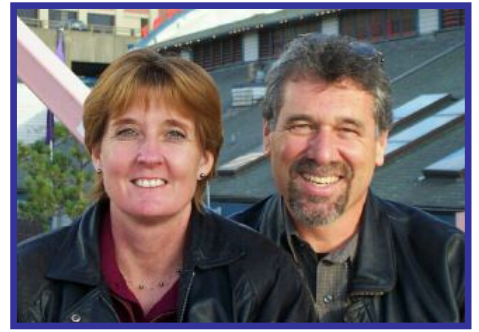


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Ministering in El Salvador

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Since I was a kid, I remember people talking about living in the "last days". The preachers with their charts and predictions of world calamities were always talking about what was going to happen to those "left behind". I also thought they were talking about people not sitting in the pews there with me. It wasn't until recently, however, that I began to look at what it means to be a part of that "last generation". But instead of looking at the warnings and judgments as that which the world would suffer, I began to see that this prophetic message is for the church of Christ. It's about my life.

If we truly believe we live in the "last days" before Christ's return, we live in "perilous times", dangerous times, "terrible times", as Paul warns (2 Timothy 3:1). The descriptive word Paul uses here portrays a killer storm brewing up and bearing down upon a small craft. It depicts fierce and violent men controlled by demons storming down out of the caves to murder and maim (Matthew 8:28). The times in which we live are *not* times to seek peace, prosperity and pleasure, even if Satan's world system declares them to be our "right" to pursue. These are times when "people will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, without self-control, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God - having a *form of godliness* but denying its power" (2 Timothy 3:1-5). These are descriptions of people *in the church!* This is not the time to cry out "peace, peace, everything is fine" or just to be positive about everything and everybody. That was the message the false prophets proclaimed during every "last generation". "They dress the wound of *my* people as though it were not serious" (Jeremiah 6:14).



If we are indeed living in the "last days", corresponding to the days of Noah (Mathew 24:37), of Manasseh and Zedekiah (2 Chronicles 33, 36) and of that last generation of the Jewish nation destroyed in 70 AD (religious but corrupt, murderous, unclean, unbelieving), we are part of an evil *religious age*, one that requires us to watch, to be on guard and to live by the Holy Spirit of Jesus. "The end of all things is at hand; therefore, be of sound judgment and sober spirit for the purpose of prayer" (1 Peter 4:7). This is necessary because the very church of Christ becomes corrupted - we *are* presently corrupted. Peter warns us that in the church of the last days "there will be false prophets among you" (2 Peter 2:1). He likens the spiritual condition of the church to that which was present during the time of the preaching of Noah and warns of judgment like that which fell upon Sodom and Gomorrah, "especially those who indulge the flesh in its corrupt desires and despise authority" (2 Peter 2:10). This judgment begins first with the "family of God" (1 Peter 4:17). "The Lord will judge His people" (Hebrews 10:30). This judgment is being reserved especially for those "spiritual" leaders whose "idea of pleasure is to carouse in broad daylight . . . with eyes full of adultery, who never stop sinning. If they have escaped the corruption of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and are again entangled in it and overcome, they are worse off at the end than they were at the beginning" (2 Peter 2:13, 14, 20).

The message of judgment for the "last times" is directed to the *church* and it is a call for repentance. It is the *church* of today that lives without holiness and spiritual life and power - like the Pharisees of Jesus' day and the generation that resisted the preaching of Jeremiah. *We* have bought

into the lie that God is there to help make us happy. We have no concept of what it takes to live a holy life, to "strive to enter by the narrow door" (Luke 13:24) by the grace of God and the power of the Holy Spirit. Rather, we "change the grace of our God into a license for immorality" (Jude 4).

We have a Creator. He created us and He commands us. We find direction for our future by understanding our past, our origins. When we know our place, we can know our purpose because it is God who made us. He did not make us to find our happiness in profit, pleasure or people-pleasing. However, we have turned from God, disobeyed His commands, believed a lie and become enslaved. We cannot find true peace or love until we are again submissive to God, listening and learning, hungry and humbled.

