

Mexico, Central & South America

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Monday, 17 April 2006

The Work of the Holy Spirit

The many Spanish speaking nations that make up the majority of all of the inhabitants of Mexico, Central and South America are strongly represented in the USA today. Every major American city has a large contingency of these individuals. There are also many from Brazil and other non-Spanish speaking countries of central and South America, but those from the Spanish speaking countries are having the greatest impact on America and American culture. The origins of the greater majority, 75 - 90%, of these Spanish speaking individuals are a mixture of one or more European nationalities and native Indian blood and heritage from their respective Latin American country. The impetus behind this ever growing migration from Latin America to the USA is primarily economic. Certainly all of the freedoms and privileges of our great country are appreciated by these individuals but these historic core values of America are not the main attraction. It is the economic blessings that come from our core values that drive these and many others to immigrate to our cities. Because of the historical realities of the Spanish and Portuguese conquest of the greater part of Latin America, the doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church have left an indelible mark on all who live in those countries. Consequently, this same Roman Catholic cultural and religious impact is also part and parcel of those who arrive here in our cities. As a direct result of this Roman Catholic heritage, the concept of salvation through faith and that as a gift from God without merit or religious works and rituals is almost non-existent. As in the times of Martin Luther, John Calvin and John Knox, who were surrounded by millions who knew about God and His Christ but who did not personally know God and His Christ!

In the Latin America of today, as it was in the Europe of the early years of the Reformation, there is a great move of the Spirit bringing hunger for the truth of God's revealed Law Word and the gospel of His Christ. There is openness and a desire to learn as never before. Surprisingly enough, the greatest of these open doors comes in the thousands upon thousands of pastors and congregational leaders from many different denominational backgrounds who have little or no formal biblical training. The fact that these immigrants to America are from third world countries struggling for survival should alert us to opportunities for teaching and for service that exists in these places. Despite the small token representation of missionaries of reformation quality in these countries, the Holy Spirit has raised up thousands of young pastors, full of basic faith, energy and a vision for their people and their land. The reformation congregations and individuals have not answered the call to disciple the nations so God is sending the nations to us. Also, He is opening the doors of opportunity to go and to teach, to lead, to serve and to be His instruments for dynamic change and growth in His Kingdom through the operation of the Holy Spirit!

We who have been born of Christian reformation heritage are quick to forget that this country and our greatest values and strengths which we enjoy are products of the spiritual and cultural revolutions of the Reformation. In spite of the decay of morals and reformation doctrine, of salvation through faith, and that of election by God without merit or works, the security of the believer, the adoption of the saints and the cultural relevance of the Kingdom for family, church and all civil matters and authority, the residue is still here and God is now calling forth a new wave of the redeemed, here and abroad.

In the early years of America, when the pilgrims of the reformation came to our eastern shores they brought all the stores and provisions with them that could cram onto those small sailing ships of the times. Most important of all they brought their gift of faith, their gifts of trade, and their gift of work ethic -- treasures all from the Reformation. The fruit of these gifts and their work ethic overcame the hardships of the new colonies and more. Within a few short years there was a surplus that could be shipped back to England and to the lands of their origins. The reality of this fruit and this productivity of pioneer families is one of the great hallmarks of the early American experience. The impact of this experience continues on to this day.

