

CARLISLE

Independent Baptist Missionaries in Spain



Diciembre (December) 2010

Dear Praying Friends,

We want to begin by wishing each and every one that receives this prayer letter a very *Merry Christmas*. True joy only comes by a personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, and for that reason we desire that this holiday season be one of abundant joy to all of you as we joyfully give thanks to our Heavenly Father for the gift of His only begotten Son.

So much has happened since our last prayer letter. This letter is going to be longer than normal in order to explain as much as possible. The big news is that after over seventeen years of ministry in Rota we believe that the Lord has led us to a change of ministry. It has not been an easy decision nor a quick one. We have consulted extensively with our sending church as well as our mission board, and there has been full and complete unanimity regarding this change. **The goal is to hand the work in Rota over to another man in March 2011.** While it has always been our desire and prayer to find a national pastor for the church, that has not been possible. However, we believe the Lord has led a missionary from Mexico to move here and continue this ministry. He is a good man and we have complete confidence that God will do great things through him in the church.

We praise the Lord for what He has allowed us to see accomplished here. We came here in 1993 to assist another missionary in the church, but after they moved a year later we were left to lead the church. The biggest blessing in our years in Rota has been the souls that have gotten saved in the church. We are also able to leave the church knowing that it owns its own building which it finished paying for in June of this year. This completes a process that started in 1997 when the church started saving money to purchase a building. We are also in the process of registering the church with the government which will make it a legal religious entity in the country of Spain. We are thankful to all the Lord has done here and for what He is continuing to do. This year has been one of more growth and more first-time visitors than we have ever seen in Rota. The Lord has been so good to this ministry! We leave knowing the church is prepared to continue as a lighthouse in this area.

So, what is happening with us as a family? Please understand that this transition is something that started almost three years ago. At that point we shared with the church our goal of handing the ministry over to another man within three years. Ever since we had shared that goal with the church, our family had been praying asking for God's wisdom and direction. We were content to stay in Rota if it be His will but yet believed that it was time to bring in another pastor. While we were in the States in May of this year for our daughter's graduation from International Baptist College, we were asked if we would consider talking with someone about a **ministry opportunity in Uruguay**. Our first reaction was no, but as we prayed and discussed it we decided that we didn't want to be the ones shutting the door instead of allowing the Lord to direct us. The person with whom we talked has been connected to the work in Uruguay for many years.

During the summer months we were in contact with the church in Montevideo (the capital of Uruguay) and also were gathering up all the information we could about the country and ministry there. In late September the Lord enabled us to make a trip there to meet the pastor and see the ministry first-hand. Our prayer was that through the trip God would either shut the doors of this opportunity or keep them open. We spent an entire week in Uruguay looking things over and talking not only to the pastor but to the church about the possibility of starting a Bible institute. We came home realizing that God had not shut any doors. Just the opposite, they were more open than ever.

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There is no doubt that there is a great need and desire for someone to go there and help in this ministry. The national pastor is 83 years old and because of health issues has not been able to continue all the ministries of the church like he had done for so many years. He has some men in the church helping in the ministry related duties but none are prepared to become the pastor. Part of our work there would be assisting him (not replacing him!) in the ministry in whatever way possible.

Our primary ministry, however, would be the Bible institute. On the Sunday that Larry preached in the service, we passed out a paper with a few questions asking how many people were interested in taking courses in the institute and what they wanted to accomplish with their training. Twenty-two people filled out the questionnaire expressing their desire to study in a Bible institute! Of those, four or five believe the Lord is calling them into the ministry. Most of the rest explained that their reason for wanting more training was to be better equipped to teach Sunday School and work in the church. We were amazed at the interest of the people in wanting further training.

To explain our goals in moving to Uruguay in a more organized manner, the following list is a summary of our primary goals.

- 1) Assist the pastor in the ministry as we are able.
- 2) Start and direct the Bible institute.
- 3) Help one of the men to become the pastor of the church once prepared.
- 4) Assist others in going out and planting churches once they have finished their preparation in the Bible institute.
- 5) Encourage and assist the church members in becoming more involved personally in the ministry of the church.

Even since before coming to Spain Larry's desire has always been to teach and prepare young men to be pastors, but the Lord in His wisdom sent us to Spain to pastor this church first. Now with seventeen years of experience in the ministry, we believe the Lord wants to use us to help prepare young men and women to serve Him. Although we praise the Lord for what He has done here in Spain, we are excited about this great opportunity to not only be working in one church but also to aid in many other churches getting started. There will be many challenges and we face some uncertainties, but our Heavenly Father always knows what is best and His timing is always perfect. **We ask that you join us in praying for this new endeavor for our family as we continue seeking how we may serve our Lord and Savior best.**

If anyone has questions regarding this change, please feel free to contact us. We'll be more than happy to answer any and all questions. We will be contacting all of our supporting pastors by phone as soon as possible to answer any questions. Also, during the coming summer we will be visiting many of our supporting churches to explain the new ministry firsthand. **Our goal is to move to Uruguay in March, 2011.** We're planning on selling almost all we have and only ship one crate of items. Even like that, the estimated cost of the move including shipping and purchasing an older car in Uruguay is **\$10,000**. That doesn't even include plane tickets for the three of us (about \$3,000 more). If any church desires to help with the cost of the move they can send the gift to our mission board marked for the Carlisle's Move.

One more thing: our website www.carlislefamily.net is currently disabled. We apologize for this inconvenience are working on getting a new site up and running as soon as possible. On the website we will keep everyone up to date on the transition. Thanks for your prayers!

Your co-laborers in Christ,

Larry, Kathryn, Katie, Lisa, Kristina and Linda CARLISLE