



## Headed to México

DEC 2015-JAN 2016

Praying and Surveying

"Blab it and grab it; claim the things God has for you! Just pray in Jesus name and He will give you whatever you ask for! It is all in the power of your words." These are some of the things the prosperity gospel movement tells you about prayer. Despite the verse they bring up to try to defend their view, they forget one major thing: they are actually diminishing what God has for us. They are not exaggerating what God does through prayer; they are actually underestimating it. It came to my mind recently that since God does "exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think" (Ephesians 3:20) and since "we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us" (Romans 8:26), then to say that God will give us everything we ask for is far less than the truly great things God wants to give us. If God does infinitely above what we ask or think, why should we limit Him by demanding He answers what we think we should have? God has better things in mind for us than we can even think. When you pray for missionaries, you should pray as best you can but rejoice in the knowledge that when things don't go the way you expected, God is answering your prayers better than you can ask or think! God often answers our prayers not according to what we ask but according to what we would ask for if we knew better. Sometimes we won't understand it right away, but we believe it to be true. I would like to thank those who were praying for our survey trip needs. The trip was extremely profitable in seeing what God did for us.

First, God paid for our girls' unexpected flight expenses. We had paid \$350 per adult for a round trip from Detroit, Michigan to Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico. That is the cheapest I have ever paid to fly to Mexico, and it was even cheaper than what Hannah paid when she first went down 14 years ago. We count that as a

### PRAISES:

We had a safe trip to Mexico and back.

Paperwork for Hannah and the girls won't be complicated.

God has given us more direction on where He wants us.

We had another church take us on for support.

### PRAYER REQUESTS:

That Marcos' eyes would be opened to the Gospel.

That we would continue to be a blessing to the churches we visit.

That we will patiently but diligently finish deputation.

That winter challenges would not discourage us.

blessing in itself! The girls are both under two years of age, so we could take them on our laps and save additional money. Our understanding was they would be free (which they would have been if we were only flying nationally). International flights have a tax for lap infants. The website was unclear when we bought the tickets, so we were surprised to find this out when we got to the airport the morning we were flying out. There was a \$180 tax for them. We trusted that God knew this would happen, and of course, He wasn't just picking on us. Little did we know at the time that God had placed the girls on the heart of a dear Christian friend of ours, and she had already sent a letter with \$200! It was at my parents' house in México before we even got there. What was more amazing still is that she specifically wrote in the letter that God had placed it upon her heart to give the money for the girls' needs. Matthew 6:8! God knew our needs before we did.

Second, God showed us where there was a greater need. One of the things we wanted to do while we were in Mexico was to find more precise direction. One of my constant prayers was, "Lord, lead us to where You want us and help us not to be like Lot in picking a place because it appealed to our eyes." I asked eight different pastors and missionaries that are serving in and around Guadalajara (Proverbs 11:14) what were the neediest places nearby. There were a lot of different places mentioned, but everyone spoke of Los Altos de Jalisco (the Highlands of Jalisco). We went to see as many of the places that were mentioned as possible and found it to be true that the Highlands of Jalisco was the most destitute of churches. The Highlands of Jalisco is the upper northeast side of the state. Even though I had grown up in Jalisco, I had never been through this part before. In fact, planting churches there never crossed my mind until this trip. We found that is one of the most catholic places in the already-extremely-catholic state. There were at least six towns of more than 30,000 people without any established churches: Atotonilco el Alto, Teocaltiche, Jalostotitlán, San Ignacio Cerro Gordo, San Miguel el Alto, San Julian. The larger cities were Zapotlanejo with 60,000, Arandas with 80,000, and Tepatitlán with 140,000. There is one church in each place. It amazed me to see huge catholic cathedrals in even some of the smallest towns: cathedrals so immense that you normally only saw them in large cities. The area has drug cartel shootings but little/no more than any other area in Mexico. Two things that might also surprise you are that the people of Los Altos are often very light skinned Mexicans and that it is a much cooler part of Mexico (some parts are more than 8,000 ft. above sea level). If you have the technology at hand, you can look up any of the towns I have mentioned on google, and you will see for yourself the massive cathedrals, cartel killings, their chief idols, and light-skinned Mexicans. We still have more prayer to invest in seeing which of these towns God has in store for us, but we are quite certain that the Highlands of Jalisco is where God wants us.

Third, God made it possible for the girls to have an easy immigration process. Since I have Mexican citizenship, we have been praying that the girls would be able to get dual-citizenship easily as well. We had been told there was a possible snag, but after spending over an hour talking to one of the Mexican immigration lawyers, we found that we just have to translate some of their papers and then register them. For Hannah, the process is a bit more involved but far more simple than it would have been without our marriage. It should only cost us around \$3,000 over three years, and she, too, will become a citizen. This is also a blessing because the cost could have been enormous and the process tedious. Fourth, God allowed us to minister to people. While in México, I had the chance to preach in several different churches as well as do some door-to-door visitation and open-flea-market preaching. It is a

true blessing to be a blessing! One interesting encounter I had was with a man named Marcos. I had shared the Gospel with him several years ago, and he was very interested in learning from the Word. Though he was polite and listened for over an hour, he did not make a profession of faith and we later lost track of him. While we were sharing the Gospel in the flea market last month, he came up and asked if I remembered him. Sadly, at first I didn't, but when he told me his name, it all came back. He was again interested in receiving in-home Bible studies, so I reconnected him with my dad's church there in town.

Fifth, we got to see my family and my brother-in-law's family, both of which are missionaries in Jalisco. They are all doing well, and God is blessing their work for Him. If you have never gone to visit missionaries on their field, you would be greatly blessed to see what God is doing across the globe. In turn, you can be a blessing to the missionary, to his family, to their church, and often to the lost people around them. As a missionary's son, I would be glad to help you with some practical ways to maximize the blessing you are to them.

Just recently, we ordered new prayer cards and will be sending them out in a couple weeks' time. Supporting churches and some others will receive packets of these; individuals who ask will also receive one/some. If you do not receive any by mid-February, let us know! We want ALL of you, our prayer supporters to have one (or as many as you can use)!

We thank you again for your continuous prayers,  
Rolando, Hannah, Azelia and Viana

