

Carrying the everlasting Gospel to prisons in Mexico

August 2022

Greetings from our corner of "His" field!

As I pulled into the security checkpoint at the prison in Santa Adelaida, behind two patrullas of Mexican soldiers, I was reminded

once again of the volatile conditions in our area of Mexico. Traversing these roads on a regular basis tends to bring about a familiarity to one's surroundings and a sense of safety, but the constant sighting of the military is a continual reminder of potential dangers. The prison here at Santa Adelaida still maintains a military presence, though not as large now as it was just a few short months ago.

It is hard to imagine, but we have been ministering in these prisons now for over 22 years. It blesses our hearts to have seen all that the Lord has done. Even though during these past few years it has been difficult to minister in the prisons because of the pandemic, we are thankful how the Lord has given us favor with government officials. We have been granted the privilege to continue ministering even though the prisons are still operating under COVID protocols. There are no visitors permitted throughout the week at Santa Adelaida, and when I am there, I am the only non-inmate inside the prison that isn't a guard or prison employee. This is a blessing that I do not want to take for granted. The Bible studies also are still growing, with new inmates being enrolled seemingly every month. The change that takes place in the lives of many of these men and women is almost beyond words, *but at the end of this letter you will be able to hear the details of one of our students* (Alejandra - a lady guard), *and what God has done in her life*.

It is wonderful to see what God is doing in the life of Javier B. He was released from the prison in Reynosa a few years ago and has become my right-hand-man in Mexico. He is a very good preacher, adept and knowledgeable in the Word of God. I don't know how he is able to do all that he is doing. He is preaching some in the prisons of both Reynosa and Santa Adelaida on the weekends, as well as preaching a couple times a week in both the men's and women's drug rehabilitation centers in Reynosa. Right now, to my understanding, he is the only one permitted to preach in these rehab centers. He is also pioneering a church which is in Reynosa and only about a half mile from the Reynosa prison. About 20 people presently attend. He keeps up with all of this while living in Matamoros, ABOUT 55 MILES AWAY! Over the years, Javier is just one of many who have repented before the Lord, received salvation, grown in grace and knowledge, and then continued on to serve the Lord in ministry when released from prison. Though COVID restrictions may have put a damper on what I am able to do at the moment in Mexico, it hasn't stopped the men and women who have surrendered their lives to the Lord while in the prisons!

This is just a small testimony that was written on the back of one of the studies by José Luis Z.:

"Thank you, Pastor Gary, for these Bible Studies. They have been such a great blessing to me in order to grow and to mature in the way of the Lord. Here in prison there are but a few of us trying to apply the Word, and there is no one to give us spiritual encouragement."

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This is why our emphasis over the years has been with the Bible studies in the prisons. We have seen homes reunited, hardened drug addicts come to the Lord, and a few prison cartel leaders literally surrender their lives to Christ simply by reading the Word of God in order to answer the study questions.

The studies, that took us several years to create, are unique in that they contain no commentary. They are studies dealing with facts, details and events, with a question for approximately every 2 ½ verses throughout the Bible. There is power through the Word of God, and only through the Word of God can men fully understand just who Christ is and why He came to die for us. Regardless of the church affiliation, religion, or even if one were an atheist, these studies can be done without fear of religious bias. We have seen so many lives turn to Christ solely by the Holy Ghost taking His Word and performing life changing miracles. After all, He is the greatest Expositor of the Word since He is the pure inspiration for it! Many of you reading this letter have used these studies for personal devotions, cell group studies, and even Sunday School literature. We are so thankful for the testimonies that we have received over the years as to their efficacy.

We are now excited to announce that we have begun a new project with the studies. We have received several requests throughout the years as to the possibilities of doing them online. The process has begun of converting all the studies into editable, fillable PDF files so that anyone with a computer or smart phone will be able to do them online. Realizing that English is the international language of business and commerce and is spoken in every country in the world, we are working on the English first. Afterward, we will then proceed to put all the Spanish studies online. This is a massive undertaking. I want to openly thank Bro. Scott Asselin who is doing a great job as IT man. He is working on creating the website while I am doing the conversion of the studies. It is our goal to have phase one of this project completely up and running by the end of the year. Though you can't access it now the domain name has already been acquired: **godsword.study**. It is also our desire at this time that there be no charge for doing the studies. We intend this to be another avenue of missionary outreach and encouragement. Please keep this endeavor in your prayers!

Brenda, Joey, and I want to take this opportunity to once again thank you for your faithful prayers and support. Without friends like you this work in the prisons could not continue, and we do not take your partnership for granted.

A wonderful report concerning Alejandra a guard at Santa Adelaida



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The prayer of our men and women in prison:

Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise thy name: the righteous shall compass me about; for thou shalt deal bountifully with me. Psalm 142:7