

The Standard

The Voice of Cross Power

Fall 2008

Until The World Knows Jesus!



Mission 2008: South America



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This Month At CrossPower

Greetings in the mighty name of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is my joy to share with you the things which the Lord is doing in CrossPower. Thus far 2008 has proven to be a remarkable year of growth and opportunity. I am grateful to those who make us a part of your prayers, surely heaven has answered.

The past summer has been a season of great blessing in which I have seen the Lord at work in many exciting ways. One of those blessings was the opportunity to serve as the Director of the Bethel Summer School of Ministry, and see the Lord raise up the next generation of Christian leaders. The School of Ministry was a vision which the Lord placed on my heart only a year ago in Mexico. Thus, its formation, and success remain in my mind the evidence that God is doing a quick work in our days. While struggling at times to keep pace with what the Lord is doing, I am delighted to be a part of His mission to reach the world.

I am also delighted to announce our winter mission's schedule, which will include travel in the South American nations of Peru, Bolivia, and Chile. The Lord has opened the doors, and I trust He will add the increase as He sees fit. As you know I have not traveled to South America since 2006, and so it is with great joy that I seize this opportunity to return. Please pray about how the Lord might use you to make this journey possible.

It is the faithful monthly support of our partners which enables our outreach, and if you are not already a part of that please join with us in taking the Gospel to the nations. It is no small token of the Lord's faithfulness that CrossPower has never had to cancel a trip due to financial lack. His calling and purpose is established in us, as we each do our part.

In His Service,

Rev. C. Isaac De Los Santos
Executive Director

Some years ago, a well know department store found its self in need of a new approach. The Sears name had become synonymous with tools, fire grills, and big screen TV's. Its sales were down, and they decided to try a new approach. In ads most can recall, they pitched a new slogan, "The Softer Side of Sears." In short it reflected the fact that the store had many items which "women" would enjoy. They not only sold tools, but linens, pillows, clothing, and fine china. Whether the approach worked or not is unknown to this author, but it seems to have been adopted by a modern segment of the church today.

A Sinister Attack

Many behind the pulpit in our generation have taken a softer approach to the Bible. They have done so assuming that it will in turn render the sweet reward of larger numbers on Sunday morning, and greater profits at the book store. Were it not that eternal souls are hanging in the balance, one could merely dismiss the "new approach" as a clever tactic. However at the center of this softer message is a sinister attack on the "Cross of Christ." They have begun to preach a softer side of the cross, a message which I submit is not the Gospel at all.

In Galatians chapter five, the apostle Paul states "and I brethren, if I yet preach circumcision why do I yet suffer persecution? Then the offense of the cross ceased." In this text we do not see Paul condemning the offensive nature of the cross, but rather defending its offense. In the Greek text we find the word "scandal" in place of the word offence, which communicated the fact that the preaching of the cross is intended to stir conflict in the hearts of men. We also find the term in the first chapter of 1 Corinthians in which the same apostle states, "For indeed the Jews require a sign and Greeks search for wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block (scandal) and to Gentiles foolishness..." The use of the term

in both passages indicates an inherent offensiveness to the preaching of the Cross." While the Cross is the message of Gods mercy and love toward man, it carries in its self a matter which disgusts every man. To preach laws,

The Softer Side Of The Cross.

By Rev. Isaac De Los Santos

and rituals was not at all offensive to a mans conscience, but to suggest that simple faith in a slain lamb, could save, is offensive to the prideful mind of men.

This fact should not surprise anyone. The Prophet Isaiah states "He has no stately majesty that we should look upon him, nor appearance that we should be attracted to Him." His Passion at Calvary was the worst fate any man could suffer, and the wrath of God which fell upon Him was fearsome to behold. "It's acceptable to preach redemption through any other means, but please don't lay the fate of all humanity at the feet of this unbecoming image of dead man." While it may be common to find such a view from the outside of the church, it is painful to see a generation from the inside which holds the view that the offense of the Cross must be softened in order to appeal to the masses.

No Offense

The primary reason for this offense is that it directly reveals the sinful nature of man. The cross is by design the great "whistle blower." It boldly and un-apologetically screams that man is guilty of sin. Were sin not the the problem the cross would not have been the solution. But sin is the problem. It seems man kind is all too comfortable with sin, so long as it's not addressed as such. The philosopher calls it evil, the media calls it a mistake, and no one seems offended. But when a preacher calls it sin, offense is never far behind. The reason for this, is that the cross lays the cause for Gods wrath

squarely at the feet of the individual. We have become a culture where the serial killer is a victim of his poor upbringing, and the drunk is the unwitting casualty of external conditions out of his control. No one is reasonable for their own sins; it's always someone else's fault.

