



### **GREETINGS FROM VENEZUELA**

Good afternoon from Venezuela. I have started this letter with the greatest of intentions about 4 different times to send 2 weeks ago, but our family has had a recent bout with health issues and doctor visits. We have spent the last 2 weeks going to doctor visits and doing tons of labs to help us determine what is causing our health issues. As I am writing this letter my wife has been complaining of renal pain most likely caused by a kidney stone or sand as they call it here. We are keeping a close eye on her. Thankfully we have 2 private clinics very close to our house. I recently passed through the very same sickness. I woke up on a Sunday evening with sever back and stomach pain. I came downstairs to lay down on the couch to not disturb my wife. The pain increased to the point it was almost difficult to breathe. I vomited 4 times from the pain and then the pain passed. I went the next morning to the emergency room and I spent three days with a pretty high fever. Thankfully, I have recovered from the kidney stone and currently I am trying to drink large amounts of water to flush any "sand" that could be left over in the kidney. My other kidney was clean and clear according to the ultrasound. Pray for wisdom with Sarah as well. She doesn't want to go to the emergency room quite yet, but we are observing her carefully.

### **SITUATION OF THE COUNTRY**

I don't think there are many missions strategy books that deal directly with what we are facing currently in Venezuela. We have seen so many people emigrate to other countries because of the current economic condition. People simply cannot afford the most basic of items to live. This tremendously affects the church as we have bid farewell to many believers who are now in different countries. Despite the situation the church continues to grow and we continue to see people give their lives to Christ. We are also seeing tremendous fruit through the intense discipleship ministry we have in our home. We have also seen a tremendous blessing recently where my co-worker had been looking for a house as he and his family have been living in a metal shack. He has wanted to have room to have discipleship in his own home but has not been able to because of his living situation. Recently, a sister in Christ made the decision to leave the country and told Gustavo that he could live in her home rent free and that he could use the home for God's glory. She will return in the future, but she has made it clear for them to feel at home and as long as she is away This is a tremendous blessing and a tremendous help to have another location where we can continue our intensive home discipleship. This is truly the hand of God because currently a whole chicken costs more than the minimum wage. Gustavo would have never been able to purchase a home, but God saw fit to provide through a sister in Christ and we are so thrilled for him and his family.

### **TRANSPORTATION SITUATION**

A huge thanks to all who have helped us with our vehicle situation. We have been able to purchase 2 Ford Explorers for our family. One my wife uses to bring the kids and music instruments home from church and the other I use to bring people to church. We were very wisely advised to specifically go with Fords because of the availability of parts and also because we found a tremendously good and honest mechanic (something that has taken some time). We were strongly advised in this direction as well because if we would have bought one much newer vehicle, there may not have been the availability of parts and mechanic. God wisely provided wisdom in this situation as security is a tremendous necessity with the current situation of the country. We also were able to purchase a ministry vehicle for Gustavo and his family (a 70's model Jeep Wagoneer) which has been a tremendous help to the church and has helped us not be in the streets so late taking people home. It has been an added security benefit for our family.

### **VISAS**

We would appreciate your continued prayers. The man who was supposedly helping us turned out to be a fraud and never turned one paper in. At first it was a shock and a frustration, but we have simply chosen to trust God and His timing and start over again.

#### **Please Prayerfully Remember:**

- Starting our visa work again.
- Our protection!!!!

*The Sykes*