



THE WORK GOES ON!

Greetings from beautiful Whitwell, TN. We are excited about what God continues to do in Venezuela. We have been in constant contact with the church we left, and it is so exciting to see disciples continuing to make disciples. Just this morning, I was able to challenge and encourage the pastor's wife by Whatsapp. They are about to begin Vacation Bible School very soon. God has opened up tremendous doors for ministry within the community. Given the political and economic climate, people are notably more receptive to the gospel, especially when they find no hope in the current situation they are facing. Within the cultural context, ministry to children is a massive door of opportunity to reaching the whole family. Many times an adult will not come to church because of traditional religious beliefs or superstitions. Often when their children participate in a church activity, they will come to the closing ceremonies, which give a tremendous opportunity to reach them with the gospel. As you have probably perceived in previous prayer letters, not only am I excited about the evangelistic opportunities, but I am excited to see the church complete the Great Commission through discipleship. We worked hard in our ministry to "teach them to observe all things," and it is so exciting to see them continue the process.

STAY TUNED

When we left Venezuela in March, our immediate plans were to return as soon as possible. Unfortunately, the situation has not improved at all. Just this morning, I was reading news stating that the United States is considering an embargo with Venezuela in hopes of forcing a change of regime. Unfortunately, the corruption runs deep, and there doesn't seem to be a foreseeable end to the political, social, and economic problems. The infrastructure, as well, is completely collapsed. They continue to have hours of blackout every day. As we began to evaluate the situation with cool heads and with a tremendous amount of counsel, we saw the possibilities of returning begin to fade. But God is never surprised by circumstance! Even before our departure, He started to orchestrate things in the background. As we were packing to leave Venezuela, a missionary in the Dominican Republic wrote to us and asked us to consider ministry there. My initial response was asking for some time to get our family back to the U.S... After our arrival, God continued to work on our hearts, and we began a series of video interviews to discuss how we might fit into the ministry picture there. One of the things impassioned our hearts was the strategic location of the Dominican Republic with regards to Venezuela and Cuba. Although ministry in these tumultuous countries is challenging currently, the Dominican Republic could and would be a vital point for training and outreach internationally. The desire is to start a seminary with the vision of training Latin American leaders and giving them the spiritual tools to reach their countries for Christ. We love evangelism, discipleship, and church planting, and that would continue to be fulfilled in the Dominican Republic.

NEXT STEPS

What is our next step? We are asking God to provide the funds to take a survey trip very soon. We have begun the process of selling our belongings in Venezuela. When we left the country, we left our home intact anticipating a quick return. We returned home with six backpacks and three military bags. While Venezuela is still a significant part of our life, we realize that it is currently a logistical impossibility to return due to a lack of paperwork. There is a sizable Venezuelan refugee community in the Dominican Republic. While our first ministry would always be to the Dominicans, the opportunity for international outreach and spiritual networking is incredible. In an era where it is increasingly difficult to minister in places like Cuba and Venezuela, we could minister from the outside in by preparing believers to reach Latin America for Christ. We are excited and are praying that God will soon provide the necessary funds to take our survey trip. Will you commit to pray with us? If God lays it on your heart, would you consider partnering with financially to make the survey trip a reality? As always, we are thankful for your prayerful and financial investment. May God richly bless each one of you!

Please Prayerfully Remember:

- Prayer for the financial needs.
- Upcoming Survey Trip

The Sykes

671 CC Road ~ Whitwell, TN ~ 37397 ~ 423.290.2706 (stateside cell)
venezuelajason@gmail.com ~ www.sykesfam.org ~ www.biomissions.org