Behold The Lamb

On the cross we see image of Gods perfect son, hanging in shameful display. Receiving in His own body the wrath of a Holy God for sins committed by every man, woman, and child, since Adam. We see him paying the penalty of a broken law, which He alone preserved unbroken. We see his bleeding side and wounded hands, as proof of payment, the receipt for sin. Bearing in His own soul, the horrible atrocities of genocide, abortion, rape, adultery, fornication, child molestation, theft, bribery, injustice, and murder, compounded by the inoffensive little sins such as white lies, lust, hate, grudges, unforgiveness, mercilessness, excess, gluttony, in-chastity, and innocent personal private pride.

Guilty!

Just exactly who was it that committed all of those crimes against a Holy God, if in fact it's someone else's fault. For whom was this billed played, and in whose name did this invoice of unrighteousness arrive. Surely someone was at fault, someone was guilty, someone culpable, responsible, condemnable. That someone was me! It is I to whom the stroke was due. I am guilty, culpable, responsible, and condemnable. His rejection by His own Father, His crushing for sin, His bruise, and His stripes, are all my fault. We look at the bloody broken body of Gods perfect son, and our hearts must cry "I did that to Him."

This is why the Cross is such a scandal, because it points to mans sinful nature as the sum and cause of Christ's sacrifice at the Cross.

Mission: South America

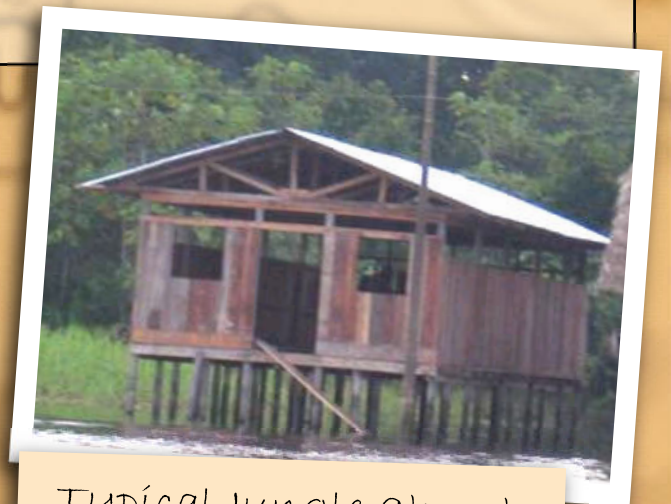
November 17-Dec 20, 2008



After a couple years since my last visit to South America, I am excited about the opportunity to return and preach the Gospel once again. This time the destination is Peru, Bolivia, and Chile. This mission will take the team and me into two very different environments. The first will be the often mystified Amazon River Region, where we are traveling by boat, into the jungle. The other will take us into the more developed cities of South America.

Two years ago, I had the amazing privilege of meeting Pastor Jorge Montero, of the Amazon Jungle in Northern Peru. The team and I affectionately came to know him as the "Apostle of the Amazon," having planted more than 25 churches in that region, and overseeing quite a number more. He proved to be a Man of God in His conduct, and a truly passionate missionary.

Now, once more I have the opportunity to return to the Amazon, and help support the body of Christ in that region. Pastor Jorge, has asked me to organize a team which will build a church in a local Village. At first the request seemed far more than I thought was possible. However as I prayed about this



Typical Jungle Church

need, I felt faith rise in my spirit, and I believe if we will take this challenge we will see the provision of the Lord.

As you can see from the pictures, the church structures in the Amazon have simple construction. Our team would be able to build a church in a week, and with only \$2500 for the cost of materials. I will be traveling with a small team of short term missionaries to the Jungle Region of Northern Peru, in order to honor this request. Our team will be traveling at least 30 hours by boat from the nearest airport. Into the heart of a region which greatly needs the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Upon our departure from the Amazon Region, most of the team will return home, and I will continue traveling South toward Bolivia and Chile. New doors have opened in that region and I trust that the Lord will allow us to gather a harvest of souls for His sake.

As in times past, I need your help to make this vision a reality. The greatest need is for your commitment to daily prayer for our team and for this effort. Every trip which has been undertaken has been successful because of the fervent prayer of God's people; this trip will be no different. Please pray that the Lord will save the lost because of our journey, and for the safety of our team as we travel through the Jungle. Pray also that our visit will serve as encouragement to the body of Christ in these nations.

Additionally, please pray about how the Lord will lead you to give to help build a church in the Jungle, and preach in the nations of South America. My thanks for all your support.



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For anyone to attempt to soften that reality is an assault on the very purpose for which Christ died. If God did not soften the cross for His own Son, why should any preacher soften the message for any wicked and undeserving sinner? How can one truly understand the work of Grace, if he does not first understand the weight of sinful

guilt? The cross is not a band aid on a boo boo, it is the full scale exhumation of man's dead, sinful, soul from sin.

