



May 15, 2019

Dear Prayer Partners and Family: Greetings from San Lorenzo, Bolivia.

I have been down with the stomach flu the last few days and now I am on the road to recovery. Sometimes I think this has to happen so life slows down a bit and we can catch up on correspondence. This said, here is our update to you so you can get a glimpse into our lives and know how to pray for us and the ministry.

Alvaro and Rocio are continuing to serve in the church and are helping us with the young people. We just recently started a discipleship level 2 with them on Tuesdays nights. This discipleship is a one-year commitment and it is an in-depth study of the Scriptures. This is our first time teaching this second level discipleship. Every time in the past when we thought God was raising someone up in the ministry, the devil came in and messed things up. It has been an overwhelming challenge for us in this area. Other pastors who know this area say, we are in a stronghold of the devil, after 12 years here I know this to be true.

This month a Baptist Church in the city, 40 minute south of us, started a music institute just for Christians, with the intentions that the students use what they learn in church ministry. Sheila and I, seeing the need for learning music, decided to take up the lessons. I am learning guitar and Sheila is learning piano. While I know how to strum the guitar, I am finding out I have learned a lot of bad habits and have a lot to learn. We are also learning to read music; therefore, music will be our third language.

You may recall that last year we had a couple's retreat. The theme was "The Art of Marriage". Going into this retreat, just in our small church 4 couples were thinking of divorce. One year later those couples are still together. Praise the Lord! On June 20th and 21st we are having another couples retreat, "The Art of Parenting." We have reserved 20 rooms at a nice 3-star hotel in Tarija and have faith God will fill those 20 rooms with 20 Christian couples and single mothers and fathers who want to be Godly Parents. Please pray that these families will forever be changed for the glory of God. There is an overall lack of education for parents here so we hope this will give them some tools.

The Political climate in Bolivia is tense. The current president is confident he can win again. Even though the constitution says he cannot run, he refuses to step aside and most Bolivians are fearful that Bolivia will become another Venezuela. If he wins the election, I believe things may be chaotic for a while and time will tell if the country follows Venezuela or if there will be an attempt to oust him. But if he loses the election and does not step-down, Bolivia will immediately become a hotbed of unrest as the people will not sit back quietly. Since independence in 1825, Bolivia has experienced more than 150 coups or attempted coups. This year's elections will be Oct. 20, 2019.

On a personal note, our oldest son, Brandon is on a 6-month deployment for a private firm in Afghanistan; and our youngest, Joel is on his way to South Korea for a year with the U.S. Airforce. Sharon continues to live and work in Union Grove, WI; and Nathan is studying and working for G.E. in Pensacola. Please keep them in your prayers as they make life choices.

**Prayer Requests:** Please pray for our health and encouragement. the new music institute and our classes; for the "Art of Parenting Conference June 20th and 21st; Please pray for Alvaro and Rocio as they learn to minister to the youth. Kid's Bible club every other Saturday at the stadium; that God would raise up qualified men in the church that could take on leadership roles, faithfulness and commitment of the believers.

**Praises:** God's Faithfulness and His Love for us, the churches and individuals like you, whom we would not be here without

*For His Glory, Matt. 5:16*

*Rick & Sheila Ackerman*

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