

IGLESIA PRESBITERIANA REFORMADA "CALCEDON"

BUENA FE, ECUADOR

"Aquellos a quienes nunca les fue anunciado acerca de él, verán;
Y los que nunca han oído de él, entenderán" Romanos 15:21

March 7, 2011

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Warmest greetings from the church in Buena Fe, Ecuador, in the name of our Majestic King, Lord and Savior, "We give Thee thanks, O Lord God, the Almighty, who art and who wast, because Thou hast taken Thy great power and hast begun to reign" Rev. 11:17.

Today is a holiday here, Carnaval (Carnival), which is celebrated in a very riotous form, throwing water or any other liquid and powder substances that might be at hand on anyone and everyone. This goes on for about a week but is extremely intense the last four days, Saturday, Sunday, Monday and Tuesday before Ash Wednesday. During this time we usually stay at home and try not to go anywhere, though I did have classes on Saturday, and managed to get home without getting wet! Things are usually so bad that we have to cancel Sunday services. So today I will make an effort to catch you up on the work here and tell you the wonderful works the Lord is doing here.

Perhaps if we look at things the way the world does, we would think that things are very bad here. Politically we are closer and closer to a Communist-socialist dictatorship, which will probably be ratified in the referendum which will be held in May, when the people will vote on the restructuring of the judicial branch of government. A majority vote of "yes" will give the President absolute power over the courts and judges. He now has absolute power over the congress. So if you think that Venezuela is bad off, wait and see what Ecuador will probably turn into. Socially and economically things are everyday worse. There is a restriction on the press, and freedom of speech is fast becoming a thing of the past. Socialist governments always produce a controlled economy, inflation, unemployment, and a high crime rate. Right now probably the best paying job here is that of "sicario" (hired assassin)—complete with a free "get out of jail" card. There is an average rate of one person killed every 12 hours by this method.

The education system is on its way to collapse, as has happened with the state medical program and state hospitals. Free medical attention has brought corruption to the system which has put into jeopardy the lives and thousands of dependents of the social security system. The hospitals are jammed with patients to overflowing. There are not enough doctors....nor enough money to pay for more. So, there is a new tax on all medicine (that would scare you) to pay for this failure of the government. Free education and a rewriting of the curriculum (with a very obvious anti-Christian stand) are sending a very clear message to the people—the state is now the absolute priority. It makes you sick to see the public schools today. This past year there was an increase of

27% in pregnancies of girls from ages 12 and up. Last year in Ecuador 37% of the women who gave birth were under the age of eighteen. And what is the government going to do about it? Their solution is put in all schools vending machines that would provide free condoms!! Absolutely disgusting!



Well, there is a lot more. And really things are not what we would like. And many times we find ourselves crying out as did Habakkuk, “How long, O Lord, will I call for help, and Thou wilt not hear? I cry out to Thee, ‘Violence!’ yet Thou dost not save. Why dost Thou make me see iniquity, and cause me to look on wickedness? Yes, destruction and violence are before me; strife exists and contention arises. Therefore the law is ignored and justice is never upheld. For the wicked surround the righteous; therefore, justice comes out perverted” Habakkuk 1:2-4. Better words could not describe the situation in the world and the position of the church. But then, when is a light most visible? ... when the night is darkest. So, we would not expect the Lord to put a light in a place where the sun shines.

Our comfort is in the Promises of the Word of God, the destruction of “Babylon” that anti-Christian system of government and world power concentrated in men, with the only purpose of glorifying man. Perhaps chapter 18 of Revelation is one such promise that lets us enjoy the peace of Christ—even when all around us there is violence, injustice and iniquity. I recall these words written by Dr. William Hendriksen in his commentary of Revelation, “*More Than Conquerors*”; “In the main, the purpose of the book of Revelation is to comfort the militant Church in its struggle against the forces of evil. It is full of help and comfort for persecuted and suffering Christians. To them is given the assurance that God sees their tears (7:17; 21:4); their prayers are influential in world affairs (8:3-4); and their death is precious in His sight. Their final victory is assured (15:2); their blood will be avenged (19:2); their Christ lives and reigns forever and forever. He governs the world in the interest of His Church (5:7-8). He is coming again to take His people to Himself in ‘the marriage supper of the Lamb’ and to live with them forever in a rejuvenated universe (21:22).”

Since the first of 2010 the Lord has given us a good number of students in our seminary program. We have 25 students in the city of Quevedo, and 15 students in the rural town of “El Paraíso” or “La 14” as it is also called. It’s a very interesting group from Quevedo, as almost all are from the “Jesús Solo” church, (in English that would be “Jesus Only”, and I don’t know if that is

known among you or not, but they are the Unitarians). I have probably been more blessed than anyone as I have had to really study very hard and earnestly to make the Doctrine of the Trinity very clear and plain to them and I thank the Lord for the privilege to do so. Every class I have with them is a challenge. We are now starting the study of Genesis. I have several who have made some real progress in learning more about God and His Word. I had a one day seminary for leaders in December of 2010 at which 60 pastors and leaders from a great variety of churches attended. We will have the second seminary on leadership on March 26. We are expecting over one hundred in attendance.

I ask special prayer for the pastors here. We would like to see more of them studying and promoting studies in their churches. I will have in April and June meetings which two groups of pastors in the rural areas during which I will share with them a study (of Pastor Morecraft's) on The Biblical Principal of Tithing. I think it is one of the most urgent messages needed in the church here.

We need prayer also for the members of our church in Buena Fe, especially for a renewing of the vision of the expansion of the Kingdom. The city is so overwhelmed by crime that the Christians are intimidated by the fear of evil men to do such things as door to door visitation and evangelism. Drugs have become a problem in the area and so people are very cautious as to whom they talk with or let into their homes. However, we have had several new visitors lately for which we are glad. But in February we had to say good bye to a very faithful family who have gone to Chile to study for four years. We trust the Lord to keep them and bring them back to us.

Our thanks and praises to God for your concern and prayer and financial support of our ministry here. I trust the Lord will bless you greatly and continue to make you a blessing here in Ecuador. We pray the Lord will send many more to work here. I am convinced we have a job here that must continue. We are so thankful that we are able to read the discussions of Discussion-Chalcedon on the internet. I don't get to read them but once or twice a week but even so it lets us know what is going on there and we feel much more part of the "family" even though we can't be there. It is a pleasure to see some of you through Facebook, also.

I know that things are just as bad in the States as they are here. We pray for you all always giving thanks for your testimony and praying God's guidance in all that is done that His Word will be honored and He will receive the glory. May all of our brothers and sisters in the Lord rejoice in His promises, fight the battle, and defend the faith. "For Thy sake we are being put to death all day long; we were considered as sheep to be slaughtered. But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us" Romans 8:36-37.

Your servants in Christ,

William and Mercy Farr