



Ortiz Family Serving in Arandas and San Miguel el Alto, Jalisco, Mx.

DEATH THREATS

Blessings to all of you prayer warriors that stand behind us as we work for the Lord here in Mexico! I hadn't realized how much time had gone by since the last prayer letter. It honestly feels like it has been only a couple of very busy weeks.

The wages of sin is death. Every time we go out and preach the Gospel, we are preaching to people who live under a death threat. Whether they know it or not, it is true. This is why the Gospel is so urgent.

We were able to pass out 1,500 invitations and have an evangelistic outreach hoping to see people saved from death's clutches. We had about 50 people (picture below). We have yet to see the full impact, but we are grateful for a few new people in church as a result. Pray they would be the fertile ground that would produce more fruit.

We also had the great privilege of being visited by John O'Malley and Cody Carden! They were here for a few days and were able to help us with ministry. Bro O'Malley preached on the family in our Sunday night service, and Cody preached on hell (the ultimate death threat) at the blueberry farm ministry. I believe both messages were exactly what was needed.

One lady by the name of Lucia came to us because she had panic attacks and many irrational fears which she cannot explain. Hannah and I would sit down with her an hour before Sunday service and open the Scriptures to present what it says about fear. After a few weeks of constantly emphasizing that the fear of the Lord is the fear that overcomes all other fears (Psalm 112) and that the love of God outweighs any fear of condemnation (1 John 4:17-18), I shared with her Matthew 10:28: "Fear not them which kill the body...rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." She professed Christ that day and has expressed in church and elsewhere how joyful she is that she has come to know Christ through this and that her problem has almost completely vanished.

I would like to ask special prayer for Bro Horacio, who got saved over a year ago out of the cartel. He has been growing slowly but surely. Last week at work, there was a fist fight that broke out between a younger man and older man, and Horacio got between them defending the older man. Since there was insufficient evidence of how the conflict started, his job is on hold. Unfortunately, that is not where the

PRAISES:

- Lucia's profession
- Maria Elena's profession
- John O'Malley and Cody Carden's visit
- Celsa's graduation
- Evangelistic outreach
- 10th Marriage anniversary

PETITIONS:

- Horacio's issue
- Noe's family
- Toño and Ady's marriage counselling
- Dangerous people
- Hannah's broken toe to heal correctly

problem ended. The man whom he fought threatened that if he sees him, he will stab him. Horacio's first response, he himself confessed to me "in anger and in the flesh." He called his old friends and made threats back using the cartel.

Now, I find myself trying to help him to see how he must respond to injustice in this situation. I already have spoken to him about seeing how he can represent the Gospel if he responds correctly, how he needs to confess his own sin, and how he needs to gently deal with the problems of the other parties involved. He needs to be ready to forgive even if he loses his job and plan for the future so he doesn't repeat wrong responses. Please pray God would have this victory!

A sad and glorious event this month was that our dear sister in Christ Celsa went to be with Christ. She had often asked prayer for her family's salvation, and we believed it important to share with them again. I preached on how Jesus said to the unbelievers, "Whither I go, ye cannot come," but to Peter He said, "Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards." I told them that some of them would see her again but many others would never see her again. The difference would be if they were Christ's or not. Her husband, Bro Noe said that many were shaken and are unsure what they believe now. May God free them all from death's threat!

Now, of a more personal nature, we were threatened by people posing as the cartel in San Miguel. They told us that they charge taxes on any building in their town and went on to explain all of activities we do. They spoke of how long we've been working there and that they admired our persistence, but that from now on every 3 years, they would be charging the tax. I struggled to know if there was a reason why biblically I should refuse, but under the pressure and with the threats, I decided I would pay. I'm not sure if they were actually cartel members or just scammers, and most people I talk to say they were the latter. Only one family in the church says that they were for real and that they had the same problem. I lean towards the scammer idea, but I'm not sure of anything. At any rate, it was discouraging at the moment and is frustrating even still. Yet, reflecting upon it all, I appreciated more the words of Paul: "for to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." I realize it is easy to say that when there's nothing threatening your life, but when someone comes and makes a threat, whether it's real or not, then the words mean something. And so I want to go on record as saying, "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." We continue serving Christ knowing that we must not fear those who can kill only the body. I do not believe our family is in danger, but I do ask that you would pray for safety and for the salvation of these men for they ever live under a divine, eternal death threat. Pray our testimony of perseverance in spite of trials would inspire the small flock to stand firm as well.

In Christ and free from condemnation,

Rolando, Hannah and family

John O'Malley in Arandas church



Celsa's funeral



Cody in Capulín



Evangelistic outreach