In response to this eternal truth, sinful humanity is called to repent for sin. At the core of that repentance must be an understanding that we are guilty as charged. If the preacher or layman choose to soften that reality, he does more to harm the Kingdom of

God, than the perpetrators of false religions around the globe. For in claiming to preach Christ, they are actually not preaching at all. To remove the Cross from Christ is to remove the very purpose for which he became the incarnate Son of God. The preacher and layman alike must affirm with Paul, "we preach Christ Crucified."

200 years ago, five young men from William College in Williamstown Massachusetts, were forced to hold their prayer meeting in a country haystack, due to a rainstorm. As the five discussed their recent studies in geography, the conversation turned to the great need to take the Gospel to those who as yet had not heard it. These five men bowed in prayer that evening, as the Spirit of Christ lit in them a great commission flame. The men committed to give their lives to this great cause, and birthed the American missionary movement. At the core of their commitment was a desire to take the Gospel to those who had never heard, and at the heart of their effort to bring glory to Christ.

Still today, there are Millions of unnumbered souls living in the darkness of sin, waiting to be brought to the Redeemer. The good news is that Christ came to provide the answer for the dark ills of sin, and He offers that remedy to all, without respect to culture, social standing, nor internal goodness. We find in Romans ten the promise that whoever calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. And what a promise that is, that the darkest of sinners has an invitation to partake in the grace of God.

Who So Ever Will

Isaiah would say "come buy and eat, without money and without cost." This free gift of grace comes as a surprise to many, who view God as a vicious tyrant shouting the spurious "off with his head." Yet it's that grace that surprises us all, when one sees the true nature of his own soul, and knows that if not for grace there would be no hope. The Christian killer; Saul of Tarsus was surprised on the road to Damascus. The slave tradesman: John Newton was surprised while lost at sea. A drunk wife beater named John Bunyon was remarkably surprised by Grace. These three men were all "whoever's," who by most accounts had no place in a church. Yet because they tasted of the Grace of God they each became leaders of the Church of their time. Saul became the writer of half the New Testament, Newton

became the composer of the favored hymn "Amazing Grace," and Bunyon became the author of the classic bestseller "Pilgrims Progress."

This must be one of the most beautiful promises in the whole of Scripture, "who so ever will." God gives the same invitation to the Harvard professor who denies the existence of God, and to the young boy in an African village who has never named the name of Jesus. To both, and to all He say's whoever will let him come!

How Will They Hear?

By Rev. Isaac De Los Santos

Yet this is where Paul, would insert a short sermon on missions, he would ask, *"how shall they call on Him, in whom they have not believed, and how shall they believe in Him whom they have not heard, and how will they hear if no one preaches to them?"*

If the Gospel has such power to save, and the power is available to all who believe, then what is the hang up? The hang up comes with those given the responsibility of carrying this Gospel. The responsibility lies with the church. Not the corporate church which gathers in the church house once a week, while they do have a role. But the responsibility lies with every member of the body of Christ.

Paul's discussion on this matter makes it clear that each member of the body has the responsibility of fulfilling the Great Commission. No one has the luxury of saying I'm not a missionary. Each has a role to play and each has a need to meet.

Unless they Hear

The Apostle Paul places a strong emphasis on the need for people to hear in order to be saved. What must they hear? In our day, the preaching of the Cross has been replaced by a listener friendly multi-media presentation, which offers positive concepts disguised as "Bible truth." However the only message that can save is the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This is the message they must hear. Not

how to confess ones way to wealth. Nor a message of positive thinking, or a psychological method masked as faith.

We must preach the Gospel, because according to 1 Corinthians 1:18, the message of the Cross, is "to those who are being saved the Power of God," unto salvation. No other message, no other gospel, no other name, has power to save. Paul would say to the Galatian Christians, "even if I or an angel from heaven comes with another message, do not believe it"

Only the word of the Cross has power to save from sin. Therefore, since the Cross is the only message that saves, it should be the only message that is heard by the lost from the lips of the Church.

I was amused a few weeks ago, when a young man, commented, "Isaac, you always preach a Cross centered message." "What else is there to preach" I asked. No other message can save, no other message can change societies, or humble tyrants, but the message of the Cross. It alone is the hope of the World.

In a world that resists the message of the old rugged cross, the church must resist the temptation to abandon that message. We must resist the temptation to sacrifice truth, for the sake of unity with the world. Some say "well they might get offended by the call to repentance." And to them I say "that's the whole point, you must come in humble repentance to Christ, and only then will you be saved." We must rather, offend men into faith in Christ, than lose their soul to hell.

To deny the power, and hope of the message of the Cross; is to deny the only means of access to God. There are not many roads to heaven, as some teach. There is but one way to God, and that way is Jesus Christ. The argument that we don't want to offend people is used by those who claim to love the lost. But the truth is that to lie about the only way to God, is not an act of love, rather a shameful act of hate.

