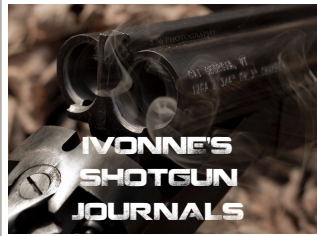


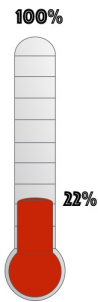
MIGHTY WARRIORS

"CHILDREN DO NOT STOP THE PLAN..."



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NEWSLETTER

MIGHTY WARRIORS!!!

When we were putting out our last month's newsletter, God had me write an excerpt on our children and I didn't know when we were going to use it or share it. When talking about our next newsletter James began to tell me, "I think we should write it on how the kids are doing and what God is doing in their lives!" How cool is that? God is always doing things like that and confirming what He wants to get said or done! So here it goes...in case you were wondering, our kids are doing great!

People always ask- how are the kids doing? What have they been up to? We think their stories are just as important as ours! They are mighty forces for the kingdom, and the Lord is using them in mighty ways as well!

I am constantly in awe of our children! They are so flexible and easily adaptable. It wasn't always this way. The Lord has put many circumstances in our lives to help them see that God is good, He is always faithful, and always cares for us and is with us! With God's guidance and wisdom, we have been able to guide our children on having personal relationship with the Lord and trusting Him more. And the training and guiding continues in that area! We have included them on this journey, opened up the forum to put out all our fears, desires, and apprehensions on the table, and then crushed the lies and replaced them with truth and what God wanted to do in our lives. All of our lives! "Let's go on this adventure for Jesus" we told them "and let's do it together."

HOW ARE THEY ADJUSTING?

They have adjusted so well to living in Mexico! Sure there has been the occasional hurdle with the heat, the bugs/mosquitos, the food, and attempting to fit into a totally different culture. It isn't easy trying to make friends when you're the new guy, let alone in another country, and you don't know the language. But they've been able to do it! I truly believe God knows His perfect timing for everything. Any younger and our children may not have adjusted so well. Any less life

experiences back at home, and they may not have learned and been able to apply certain life lessons! Our children are very outgoing. They are confident, loud, silly, and full of life! They are very much like their parents! They are able to make friends wherever they go and influence those around them in mighty ways. Although not perfect (just like us adults), God uses them and wants to do a work in and through their lives just as much as ours.

Since here, our kids have embraced their new surroundings. They want to know everything about everything, especially the boys. They are complete boys wanting to discover, hunt, and figure out how to do everything and how everything works. And our landlord has enjoyed teaching them and all of us all the secrets to the trades. The kids have gone fishing a few times and learned how to net catch and clean fish (we have yet to go deep sea fishing for larger fish! That's next!); they have learned how to take care of chickens; James Jr. has even learned how to properly kill and clean a chicken; they've released baby turtles back into the ocean and they've gone crab hunting on more than one occasion; they know how to open coconuts with a dull machete to get to the heart of them (this yummy soft spongy center of a coconut), and they have also learned when fruit is ripe enough to pick from the trees in our yard. They play soccer in the dirt, ride their bikes to school, and come home to do chores like washing clothes by hand and hanging them to dry or sweeping the dirt that constantly comes into the house. It's amazing to watch them adjust and be joyful doing it!

Over the last six months they have made friends with many local kids in their school and the pueblo and constantly play and interact with them. They have also befriended some of the young adults from our Spanish school and young bible students from the base. If they are not playing fútbol with the local kids by our house, then they are usually playing volleyball with the young adults and bible students by the base. Throughout the week but especially on weekends, our house is full of the neighborhood kids and sometimes the young adults from our Spanish school. James, Leilani, and Jacob push themselves to learn and speak the Spanish language, and we have really seen them both step out more to speak and accelerate with communication. As they have learned more of the language, it has become easier to be able to communicate better and develop relationships. The little girl who lives upstairs from us has even asked us and the kids on more than one occasion not to move because she'd miss us too much (as we would them)! Recently, our kids were even asked to help an English teacher who wanted them to come and converse with other local pueblo kids once a week in English to help them practice. And they were more than willing.

They are very fortunate to have each other. Our kids have always been close, a team, a force to be reckoned with...the Cadena Clan. Although they have the normal disagreements, we've never allowed for bad attitudes to stay or strife or complaining spirits to linger. It's always been an opportunity to better their relationships and unite. They have each other's backs and stick together, something that we think is even more key coming on the field. We know they will look out for each other and also hold each other accountable.

They are always finding more ways to show the love of Jesus, extend a helping hand, and work hard in all they do, including working on the themselves! It is something the Lord has helped us as parents discern and train them up in, and here in Mexico, it is simply another level of training to bring forth more of who they are called to be!

And where God is calling us, God has showed us, even way before we got to this point, that our children will be serving and ministering even more and being even more of a force for Jesus. It is not just a calling on our lives but on theirs as well!!

