

Oct. 8, 2020

Greetings Prayer Partners, we hope this letter finds you all well. Freedom feels so good. After almost 7 months of lock downs we now have many of our freedoms back for a little while. Restaurants are still not open for indoor dining, and large events of people are prohibited. Concerning church, we can now have services throughout the week with some restrictions. M-F we can be out 5am -10pm, Sat. and Sun. 5am - 7pm. Those prohibited to be out and about are people over 60 and under 14. Lots of protocols are in place, such as masks, social distancing, and the allowance of 30% of capacity.

The last weeks of September we had a few meetings at our house on Sunday with a couple of families. We also shared the services on Zoom. Then last week on Oct 4 we had our first allowed meeting in the church. What a wonderful blessing to sing and gather with 20 of the brethren. After the service I dismissed the church family and they all just sat there! It was like they were saying, "We waited 7 months to be here, what is the rush to leave?" What a blessing. We still were missing several of our members, but we had one new attendee, his name is David and he is about 16 yrs. old, and seems to be very hungry for the Word. Several months ago, we were invited to start an outreach in the community of Tomatas Grande (Big Tomato), where we had delivered bags. However, it would be an evening outreach and we just recently we were given permission to be out and about until 10pm. So, we are looking forward to see what God will do with this opportunity.

What's going on with the virus? It is still here and people are still getting sick. People are now able to go to work if they have any. Therefore, the food bag ministry has dropped off considerably, we now are giving to those families that are in the church who have family with Covid-19 and are quarantined in their homes. There seems to be less need at this time for us to continue as the government has also started to hand out money and distribute food to the needy.

I wish I could tell you that 100's have come to know the Lord through this ministry, during this time of the quarantine, but it has been difficult to talk to people though we try to get the Word in when we can. The reason for this is; 1<sup>st</sup> Bolivia is a Socialist Country and many have seen the food baskets as something owed them. 2<sup>nd</sup> this area in Bolivia is a very Catholic region and a small town where everybody knows everybody and changing one's religion results in persecution. 3<sup>rd</sup> Covid has many freaked out about getting the virus. Examples of this; Some will not even accept a Gospel tract, for fear it is contaminated. I went to visit a pastor friend of mine and I had not seen him in 6 months, but we have been messaging on the phone. I was excited that I would finally get to see him mask to mask and bump elbows in the new customary greeting. However, he yelled at me from the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor balcony and lowered a basket on a rope to receive the small gift I brought him. I was not mad by the reception, but saddened. I do understand his concern, and precautions are necessary as the medical care here is very limited, but we are not to live in fear. *"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."* 2 Timothy 1:17

I mentioned in the beginning of this update that; "we now have many of our freedoms back for a little while." What I mean by this is that, our movements may be restricted after Oct 18<sup>th</sup> when Bolivia will reelect a new president and administration. Will it go to the socialist party that was thrown out of office, after they committed widespread fraud in the November 2019 election? Or will it go to a more conservative party? The socialist party has already shown its violent side and promises that if they do not win, they will turn the country upside down with blockades and violence in the streets. We have already begun to stock up on food supplies, gas, and other essentials to survive the siege. And if the socialists win the election we can expect the blockades, and maybe some violence when the two sides clash. Sounds a lot like the political climate in the USA.

Satan and his demons sure are busy in North and South America. We must not be complacent, we must be praying for our leaders and our countries harder than ever before!

**Praises:** We can now meet in the Church building, God's protection while serving Him in this pandemic.

**Prayer Requests:** For wisdom for Sheila and I, our health, and that those who received the Word of God would find their way to the church. That God would continue to lead us to those He wants us to minister to. Pray for David, the young man who came to church on Sunday. And finally, about the new outreach in Tomatas Grande.

Thank you for your prayers and a great big thank you for your financial support of this ministry and for the special offerings for the food ministry during this crisis. God will give the increase in His time.

**For His Glory, Matt. 5:16**  
**Rick & Sheila Ackerman**