

Nicaragua: A Land of Contrasts

Contributed by Rev. Ken Pounders
Sunday, 21 February 2010
Last Updated Sunday, 21 February 2010

Nicaragua is a land of tremendous contrasts. It is an amazingly beautiful and diverse land with plenty of resources and yet remains the poorest country in Central America. The people for the most part are very friendly and congenial, and yet throughout its history it has been a war torn country, often divided internally. Even the weather is a display of contrast: half the year the country is dry and brown, the other half its lush and green with torrential rain throughout each day.

These Nicaraguan contrasts do not end at the natural level. They actually extend heavily into the spiritual realm as well. The country is very "spiritual" albeit divided along several lines. There are lines between people of faith and the atheistic socialists, catholics and protestants/evangelicals, and between christians and those practicing pagan rituals in the remote mountains and the Caribbean coast. In the major cities you often see churches on every corner while in the villages and in the northern mountains you frequently find no church at all.

While you find much Christian ritual and practice in Nicaragua you will also find that often the conduct and daily lifestyle of the people don't match the outward profession. I have found that many dedicated pastors have little or no training at all. Years of devastating poverty have led many people, even committed christians to an unhealthy dependence on foreigners and their resources, many times resorting to openly begging for their needs to be met.

In the midst of all these contrasts and obstacles the Lord is raising up His Church. I see them awakening as a sleeping giant. The Lord is granting to them a clear vision and placing His burden into their hearts. An evangelistic fervor is seizing the hearts of God's people and they are beginning to believe for the Lord to grant them their nation and beyond.

I believe with all my heart that God is raising up fearless people in Nicaragua and Central America that will do ALL His will and carry His Good News to a world that desperately needs it. He is mobilizing a people who are unhindered by the distractions of affluence, comfort, ease, and security. He is preparing a people who will complete the unfinished task of the Great Commission and will be willing to go to the not yet reached peoples and nations of our world.

My heart burns for these nations and I am so grateful that the Lord is allowing me to play a small part in what He is doing in this great land of Nicaragua. I believe that Priority! Evangelism is going to be used in the next few years to raise up and train young church planters and world changers in Nicaragua and the surrounding nations.

Thank you so much for sharing this vision for world evangelism with us. In just a few weeks I will be in Nicaragua hosting two teams for outreach there. Our first team from Forest City Foursquare in Forest City, NC will be ministering in and around Esteli, Nicaragua conducting medical clinics and evangelistic outreaches. Our second team from Bethel Master's Commission will be ministering among youth in schools, youth rallies, and on the streets. I am confident that these will be very fruitful outreaches and that many lives will be transformed as a result. Please uphold us in prayer as we reach out with His love among hurting people in this needy land.