There is a great contrast between the American experience of cultural growth and economic productivity through families of reformation descendants and the Latin American experience through conquest by soldiers of fortune born of the Roman Catholic heritage of salvation by religious ritual and works. The former always ask God for wisdom and understanding to overcome present circumstances to be productive and to be relevant to their times and places for service. The later ask God for power to overcome any and all who would stand in their way to conquer and to pillage. The former, though totally without merit of the same, have been blessed in so many ways it is hard to describe, suffice it to say that our blessings, though not understood by many; are the greatest magnet to all people of the world that history has ever witnessed. The conquistadores were given the desire of their hearts, but the Lord sent a great leanness into their souls. Although many of these same Latin American countries still have great wealth in their natural resources, their cultures are weak and impoverished. The Latin American immigrants, whether here legally or illegally, they all send money back to their family members who still struggle to survive in these impoverished cultures. When we say the cultures are weak and impoverished we do not say that there are no opportunities or that there are not those who have money and who are educated. What we are saying is that as a whole, is that the people of these lands who are weak and impoverished in their souls. These cultures have not yet been given the gift of faith in numbers great enough to effect wide spread cultural and economic changes in the same way that our early pilgrims were able to do. This is the current and real world situation throughout Latin America to this day, but the situation is changing before our very eyes. If you cannot see it yet it is because you do not have the opportunity to know where and how to look to find it. Dramatic changes are taking place at the grass roots level in all of these Latin American cultures and these changes are both being driven and being felt by our own American culture. These dynamic changes are occurring within our borders at the core of every Latin American group represented in the USA and also at the core of these same cultural groups within their respective countries. It is a dynamic that is flowing in both directions at the same time. There are two basic parts to this dynamic flow of changes and both parts are the work of the Holy Spirit.

First: There is the more visible and tangible economic part. Second: There is the more powerful, invisible and intangible spiritual part. The Tangible Economic Part All immigrants who come to our shores and take up residence here are blessed by the same overflow of God's blessings

through the heritage of the Reformation doctrines and biblical principles that still form the foundation of this great country. None must understand these truths in order to be blessed by them; they just simply have to be here and to be in force. Once here the crumbs that fall from the tables of the redeemed are quickly snatched up and a portion of them is sent back to the ones left behind. At first, decades ago, when this immigration wave first started, the cumulative amount of money sent back to their countries of origin was so small as to not be noticed. However, today the cumulative dollar amount is in the tens of billions. Mexico, as an example, receives so much money via this conduit of direct transfer from millions of Mexicans to their respective families still living in Mexico; that it is counted upon as a major portion of the countries GNP, over 25%. In this case GNP of the immigrants who live here and send a portion of their wages back to family members who still live in Mexico. One of the more unusual aspects, of this economic connection between the immigrants and their family members back home, is in the way in which a large percentage of this money is spent. There are hundreds of small towns in Mexico and other Latin American countries, where you see new homes that have been built but that no one lives in. You see many other homes, some quite large and elegant in the Spanish tradition, that are being built but that no one will live in for several years. This construction is all being financed by the transfer of payments from immigrants to their families back home. This shows that for many their home is still in the country of their origin. Their dream is to someday go back and to have a business in the place where they are building their new house. Many of these dreams will never materialize but for some they will and the proof is in the fact that there are those who have already realized this goal and are back in their country of origin. They have a new house and a small business, all paid for from their work here in the USA. Many, perhaps most, will never go back to live in their country of origin. However, they will continue to send money to those who are still there and in many cases they will also fund the other family members in their efforts to come to the USA.

The Intangible Spiritual Part The invisible and more powerful spiritual aspect of this dynamic two way flow is seen in the millions who have already broken with the Roman Catholic Church and have started a new journey into the evangelical community. These individuals are in contact with their family members here in the USA and the Spanish speaking congregations are growing at a rapid pace as a result. The spiritual communication back to the countries of origin is slight because of the new problems they are facing here. Yet, the growth of the present day evangelical congregations is so fast in these Latin American countries, their own original denominations cannot keep up with them. The needs are so great, from basic bible teachings, work ethic, vocational skills, business and finance. There are truly many great exploits and adventures awaiting all whom God will call to join with us in His work to disciple these nations. RMIC, Reformation Ministries International Corp. is uniquely trained and suited to spearhead this modern day advance into these Latin American countries. Ask your Heavenly Father what He would have you to do for these nations. Philippians 2:13 (New King James Version) "For it is God who works in you, both to will and to do for His good pleasure." What is His good pleasure in you? What experiences will He give you and what challenges will He allow you to know and to overcome? Great things wait all who are attuned to His voice for this call who will be a part, even a small part. Even small things in the hands of our living God and Father become big things in His Kingdom.