**" So, they are inspired to take up the mantle of Christ-centered leadership in their communities.

Today, when these people hear that Hugo's coming to visit, they travel from as far as a four-day journey away to *taste and see the goodness of the Lord*. And Hugo is committed to returning to them every few months - through the mountains and jungles and the rivers - to help the leaders of these tribal groups in their Christ-centered journey and growth.

Leaders like Hugo count the cost because they understand "the rest of the story." They are committed to cultivating competent Christ-centered leaders for *this* generation. Because even when the people they are trying to reach are the most hostile, and the farthest to reach, these leaders live their faith and imitate this Jesus who saw the multitudes, each and every one of them, as sheep without a shepherd, and was moved with compassion.

Will you help us invest in leaders like Hugo who are entering these difficult places and changing communities for Christ?

 *Michelle Jensen*
CEO, Freedom to Lead International

Donate Online:
freedomtolead.net/donate

Send a Check:
Freedom to Lead
P.O. Box 3
Cary, NC 27512