GOD WANTS TO USE YOUR CHILDREN

Parents: God wants to use your children! He wants to use them and in mighty ways. He wants to grow and refine them! He'll put them in situations that will test and stretch their character and shape them! And if we as parents let them, these situations can help our children as we guide them, according to how God shows us, so they will grow from them. Grow in character, grow in faith, grow in identity of who they are! The Lord has already placed gifts and abilities in them, and, as parents, it's our job to help and encourage those giftings to rise up and correct where they've gone wrong! It's our job to speak life and purpose over our children, and not as we see it, but as God sees it. Jesus says suffer the little children to come to me and forbid them not! Let them come to Him! Let them know their loving Heavenly Father personally! Let them depend on Him- not man! Let them know He cares for them and can be trusted; that He has a purpose and plan for their life; that their identity is found in Him; and that they are fearfully and wonderfully made by a God who does not make mistakes!! Let them rise up!

We think our children are wonderful and rightly so! They are wonderful! Amazing in fact! And we can see all children in that light! Working in children's ministry has grown that vision in us, His vision of how The Father views all His children. We choose to see the giftings in any child past all the flesh because God gives us eyes to see that!!! We call children mighty men and women for Jesus, mighty warriors, and we encourage you to do the same in your children! Call out who God says they are because that is who they truly are and who they will become!!!

INDIVIDUAL GIFTINGS TO BE USED FOR HIS GLORY

Children are so unique, made with individual, purposeful characteristics! All of our children each have amazing hearts but expressions of their hearts and their gifts come out in different ways!

Did you know our Jacob lays hands on people and prays over them? He's even been receptive to receiving words from God and has given words to people already at the age of 9. He is fearless for Jesus and is not afraid of rejection. He also has a worshipper's heart- so pure and all out for Jesus! When he worships, it's like him and Jesus are the only ones in the room. Did you know that James Jr. took his first mission's trip to Mexico at the age of 9 after God confirmed in his heart he was to go? James has a gift for leadership and a gift with children. They flock to him, and he has this amazing God given ability to love, teach, and make them laugh. He's a natural born entertainer and a natural born leader. He is strong both physically and mentally, and we know God wants to use him to help lead and raise people up and assist the weak and the helpless! He already jumps at the opportunity to lend a helping hand, and when he puts his hand to something, he is determined to do it well! Leila has a love for Jesus and telling others about him...she wants the world to know him! She has a soft heart and yet a strength to take charge. I see her empowered and doing/speaking great things for Jesus! I believe as her confidence builds in who she is and her identity in Christ, she will be able to encourage others in their own God

given identity! She also has an amazing voice and a heart to worship! She is constantly walking around with a song on her heart (and lips)! All three of our oldest children are in their own little worship band, each learning a different instrument. And Zoë Grace- well she's got the favor of the Lord on her life and the joy of the Lord in her heart! She is full of life and everyone flocks to her! We are so thankful and honored we get to be these precious ones parents! I wholeheartedly believe we as parents are handpicked to raise the children we are blessed with! Remember that! There can never be a better parent for your child because you were handpicked by God!

We have told our children from the beginning of this journey, you are not missionary's kids, you are missionaries! God called us all to Mexico to serve! Because He wants to use each of us and our giftings to further His kingdom!

CHILDREN DO NOT STOP THE PLAN

After going home from our short term visit to Mexico, and after us saying "yes" to going to Mexico, we found out I (Ivonne) was pregnant with Zoë! When I first found out, I was excited but thought, how are we going to do this? I can't go to Mexico with a newborn! That's crazy! Rof!! I can't get ready for Mexico. I have to get ready for a baby. But boy is His grace sufficient for me!! And I had to seek the Lord on this! Lord did we hear wrong? Should we wait longer? Is this no longer the "plan?" And God has ways of giving you peace to so many questions in one simple response. I remember the word God gave me, and it has been something that has never made me think twice about Mexico, His timing, or what God wants to do with our children! He said, "Having a baby (and having your children) does not stop the plan I have on your life, it enhances it." And that was it! Yes it does! It enhances it in ways words cannot explain. It multiplies the love of the Father to not just my husband and I but to our children who not only get to experience this love but share it with the world!

Please Pray for us...

- Pray as we step into all He has for us.
- Pray for our kids (and for us) to continually put on the full armor of God!
- Pray for protection from any attacks or schemes of the enemy and that we will each guard our hearts and be alert!
- Pray for our trip to the border to renew our visas- for safety, wisdom, and provision every step of the way.
- Pray as we have our first team coming in to help minister to the surrounding areas. We will be with them on their endeavors to both minister to the people and translate.

* Click Here [Giving Opportunities](#) to go to our website's giving page.

* Click Here [Shotgun Journals](#) to visit Ivonne's perspective of the journey.