Faith Comes By Hearing

Why then must they? They must hear the Gospel preached because Romans 10:17 declares the

“faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.”

Modern trends in evangelism have led some to believe that simply living well will attract people to Christ. Yet scripture does not say that faith comes by watching a Christian live well. Faith comes by hearing the word of Christ.

This is where I believe that those who preach the social gospel have become misguided. They would argue that the way to bring someone to Christ is by meeting their physical needs, and then allowing them to see the godly example and then desire to be saved. This philosophy often leads to what is termed as a “rice Christian.” A person becomes involved in a church body, because they are getting fed, all the while the real needs of mans soul is never addressed.

We see further in John four, that Jesus met the woman at the well, and immediately began to speak to her concerning her spiritual situation. He did not offer her a cup of water, because she would have remained thirsty. Rather He spoke to her concerning the birth of a spiritual well, which only he could give.

This is in no way, to diminish the need for the church to meet physical needs. I am a strong believer in such services, and have been involved in doing exactly that. I also know from my experience in serving the homeless, that often a sandwich can be an excellent ice breaker. These services often serve as an excellent introduction to the Gospel. But, one cannot stop there. Faith comes from hearing the message preached, one must not expect a fallen human being to make the leap to faith, outside of hearing the word of Christ.

Leading To Repentance

They must hear the Gospel, because only in hearing it can they be brought to repentance, and only in repentance can they bring glory to God. The only way fallen man can bring glory to God is by coming in repentance to Christ.

Isaiah 43:25 states that God blots out our sins for His own sake, for His own glory. Humanity must

hear the Gospel, because humanity belongs to Christ, and He is worthy of its allegiance.

Hell Is Real

They must hear the Gospel, because hell is a real place, and sinners are going there. It is said that 150,000 people die every day, around the world, and many without Christ. One must often wonder if the modern day Evangelical church actually believes in Hell.

“Prayer is
the fuel of
missions”

If one believes, his neighbor's house is burning in the middle of the night, that belief propels me to wake the wide world for the sake of my neighbor's life. Yet by and large the church believes in a place of such unimaginable horror as Hell, and lives as though it were a myth. Living in rejection of the responsibility we have been given to “pluck them out of the fire.”

Foolishness Of Preaching

Paul would ask how, will they hear, without a preacher. In spite of the current trend of many American churches, who seem to think the preaching is an outdated approach. We find a very different teaching in the word of God.

1 Corinthians 1:21, states that God is pleased to save “through the foolishness of the message preached.” In a close study of the word “preach” in this text we find that it is through the “spoken,” “heralding,” of the Gospel that people are brought to faith. Preachers and preaching are still, and always will be a vital part of the Great Commission.

It is here that we see the first layer of responsibility. If we do not preach, the lost cannot hear, if they cannot hear, then they will not know what to believe. Thus the body of Christ is responsible for preaching the Gospel. Responsible for preaching the un-compromised Gospel,

responsible for going into all the world by faith, responsible for preaching with power, responsible for giving with a generous spirit, and responsible for praying with desperate intensity.

Missions on every level is an act of faith, faith in the Power of the Gospel to save the lost, faith in the Power of the Holy Spirit to draw men to Christ, faith in God's ability to provide. It's always an extraordinary comfort for me to know that I do not have to produce results in missions, I must rely on the work of the Spirit to do that. Thus one must take care to concern himself with preparation, and availability, God will do the rest.

Many believe that if they are not in full time Christian ministry, they are not responsible for the Great Commission. Nothing could be further from the truth. Every member of the Body of Christ is called to preach, whether it be from a pulpit or in everyday. All have been given the same Commission, Go Into All The World.

Now we arrive at the next layer of responsibility. Not everyone is called to full time ministry, thus those who have not been called to full time Christian ministry, have a different although significant role. Their role then becomes that of a “sender.” The role of the “sender” can never be to great.

Jesus was surrounded by “senders” people who gave to his ministry; we find this among other references in Mark 15:40-42. Mark teaches that there were women who used to follow Jesus, and minister to Him. Jesus even had a treasure to administer the apparent giving. Paul was always surrounded by senders; people in his life who made it their goal, to make sure he never had to stop his great work.

But the responsibility does not end with giving. The sender also has the responsibility to pray, with the same enthusiasm that five young men had when they birthed the American Missionary movement. The “sender” must pray with desperate intensity, for those on the field, The sender must pray, because prayer is the fuel of missions. Each member of the Body of Christ has a responsibility to go, or to send; idleness and apathy are not options.

“How shall they hear, without a preacher, and how will they preach if they are not sent.”

until the world
knows Jesus

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