



May 21, 2017

Dear Prayer Partners and Family: Hello from Bolivia, but for some of you, by the time you read this we will be in the States. We are about to embark on our furlough fro 2017 in the Continental U.S.. We are anxiously waiting to see our families and visit with our Brothers and Sisters in Christ. Some of the hardest moments in being a missionary are the frequent goodbyes we have to make. But I am thankful that every goodbye is followed by a wonderful reunion. Most of our goodbyes are done here in Bolivia and Monday we travel from Tarija to Santa Cruz Bolivia and then on Tuesday we travel to Kansas City. Then on Wednesday we start hugging our families.

It has been a whirlwind of activity as we prepared for our trip. On the 3 of May we traveled over 1000 miles over mountain roads to attend the wedding of Santos and Elizabeth. They are the couple that will be watching the ministry and our home while we will be gone for 5 months. On our trip we took advantage of the time to visit several friends and fellow missionaries. We also went to Postervalle to visit a children's orphanage where our Bolivian friends are ministering. What a wonderful time we had with them and the kids. We also took two young ladies from our church on this journey with us, Sol and Yos. They were a blessing and were ready to minister at a moments notice, they ministered to the children through the puppets we took along and they did a great job.

On our return to San Lorenzo we did experience some vehicle problems and road problems. One section of road, which is 155 miles, took us 7.5 hrs to drive and we had to drive it twice on this trip. But we arrived home and were very thankful for God's protection.

Last week was another week filled with ministry. Aldo's grandmother passed away, she was more of a mother to him. Then the following day Mari Elena left her partner Sandro of 14 years with no notice and fled to Argentina with another man. She left Sandro and two wonderful kids, Oriana of 11 years and Alex Miller of 9 years. This week has been busy and a rollercoaster of emotions. But I want to share something with you that was incredible.

On Wednesday night, God gave me an awesome opportunity. We went to the very catholic viewing of Aldo's grandmother. The Bolivian Catholics call it a Velorio. At a velorio or viewing everybody's presence consoles the family. The family provides the food, drink (mostly alcoholic), cigarettes, and coca. There are always a few who stay all night keeping vigil playing cards, drinking, and doing coca. We do not participate in the religious ceremony or drink alcoholic beverages or do the coca. But we come for the family. That night Daysi, Aldo's wife, said to me, "no one has said any words or prayed, pastor you need to do something." Please realize we are in a very catholic society who looks at Baptist Christians as devils, so you can understand my reservation. Then 5 mins later Brother Aldo asked me to say something. About that time the catholic layman started in on the religious ceremony with a constant barrage of Hail Marys. After he was done Brother Aldo said its your turn. Still hesitant, Aldo's brother came to me and asked if I would say something now. Ok Lord, I got your message loud and clear, you sent three family members to me asking. So I asked HIM to give me wisdom and to take my fear away. The short of it is our Lord gave me the opportunity to share from His Word to give comfort and to share the Gospel to about 50+ people last night. Please pray his Word would work in hearts.

**Prayer Requests:** Please pray for the Santos and Elizabeth as they minister in our place ; for those who heard the Gospel at the funeral; a van for transportation; for Sandro and his children and that God would work in the heart of Mari Elena, The Mother's Day Outreach June 3", and our travels.

**Praises:** For God's grace and for your prayers and support. Please note. Our Stateside personal mailing address is; Rick and Sheila Ackerman 3916 N. Potsdam Ave. PNB 2470, Sioux Falls South Dakota 57104-7048. Our new Website, please visit us at [www.ackermantobolivia.com](http://www.ackermantobolivia.com)

*For His Glory, Matt. 5:16*

*Rick & Sheila Ackerman*

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