The "last generation" will be full of the yeast of this world's thinking, the lusts of the flesh and the pride of life. We are this last generation. We are polluted and contaminated. There is no true moral holiness. There is no time for prayer. We are all about how busy we are, stressed out we are and just *wishing* for a time of peace. It only comes from repentance. It comes from taking seriously the dangerous and perilous times in which we live. It requires an honest look at how we live. It won't get better until we stop and "get rid of the old yeast . . . Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed" (1 Corinthians 5:7). "If your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away . . . If your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off." (Matthew 5:29). "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth" (Matthew 6:19). The message for us, the last generation, is a message to be saved by repentance, for we *will* suffer the wrath of God for our disobedience and unbelief (1 Thessalonians 5:1-11; Hebrews 12:14-28). Judgment is coming. This message of judgment is not only for the States. It is the message we are preaching here in El Salvador as well. Pray for us to be strengthened in the truth, in the Spirit of Grace and to not turn aside. It is never easy being a prophet during the last generation.



Ernesto, the ex-alcoholic husband of Lilian (the woman with cancer who by her suffering led her husband to Christ) was recently baptized. He is continuing strong in the Lord. Lilian, however, is declining rapidly in strength and health. The tumor is growing in her brain causing extreme pain and has spread to her lungs. Please continue to pray for this family and for Lilian's healing.

In a way I can't explain or understand, the church is beginning to grow again. There is a growing concern for those without Christ. People are being invited and new faces are appearing in the services of the church. We have seen a number of people make professions of faith in Christ recently. Pray for us as we humble ourselves before the Lord and cry out for our city. We desire so much to see the Spirit of God bring conviction to the lost for salvation. Pray for us as we seek His leading and direction.

The visitation ministry to the hospitals is being strengthened and growing. Cheryl is assisting Ronald, who leads the ministry, by meeting every other Wednesday evening with the nine or ten people who go into the hospitals each week to share the love of Christ. Ronald is learning how to encourage and care for those who are part of this ministry. Pray for Ronald and Estefany as they are growing in the Lord and learning to be guided and empowered by the Spirit for ministry.

The concern for the very poor of our city, a conviction born out of the Spirit's love, was manifested again in our congregation during the last two months.



For the community of Ilamatepec (Luna Maya, a refuge camp), Leonel first organized medical clinics on two different occasions using the doctors of our church and assisted greatly by the youth and women ministers. Hundreds were attended to through consultations, medicines and prayer. Then, evangelistic activities were carried out with open-air films and preaching. Pray for this outreach, as well as plans for a Vacation Bible School in August in another poor community named Chaparrón.



Iliana, the little girl who lives at the beach, was operated on by Dr. Roberto Pineda to straighten the angle of her feet. The casts came off a week ago and I was able to get them set up for physical therapy here in Santa Ana. (A member of our church, Marta, works there as a speech therapist). Because of some special donations, the operation has been paid for, the transportation costs for the weekly therapy are covered and special needs like orthopedic shoes have been provided for. Thank you so much.



Continue to pray for a couple we are meeting with each week, Carlos and Francesca, who have come to know the Lord as their Savior. They are attending Wednesday night services but are not yet attending on Sunday. They need to take a stand for Christ and be baptized. It is a big step and there

are many barriers. Pray that fears will be cast down and destroyed by the authority of Christ and by faith. They have two children close to the ages of our grandchildren and Jon and Kelly are cultivating their acquaintance as well.

Pray for us to receive God's wisdom to know how to proceed in our building project. The church is giving for the building, but we are not covering the monthly church operating budget needs. We have definite needs to grow in maturity, to make wise decisions and to plan well. We are trying to break down the project into steps, to know how to begin. A \$400,000 building is not put up in a moment and I know God would teach all of us many lessons concerning His priorities, power and planning. This will be a faith project and I certainly covet your prayers for me at this time.

Pray, too, for us as we make a trip to the States in May to see our two new grandbabies. Kennedy was born to Lisa and Todd on April 11th and Kiera was born to Paul and Michele on April 16th. While we are gone, Leonel, Jon and Ronald will be preaching. Our small group will be led by our neighbor, Ricardo. The men's group will be studying a twelve-step program to inner spiritual healing and the ladies that Cheryl has been training will take on their ministerial responsibility to lead their groups. Pray for us that we may be a blessing to our children - and profit by this time of rest.

Thank you for your gracious and generous giving to us, for the financial needs of our family and ministry here in El Salvador. You are part of the struggles, prayers and victories we have together; for, truly, we are "workers together with God" (1 Corinthians 3:9).

Yours for souls,



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Kiera Large
(First daughter of Paul and Michele)



Kennedi Sangster
(Second daughter of Lisa and Todd)