



Jackson Neighborhood Saturday Sports Ministry

Greetings Sweet Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

We are frequently asked by others, "so what is that you guys do in your ministry?" Our ministry is fairly simple; it basically involves sharing our life with our neighbors. And because Christ indwells us, the sharing of our lives naturally involves a sharing of Christ.

Some of us are called overseas and into the far reaches of the world. And all of us are called to love one another as Christ has loved us; love one another in the very zip code that Christ has planted you. Love when you wait in line at the grocery store, love while you are getting your haircut, love while you are at the park and by this, others will recognize you as a follower of Christ (John 13:34-35).

Okay, so now for the hard part of our ministry. Sometimes people are hard to love. And people take time. Time away from family, time away from rest, and time away from our plans. One of my own personal obstacles is this, time. I don't struggle with saying "no"; I struggle with surrendering my time to God. We recently heard a radio pastor say, "if you can trust God with your eternity, why can't you trust Him with your time?" And that truth shot straight to my heart.

Most of you don't have a "ministry" but you have a life and it is meant to be offered up to God, for your good and His glory. As we heard someone recently explain, "don't think of it as going on mission, think of your life as being on mission."

What is keeping you from surrendering your time to serve your Lord wholeheartedly? As you bring that response to the Lord, will you also offer up the following prayer requests to Him?

Because He First Loved us,

Cesar and Terry Rios

Prayer Requests and Updates for August 19, 2018

It's been a while since we sent out a prayer newsletter and even though we don't connect with all you directly, we've missed you all!

The LORD has been abundantly kind to our family this past summer. Not only did He provide the time away and restorative rest that many of you prayed for on behalf of our family, but He also taught us on a deeper level, that rest is not so much an activity or lack thereof, but rather rest is a Person; and His name is Jesus Christ.

We are learning to love our finite nature as we learn to sit and rest in the lap of the Infinite One. As someone who has dealt with pride long before I even knew it was a sin, it has been a surprise sweetness to become small as Christ increases in me. And of course, as many of you can testify, the process of dying to self is quite painful as well.

But our God is faithful, and in the toughest of sanctifying seasons and trials, He shows us that the blessings He provides during the storm are not simply gifts outside of Himself, but they are His very nature; He is The Refuge, He is The Rest, He is The Peace.

Dear One, what keeps your weary soul from experiencing Christ as Rest? Are their things that you have convinced yourself would need to change or improve for you to be at peace? Perhaps those things that you have been wishing or praying away are the very instruments that God will use to draw you closer to Himself, if you would just step out of the way.

As you ponder the above with the LORD, will you also take time to join in praising and praying to God for the following updates and prayer request of our neighbors.

Jackson Neighborhood Prayers/Praises:

Desiree (update): Thank you for praying for Desiree who has been struggling with the temptation to drink, especially first thing in the morning, at noon time and at midnight. She is doing so much better and is overjoyed with a new job that God provided at Coalinga State Mental Hospital. Please continue to keep this young mom in prayer, especially for her faith.

Maria: "Please pray that I can get a job and for my car situation, it got wrecked. I am also planning on helping a friend do Bible study at the ladies' county jail, just waiting for the finger prints and background check." (Many of you have also prayed for Maria's struggle with depression; she is doing better with her mental health as well, praise God).

Zoila, 16yo: Please continue to pray for our Zoila who started her sophomore year at Roosevelt. Her first week of school was rough as she was placed in the wrong classes;

she should be in classes that meet her severe learning disorder. She is a bit discouraged. Her mom, Maria, is not around to help her as she is receiving chemotherapy in San Jose. Zoila is currently living with her sister.

Rios kids update: We cannot praise God enough for how kind He has been to our Isa and Mateo. Both started new schools, Isa at Computech (7th grade) and Mateo at Baird (5th grade) and both had a *very* sweet first week of school. They are connecting well with new friends and teachers. It is especially sweet to witness our kids appreciate the many resources at their new schools while also being grateful for the way that God provided during their time at Jackson Elementary. Our God is abundantly good! Please continue to pray for our babies, especially for their faith and for them to make godly connections at their new schools.

Cesar and Terry: Please pray for Cesar as he prepares to begin a new season as a School Resource Chaplain at Jackson Elementary as well as being part of the Good News Club team at Jackson; both roles will start up again in September. It is an especially busy season for Cesar as he balances his roles at Jackson, his job with the Fresno Police Chaplaincy and extra driving now that the kiddos are attending new schools (he clocked in over 200 miles the first week of school!). Terry enjoyed a lot of time off from her job at Kaiser; please pray for grace and favor as she attempts to make changes to her work schedule to help Cesar with school transportation. Please also pray for Terry as the 3rd year anniversary of her mother's death approaches (September 29th); this anniversary is already feeling a bit heavier than last year.

Saturday Sports: We will be kicking off a new season of Saturday Sports at Jackson Elementary on September 15. We would love for you to join us as either a regular volunteer (you don't have to play sports to help!) or in any other capacity that the LORD is leading you. We are especially trusting for God to provide an individual to lead the craft during Saturday Sports. Please respond to this email for more information.

Because He First Loved us,

Cesar and Terry Rios