



The Russell Family

Missionaries to Mexico

Nov-Dec
2017

SENDING CHURCH

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PRAYERS

PLEASE PRAY

- *Learning the language/culture
- *Safety
- *Church in Guayabitos
- *Sarah's health
- *National "Timothy"
- *The lost souls around us

Buenas Dias, mis Queridos Hermanos,
(Good Day, my Dear Brethren,)

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! The season of holidays have been in full swing here, and we are experiencing the Mexican way of how things work. I want to describe some of the holidays, for better understanding of the culture. Halloween as we already know is wicked and pagan, but it is brought to a whole new level here. Here it is called "Dia de los Muertos". The people will dress up like skeletons, with parades, and huge fiestas which last for two days. The whole tradition is to remember loved ones that have passed. The first day is to remember the children and babies, and the next day is to remember all others. They say that on these two days the loved ones get to come back for 24 hours and enjoy a meal with their family. Everyone prepares food and drinks for their loved ones, and they bring it all to the graveyard to be with them. They believe that spirits of their loved ones can feast on the aroma and smells of the meal. Afterwards, the families eat the food that has been offered to their loved ones so that they may all enjoy the same "family dinner" together. This is a way to invite spiritual wickedness into your home and lives, but of course they don't understand the concept of these biblical things.

If you did not know, Thanksgiving is an American holiday so they don't celebrate that here. We opened up our house for many of the people from church and hosted an American holiday for them. It was a great time of food and fellowship, and we really appreciated it since we couldn't be around family.

November also starts the HUGE annual festivals in each little town of Mexico for the idols or "saints" of those towns. In our town, the festival lasted for two weeks! The details of this is toting around ginormous eight foot idols through town, lots of food and drinks (especially alcoholic), with very loud music EVERY single night until 3am (I am not exaggerating on any of those details). We live a half mile from the plaza where everything is centered, and the music is so loud I can hear the individual words like it is in front of my house. The music was a different flavor every night: traditional Mexican, rap, rock, country, oldies, etc. The great thing about all of this is the opportunity to pass tracts. One night we passed out well over a hundred and fifty tracts in less than ten minutes. We also noticed that people were seriously interested and read them, after all they believe that they are celebrating for God.

Christmas is also a huge month long festival. It starts on December 12th in a festival to honor the Virgin de Guadalupe. Then there are daily festivities to celebrate the different saints called "las posadas." On Christmas Eve (la Noche Buena) the people get together around 8pm for fellowship, music, and fireworks until around 10pm when they serve a huge meal. Afterwards, you eat and do all the other things until midnight when it is officially Christmas. At midnight it is time to exchange gifts for the whole family. After the gifts are done, the people go back to music, fellowship, fireworks, and just hanging out until 3 or 4am. We were invited to celebrate Christmas Eve with another Christian family from the church and had great time until around 1am...I'm getting older and I have kids... Haha!

I had the pleasure of accompanying one of the men from the Bible institute, Miguel, to pass out presents to the different rehab facilities that he visits weekly. We sang hymns, gave gifts and cookies that Sarah baked, and preached the Gospel to those men and women that are at the lowest point of their lives. Some of them as young as 12 or 13 and in rehab because of their addictions. Praise the Lord we were able to see some people accept Christ as their personal Savior! God is GOOD!

We are getting ready for New Years, and I'm sure it will be another all nighter! In the meantime everything has been progressing great with the language, "culture shock", and everything else. There have definitely been some lumps, which just comes with the territory of living for Christ. My wife's back seems to have returned to normal, praise the Lord; but now she is dealing with another issue which is being treated. The doctors know us very well from the last couple of months due to various things: poisonous insect bites, my wife's health issues, different illnesses, etc. I want to fit all of this onto one page for your convenience, so I'll end with the many thanks for your prayers and continued support!!! I pray you find this helpful in understanding the culture a little better, and knowing the fight is still on down here in Mexico.

Brothers and sisters keep up the good fight!

God bless- *The Russell Family*
Adam, Sarah, Cristian, Kendra, Braden

3 story high stage for the idol



Kids marching an idol



Kendra passing tracts during the festival

