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How Do We Say it...?

by Ken Bain

The wonder of God's grace towards the people of the Mexican Sonoran Desert along the Arizona border continues. I believe we are seeing nothing short of a Spiritual Awakening. For instance, a pastor from Sasabe, Sonora, Mexico told Sharing Ministries Church in Tucson a couple of weeks ago that he was seeing about 140 new converts a week. ...And that has been going on for months! Since Sasabe is a town of about 900 (near the border), it may mean that **more people have been saved than the total population of the town!** Thurleen asked about how follow up is being done. Well, it was reported that the little church is having 5-hour services, 7 days a week!

When we returned from our summer Partnership Tour we were impatient to be able to confirm the stories of large numbers of people coming to Christ in that area. We were assured by Tucson pastor Rob Landry that the "979 number" I reported in our last NewsLetter was accurate, to any degree that we can know. ...But he said that the number of salvations may be more like **six to seven thousand!**

We praise God for his harvest of souls! It is humbling to even know about what God is doing in this great outpouring. It appears that at the current time doors have been broken open for the advance of the Gospel.

This last year we have been very cautious about not naming the Christians who, last February, bravely took the gospel into Northwest Mexican areas that so many said were far too dangerous. Now the Awakening has taken on a life of its own. Its success was not from organized or denominational efforts or programs. No great "revival tents" with loud-speakers were brought in. Just a handful of obedient Christians who patiently "connect the dots" on the "paint by number" canvas that the Holy Spirit reveals a little at a time. Now we hear about how eager sinners are standing outside of tiny packed churches to hear about the Christ who can save them from their sin.

Our prayer is that this hunger for the Gospel will spill over into the United States through her "original residents" here in the Arizona Sonoran Desert.

Along with Mexicans who are receiving Christ as their personal Savior, there are also converts from many other countries of the world. As we looked at a map of Mexico, pastor Landry said, "you know, the world looks at Mexico as the way into the United States."

In addition to Mexico, there are known to be people from several Central American countries, South America, even from Australia and the Middle East who have received Christ in the amazing move of God.

Baptist Indian Fellowship

The BIF (Baptist Indian Fellowship), a 50 year old group of various Indian churches, now led by Felix Juan, has concluded that they must become mission active.

Felix is Tohono O'dham and his mother still lives in the Hikiwan district. He has graciously made himself available to fill the Hikiwan Pulpit several times this year. The BIF leadership has taken action to begin an ongoing outreach in and around Hikiwan. They

are planning a two day ministry effort, in February or March. As a Native American group, I believe they will be able to open doors for the Gospel, perhaps as never before.

The timing of their ministry efforts just may beautifully coordinate with the move of the Holy Spirit directly across the US / Mexico border. Pray that it does...

Perspective...

But Mary kept (treasured up) all these things, and pondered them in her heart...

I was a night like no other. In the fields outside Bethlehem, young shepherd boys knew the importance of guarding their flocks through the long nights. Their sheep were bred to be the most perfect in the land. Their purpose was special. Not for the quality of their wool, or the flavor of their meat. When these lambs were ready, their destiny was set. It was at Bethlehem where the sheep pens were filled with, well, sacrificial lambs. Bethlehem is about six miles from Jerusalem and the holy temple of Jehovah. The Temple had, for a time, been filled with the presence of God. Hebrews remembered, and some yearned for God's return.

Yet even though the Hebrews were the people of God, as individuals, their relationship with God required a sacrifice to atone for their sin. They would buy a lamb from the sheep merchants at Bethlehem and present it to the priests at the Temple.

The life of the poor sheep would serve for an exchange or atonement for the sinner to be right with God. The lamb's blood would be poured out and rivers of red would run out from the Temple. But each year the sacrifice had to be done all over again.

But this night was special. It held the best of good news. Seekers...sinners hungry for enduring righteousness but never able to keep it, tho repeatedly offering blood sacrifices, can...now, by faith in the perfect Lamb of God born to die for mankind...be saved eternally!

The shepherd boys immediately knew it was an grand moment when the angels announced that "A Saviour who is Christ the Lord is born." They ran "with haste" and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby Jesus lying in a manger.

**Where...but Bethlehem?
In what...but a manger?
To whom first announced...but, Bethlehem's Shepherd boys?**

*Mary, did you know?
One cannot help believe, in her heart, she did.*

Ken Bain

LUKE 1:26 And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, 27 To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. 28 And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. 29 And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. 30 And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. 31 And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. 32 He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: 33 And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

LUKE 2:8 And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. 9 And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. 10 And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. 11 For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. 12 And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, 14 Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men. 15 And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. 16 And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. 17 And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. 18 And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. 19 **But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.** 20 And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.



Merry Christmas +++ Happy New Year

Mary did you know that your baby boy would some day walk on water?
Mary did you know that your baby boy would save our sons and daughters?
Did you know that your baby boy has come to make you new?
This child that you've delivered, will soon deliver you.

Mary did you know that your baby boy would give sight to a blind man?
Mary did you know that your baby boy would calm a storm with his hand?
Did you know that your baby boy has walked where angels trod?
And when you kiss your little baby, you have kissed the face of God.

Oh Mary did you know

The blind will see, the deaf will hear, the dead will walk again.
The lame will leap, the dumb will speak, the praises of the lamb

Mary did you know that your baby boy is Lord of all creation?
Mary did you know that your baby boy would one day rule the nations?
Did you know that your baby boy is heaven's perfect Lamb?
This sleeping child you're holding is the Great I am

Songwriters: MARK LOWRY / BUDDY GREENE