

LIGHTHOUSE HOLINESS MINISTRIES

Ministering in the Prisons of Mexico — Our Corner of God's Field

July 2016

Greetings from our corner of the Lord's field!

There are so many different aspects to prison ministry in Mexico. We regularly deal with the children and families of inmates, minister to the drug addicted and those in the infirmary, as well as evangelize among those outside the church. All of this is done while preaching, teaching and administering the Bible Studies to those within the church. One thing is for sure; we have learned not to be too surprised by anything.

Jesus Comes to Church Covered in Tattoos!

We have purposed not to minister in the prison churches any differently than we would in churches outside the prison. Some feel that you need to preach to the lost in every service, but a well rounded church needs a well rounded ministry. In the Reynosa prison, we have been "treaching" chapter by chapter through the Scriptures.

Recently, while ministering from the book of 1 Peter, I was teaching on being in subjection to government authorities. All through the service, I received "deer in the headlights" stares. I felt like my congregants were asking themselves, "What has happened to Bro. Gary, and who is this alien from another planet?" After preaching, I opened the altar. Before praying with anyone else, I went off to pray by myself for a few moments. While praying, all of a sudden I felt something brush against my legs. I looked down and there was a very large, muscular young man pouring his heart out before the Lord.

It isn't necessary to give details about the life this young man had lived, but suffice it to say, we were in a prison and he had run with the worst of the worst. This was also the first time that I had noticed him in our service. He was wearing shorts and everything that could be seen from his neck to his ankles was covered with tattoos. The left side of his body was covered with tats of "La Santísima Muerte" (The Most Holy Death - god of the cartels) and the right side with the Virgin of Guadalupe, the rosary and other Catholic symbols. He was definitely trying to cover all his bases!

It was an inspiring sight to see the battle that this young man waged and finally won. He was tired of the life that he had been living and came to church seeking "help from above." So, what is the first message he hears? Submit yourself to government authorities because all authority is of the Lord! This young man's name is Jesus and the Lord has done a wonderful work in his life. One indication of the change in his life was that he didn't stay away from church when his girlfriend came to visit. He brought her to church and led her to the altar! They have both been doing wonderfully and are faithful to the services.

An Inmate Returns To Minister

It is always a joy to see former inmates return to the prison when it is not a case of recidivism, and such was the case with Marcelino. He had given his life to the Lord and was actively involved in our Bible Studies when he obtained his freedom a little over 14 years ago. He returned a few months ago to Reynosa's prison with the intent to work with the men and women as we had worked with him. It is great to have him with us again because he can definitely relate to the inmates in ways that I cannot. One always wonders what has happened to these fellows after their incarceration comes to an end. It is good to see that not only has he continued on with the Lord, but he has been busy preaching the Gospel and pastoring a church in Reynosa. He is a wonderful addition to the work as it continues in the prison.

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For the LORD

heareth the poor,

and despiseth not

his prisoners. ."

Psalm 69.33

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Ambulance Finally Arrives At Reynosa Prison

We are happy to finally report that the ambulance that was purchased for the Reynosa prison in October, with much sacrifice from many across the country, has finally arrived at its destination. I drove the much needed ambulance back to the border after the Mission Conference in Roanoke, Virginia, in October; and for months we had nothing but difficulties trying to *donate* it to the government of Mexico. The requirements for donating the ambulance seemed to change almost every week, and we weren't sure if we were going to be able to deliver it. The problems all began when we questioned why there would be nearly \$4,000 in duty in order to donate it to the prison, an entity of the Mexican government. That just did not make any sense to me. It is a very long story, but with the assistance of the Lions Club of Mexico, we finally were able to see the ambulance parked in front of the prison. It seems that the head of the Lions Club is good friends with the head Aduana of importations. After waiting six long months, it took only a few minutes of conversation to get permission for a duty free delivery. We thank the Lord that it all worked out well. The director of the prison informed us that the week after its delivery the ambulance saved the life of an inmate by providing accessible and speedy transportation. Once again, thanks to all who assisted in this project.

An Update on Shaolin Sobrado



Many have asked recently concerning Bro. Shaolin and how he is faring since his release. Shaolin had been a member of the Zeta Cartel and the story of his activities and capture can easily be found on the internet. His capture (pictured above—left) made international news, but the Lord has done a wonderful work in this young man's life.

He was incarcerated in Santa Adelaida with several of his Zeta companions. After a short period of time, all of those who had been with Shaolin had died from unexpected "accidents"; accidental hangings, accidental electrocutions, accidental drug overdoses ...etc. God, in His mercy, had His hand on Shaolin.

Shaolin's family background was Pentecostal. His whole family is saved and actively serving the Lord and some are ministers. Shaolin was the black sheep of the family, but the knowledge of the Lord never left him. Shortly after being incarcerated, he gave his life to the Lord and immediately began our Bible Studies.

He devoured the Word of God completing over two years of studies in only a few months, and the impact he had on the prison staff and guards was nothing short of miraculous.

Due to the dangers Shaolin faced from the Gulf Coast Cartel, he was chained to his bed in an open cubicle that housed the prison power plant, as well as serving as the guards' break room. Nearly every week when I visited Shaolin, I would find him sitting with an open Bible witnessing to the guards about the Lord. As a result of his witnessing, five guards prayed and requested Bibles from us!

Shaolin stayed a little over a year before being transported to a Federal maximum security facility, and we had been praying for months concerning his situation because he was facing many years in Federal lockup. Though he was deserving of all that he was receiving, he was haunted by the pain and suffering that he had caused his family, especially his wife and three precious daughters.

There is no explaining Shaolin's release from Federal incarceration other than the mercy of the Lord. Though guilty of his activities and being held in maximum security, he was granted an unexpected release! He has returned home, reunited with his wife and children, and he is faithfully working in his home church serving the Lord.

I spoke with Shaolin before preparing this newsletter, and he wanted me to be sure to thank everyone for their continued prayers on his behalf.

Thanks For All You Do!

Words cannot express our gratitude for all the prayers and financial support we have received allowing us to continue ministering in Mexican prisons. This work could not continue without you, but we take great joy in knowing, that together, we will all reap the rewards in that final day.

Please continue to remember us and this work in your prayers.

From our corner of "His" field,

Gary and Brenda Morgan