

Christians Fearful After Chavez Re-election

Amid allegations of voter fraud, Hugo Chavez has won another six-year term in office with 54 percent of the vote. The Chavez victory disappointed many Venezuelans in the United States, some of whom point to evidence of election fraud.

“Among the true believers, there is a sense of disappointment,” says Daniel Sandoval, executive director of Spanish World Ministries. “There’s a sense of fear about what will happen in the next few years. But, we are certain that God is in charge of whoever is president in Venezuela.”

The fear is understandable. In 2006 Chavez forced many expatriate **missionaries** from the tribal areas of the country. This time around, however, Chavez is sending mixed signals.

Sandoval says before it was announced that Chavez had cancer, he was condemning Israel. “When he came back from Cuba after the surgeries, or therapies that he had in Cuba, he came back with the idea that he needed Jesus in his life,” he says. “So Chavez all of a sudden, within the last month, has become a more religious person.”

That doesn’t mean his socialistic ideas have changed, however, despite Chavez’ inability to fix the problem. Sandoval says, “Poor people remain poor people, and the rich people are deciding to move to other countries, or they’re deciding not to invest their money in Venezuela.”

While the so-called injustices haven’t been fixed in Venezuela, Sandoval says those issues can only be fixed completely as Venezuelans come to Christ. He’s challenging Christians to rise up.

“Christians have to stand firm in their convictions and have

boldness to reach the unsaved with the gospel. Certainly there will be more obstacles in Venezuela," he says. "We don't know the socialist agenda, but the truth is the Great Commission remains the same."

That's why Spanish World Ministries continues broadcasting radio programs in the country. Sandoval says Christians have the authority through Christ alone: "There are still people who need to be saved in [Venezuela] just as in the rest of Latin America where are programs are reaching so many people."