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WWNTBM

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Much has happened in the last few weeks! As we searched for where God wanted us to start working, Mexico had a gas shortage. Many people were in panic mode, and almost no one was traveling. Thankfully for us, the gas shortage was no problem because our vehicle runs on diesel. Praise the Lord!

As for how our searching went, God has led us to begin working in San Miguel el Alto. It is in the very middle of the highland region. The only religious group here other than the Catholics is a small JW kingdom hall on the outskirts of town. Though it was not the determining factor which led us to start here, it did stir us to see them working in this place. If a cult that teaches falsehood is willing to work in a hostile catholic place, certainly we who carry the truth must not retreat. It is a daunting thought that we may be the only saved people in a town of over 40 thousand. Still, there may be some who came to Christ elsewhere. If so, we are looking out for them as well.

A special thanks to those who prayed with us as we looked for a place to rent! Finding a place to rent in México can be very difficult. Unless you are talking about Americanized cities like Guadalajara, these are some of the difficulties you may face:

- No internet website for finding rental houses
- Nearly no one putting rental signs up
- Great unwillingness to rent to strangers
- Building costs being too great for renting out to be practical
- Low likelihood of renting to those who are proponents of "other religions"

So how did our search go? We drove around for three days, all day, asking people if they knew of any houses for rent. Everyone asked where we were from and then informed us that they had just rented out the house (only the day before). By the third day, we were getting frustrated and tired, but a random old man who heard me asking someone about their house approached me and said, "I have a house you can rent, and I know you will like it." Long story short, that is where we located! It is much nicer than we expected in that it has a large yard and fruit trees. What a blessing for our girls and us!

We really need your prayers as we work in this heavily catholic region. Years ago there was a group of people that called themselves Cristeros. When the Mexican government put restrictions on the Catholic Church, many of the Cristeros fought and died for their religion. These were canonized as saints. Some of the people alive today were part of that war, and nearly everyone is related to some martyr of the Cristero War. That zeal that led them to die for their religion is still alive. One missionary here put it this way: "Starting a church in 'Los Altos' is like starting a church on the edge of the Vatican." A church that was started eleven years ago in the lower

Ortiz Family in Mexico

PRAISES:

The privilege of sharing the Gospel

Several people opening their homes

Getting our family structure back in order

PRAYER

REQUESTS:

Salvation: Héctor, Victoria, Carlos, Miguel, Sabino & Margarita, Beto, María de la Cruz, Jeffrey, Lucino and Cuca, Abraham, María Isabel, Daniel, Arnulfo & Lupita, Noemí, José.

Continual open doors

part of the region was stoned (not to death) by the town for “deceiving the people and turning them against their parent’s religion.” One missionary we heard of was shunned by the town he worked in to the degree that no one would rent a house to him or even sell him food. He had to live and buy in other towns. After two years, that missionary left to work in a different area. Needless to say, now more than ever we need your prayers for words, boldness, and opportunities as we engage in enemy territory.

I feel like 1 Corinthians 2:2-5 best captures how our ministry here has begun. *“For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.”*

In two weeks of visiting, we have had some people straight out tell us that they are against anyone who is not catholic, and that we will be judged for not worshiping Mary. Several have kindly closed the door in our faces without any words. However, to say that all has been negative would not be true, for several have listened to us attentively. One man (Hector Loza) told me he will talk to me at any time but that he does not plan on ever leaving the Catholic Church. A lady (Maria de la Cruz) with three kids has allowed me to come share the Bible every week in her house with her family – including her mother and father. One neighbor (Lucino) has done the same. Another man (Arnulfo) who has had a lot of contact with the false witnesses but continues to be catholic has allowed me to visit him on his work break to talk. None of these have wanted to receive Christ yet, but I share the Gospel with them every week and challenge them to respond. Please pray their eyes would be opened and that they would come to know Him.

In Christ,

Rolando, Hannah, and the girls

P.S. A special thanks to those who sent Christmas gifts to us! We have used that money to buy a fridge, a queen-size mattress, and a washer. We will not forget your generosity as it is directly connected to our food, sleep, and dress!

