

Hal and Cheryl Large

Ministering in El Salvador

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This year began with a startling word from the Lord for us from the prophet Habakkuk: *"For behold, I am raising up the Chaldeans . . ."* The word took Habakkuk back, as he was expecting another answer from God for his complaints of cold love, wickedness and secret sins in the lives of the saints. But the word of judgment went unheeded by the people and God's determined hour arrived. Having not repented, the nation was destroyed.

John the Baptist came preaching repentance. Jesus did the same. He declared: *"Do you suppose that these Galileans were greater sinners than all other Galileans because they suffered this fate? I tell you no, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish"* (Luke 13:2,5). Repentance is seldom mentioned anymore, but it was very much a part of the message of the Gospel and, as such, of the Christian life: *"Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, 'Brethren, what shall we do?' And Peter said to them, 'Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit'"* (Acts 2:37,38). Paul's message of salvation was that every man *"should repent and turn to God, performing deeds appropriate to repentance"* (Acts 26:20).

Repentance is not just asking for forgiveness. We have all done this ad nauseam and then returned to our wicked ways. Repentance is the confession and forsaking of sin. It is the fruit of holy fear and terror of God, believing the judgment sin demands will indeed be unleashed at the appointed time. It falls upon the one who ignores the warnings, who trivializes his sin and lives in hypocrisy. The Spirit of God has, from the beginning of the year, called us to repentance and warned us of the coming judgment. We have been charged to consider our ways, examine our life and take seriously God's Word. *"Do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance? But because of your stubborn heart, you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God"* (Romans 2:4,5). Paul isn't talking about some far-off day in the future. He is talking about the appointed time God will bring our sin out of darkness, reveal it and judge it. God's wrath is a consuming fire; this fire will fasten upon the unrepentant life and consume it, or God's eyes will be moved by true repentance to look upon the perfect sacrifice of His Son, who atoned for our sins. *"Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh shall from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit shall from the Spirit reap eternal life"* (Galatians 6:8). As Matthew Henry wrote, commenting upon the death of Aaron's two sons: "Thus those that hate to be refined by the fire of divine grace will undoubtedly be ruined by the fire of divine wrath."

This month of September has been God's appointed time for us - the last opportunity before the books are closed, God's grace removed and all we have accumulated during a life of habitual sin brought out before the eyes of men. On the Jewish high day of Yom Kippur (Friday, September 21), thirty men of the church set aside the day and night for a time of fasting, prayer and confession of sin. For weeks, there had been spontaneous all-night prayer meetings among different groups of the church, starting with one organized by Cheryl and her group of women leaders. Then the men went on a Friday night retreat of fasting and prayer. The leaders of the church came together for another night of prayer and then the praise team had a night of prayer and confession. This all happened during a two-month period, ending with the Spirit giving clear warning: The repentance must be done before Yom Kippur ended.

That night, we men gathered to humble ourselves before God, confess our sins and break with the spiritual pacts or strongholds of sin in our life. It was an unforgettable night, something I have never experienced in my life. The Spirit of God was in control and, by the Spirit, we were brought to repentance, to the confession of our most heinous sinful practices; to repudiate them and break with the spiritual pacts we had made with Satan. There was no hiding behind a false front of Bible knowledge or religious doctrines. We were dealing with what we did, not with what we said we believed. For three hours, non-stop, one-by-one (beginning with myself), we stood to confess to God our sins and make an end, by the authority of the name of Christ, to our spiritual slavery. The power of Satan's lies, of our spiritual adulteries and idolatries were broken and we were set free.

If indeed we have died to our old man, all things will truly become new. There will be deeds appropriate to repentance. If we turn again to our sin, there is confession but never repentance. Repentance means we never return to our sin - ever. You throw it off of you as if it was a filth-covered garment, dripping pus, nauseating and vile (Isaiah 30:22). It is the Spirit that brings us to this understanding and conviction. Sin is repudiated in the name of Christ and overthrown by the power of His blood.

I would ask you to pray for us, that the work of God's Spirit (in mine and other hearts) brings about the precious fruit God has wanted all the time. Pray it would result in the throwing down of pride, self-worship and the practice of sin. Pray for those who have hardened their hearts and soon will fall under the judgment of God's wrath. This morning, in the middle of writing this letter, I stopped to meet with a man in the church. He confessed to me his adultery of nine years ago. There is a child. Pray for us as we deal with what God's Spirit is bringing to light and with the painful process of repentance and restoration.



I also want to thank you for your prayers for my trip to Mexico in July and August. I was in two youth camps in which there were 12 or 15 professions of faith and many received the healing of their heart by the blood of Christ. We have known the power of Christ's blood to forgive us for what we have done. But few Christians have known the power of



Christ's blood to heal our hearts of what others have done to us. This was also the message I preached on Sunday in Mexico City. Five received Christ as Savior that day. On Monday, I began a five-day seminar on "Healing the Heart by the Blood of Christ" in the Bible Institute with 55 students in the class. It is a message given by God to transform our lives.

From the 13th to the 20th of October, we will have an evangelistic team with us from Columbus, Indiana. We will be doing over 20 presentations during the week and I will be sharing each morning with the team the same principles of healing the heart.

We are taking some preliminary steps to have the new property graded and establish a master plan of construction, for which I ask your prayers. We are

Yours for Souls,

World Reach – Celebrating 25 Years of Ministry

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