

April 1, 2012

Dear Ministry Partner:

Happy Easter! Mexico celebrates two weeks of Holy Week. The week before Easter and the week after Easter, many families go to the beach. It is their family spring break! I always wonder why it is called Semana Santa (Holy Week) and not Semanas Santas (Holy Weeks) since they take two weeks off for Holy Week???? Like many things here, I don't understand it, I just live in it.

It has been a very interesting three months for this spring ministry season. There has been an inflow of new ladies coming and going in my small group. I usually wait three months to see who is there to stay. At the beginning of the year, many women are enthusiastic to join a small group. Once they realize it means some type of commitment, some women choose to drop out. But that is the exciting part for me because I pray for God to only bring me faithful women. My vision for Mexico remains the same: To teach faithful women how to walk with God so that they in turn will teach others also. It is exciting to see the many wonderful things God has in store for the faithful ones.

Let me tell you the story of L. She came to my group for the very first time on January 10, 2012. She was invited by one of the faithful ones, Y. L.'s 18 year old son was gunned down by the drug cartels back in 2011. Y. and another gal from my small group, I., went to the hospital where L.'s son bled to death. L. was angry, bitter and sad over what happened to her son. Rightfully so!!! Yet, God used two faithful ladies, I. and Y., to share the gospel with her and pray for her. They kept inviting her to church and to our Bible study. L. finally came to church for the first time in January. I expected her face to be sad, angry and bitter from what I had heard about her. To my surprise, she was peaceful and quiet. I welcomed her to our church and invited her to join my small group. I reminded the other women that we needed to be very sensitive since one new woman coming to our group just lost her son. I've never had a child so I really have no clue of what this woman is going through, but I know God the Father lost His Son on the cross, and He knows what it means to lose a Son. Praise God, in the last three months we have been able to progress with the lessons, yet also have had time to cry with and pray for L. I am learning to balance the time so that we have one hour of study every week and at least thirty minutes of prayer time for each other. L. came faithfully for two months. She suddenly stopped coming in March. The two ladies Y. and I. tried calling her, but she did not answer. I prayed and prayed and prayed that she would come back. I was afraid she would decide to take her life.

After two weeks of no show and no word from anyone, L. came back. What a joy to see her! I knew everyone was happy to see her too! We all gave her big hugs and welcomed her back. I asked her what happened. She said, "I was depressed and did not want to talk to anyone." I told her to please keep coming and to join us on Sundays when we try to eat together. I gave her my home number and cell phone number and assured her that I have time to have coffee with her if she needs to talk and cry.

Coming home, I thought to myself... “What do I know about losing a son? What can I offer to this young woman who lost her son? What do I know about a marriage falling apart because they lost their first born? Nothing!!! I know nothing!!!” I thought of Acts 3:3 when Peter says to the lame man: “Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you...” I do have Jesus Christ. Yes!!! Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Life!!! I do have Jesus. Jesus knows. Jesus is my Shepherd. Psalm 23:1 says “The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want.” Peter did not need to be a lame man to heal a lame man. Peter had Jesus and had the power to heal the lame man because He was filled with the Holy Spirit!!! I too, can be full of the Holy Spirit and can have the power to heal this woman’s broken heart.

As you can tell, many times the weight of the women’s problems are beyond me. I cling to Ephesians 3:20 for this year, “Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us.”

Thank you for your faithful partnership with me so that I can invest my life in faithful women like Y., I. and L.

I flew to Chicago on March 17 for medical reasons. At this time, they are still running some tests to find out exactly what I have. I plan on flying back to Mexico on April 12 if all the tests turn out all right. Please pray for my medical insurance to cover all the expenses. Please continue to pray also for the Lord’s provision of a new/used car. My car fund stands at \$1,425. If you choose to give, please send your gift to Shepherd’s Staff (www.Shepsstaff.org) indicating that it is for my car fund. Thank you!

Sincerely:

Angie Velasco

