



Hablan Los Holtrop

Literally: The Holtrops Speak

...Partnering with you in Nicaragua

September 2008

CHURCH CORRUPTION:

"No one reads the Bible - sheep stealing - numbers are what matters, not people - there is no prophetic voice - corruption - children on the streets - authoritarian leadership - dependence on others to solve our problems - the Church doesn't care about women, kids or those with AIDS" - these are all things I heard last week from a group of pastors when asked to describe the problems with the Nicaraguan church in general. *Corruption* surprised me. A few days later, the United Nations listed Nicaragua as a very *Corrupt* nation. Is there a relationship between the corruption in the church and in the government? Is the church corrupt because the country is corrupt, or is the country corrupt because the church is corrupt? On paper Nicaragua is a Christian nation, indeed its population is much more spiritual than most North Americans or Europeans. How can this be that such a corrupt and broken land can be filled with Christians?

God did not put us or the Nicaraguans here on accident. He is pushing the church. I wonder globally how many of the problems and sins of the church reflect the culture around them. Can you identify any ways in which your church reflects that which is bad in society? Pray with us as we attempt to help the church be more which God desires. In Nicaragua one aspect of that is combating corruption both inside and outside of the church.

AT OUR CORE - WHO ARE WE?

We had a great gathering of about 200 leaders from pastors to business people to educators in August. Ruth Padilla DeBorst spoke on how Spirituality and Leadership relate. One of her main opening points was to bring us back to who we are, to ground us. She reminded us that we are all players in transformation of creation and we do this with and through a relational God. Thinking about *how* this can be is mind blowing. Who of us really understands the Trinity or the distinction between man's free will and God's sovereignty? In spite of our best dialogue and philosophies we are really still left in wonder. In spite of this we do all have the ability to be in direct relation with God. We *do* see the fruits of God working through us whether it be sweeping the floor of a factory or teaching high school physics. When we define ourselves first as in His image, as part of His plan of transformation, then we are more able to lead others.

SINCE WE LAST WROTE:

- Seven Dordt College students are here on a Semester program. The students are living with Nicaraguan families; studying Spanish, Nicaraguan culture and history, transformation, and also doing an internship.
- Read about what God has done with us in Nicaragua this past year in the Nehemiah Center Annual Report at www.nehemiahcenter.net/Reports/0708AnnualReport.pdf.
- Kim has been healthy, we anticipate child #3 around October 20. Nathan was nearly 2 weeks early and Alia was 2 weeks late - we'll see.
- Alia started school in August and it is going well.

*Thanks,
Steve, Kim, Alia & Nathan*