



going, then he knocked out 8 feet of base (pic) that was going further and further into church property. He asked us to forgive him for his anger, and so did his daughter. I asked that she would kindly explain to our mission board what happened since she went so far as to tell them we were robbing her land. She said she would, and I hoped for improvement. However, she did not clarify anything with them but rather accused us further a few days later, so we continue to have to work with her and our conciliator. Pray this will be resolved with confession and repentance so she can see God's blessing in her life.



She hired several unsaved men from one family, and she hired Jonatan. She put Jonatan who is young and inexperienced as the supervisor of the older, experienced men because he is a brother in Christ. He let it get to his head, and the others became jealous to the point of beating him up (three against one) in front of our church. I let him in and had Hannah lock the door while I stayed outside and calmed the others down.

I was able to calm them down for a while, but since a lot of whispering went on between her and Jonatan in front of them, they believed he was taking vengeance and talking trash about them. One day while I was headed out, a neighbor girl asked me where her bike was. Our kids had been playing musical bikes, so we looked for it for a while but couldn't find it. I told her to check her grandpa's cameras to see where the bike ended up. I assumed it would be quickly resolved. I didn't hear until the next day that the the police had showed up and that the builders threatened to kill Jonatan. They believed that Jonatan not only called the police but also the cartel to deal with them supposedly stealing the bike. Stealing is punishable by death as far as the cartel goes. I went to try to clarify it with the builders and offered to be a witness to whomever was needed that I had asked for the cameras but with no intention of incriminating anyone. This problem is also only half solved.

Only two weeks before, when I opened the church door in Arandas, a shirtless man barged in all beat up and bleeding. He pleaded for help and said they were coming to kill him. I only had five minutes to talk before those that sought him came knocking at the door. They were dressed as police and heavily armed but had skulls instead of shields on their vests. They did not do anything to me or even enter the church; they only asked some questions and left. I had previously told the man that if they came he needed to run and not tell me where. The thing that most bothers me is that I could only share a tiny bit of the Gospel before they arrived. I hope he found the salvation of his soul.

On the bright side, Valley Baptist Church of Virginia donated enough money to finish the church roof! So while the drop tower goes up and down, we will continue to build.

We also have made some leeway with brother Cesar and hope to have more good news in the next letter.

I have had to remind myself of Biblical promises to keep myself sane. I literally cringed every time my phone notified me of a text because I didn't want any more bad news. Psalm 112:7 especially is helping me: "He shall not be afraid of evil tidings." The psalm teaches that if you fear God (v.1), you wont fear anything else. Learning this is helping me in the present trial.

Riding the drop tower and holding on to His promises,

Rolando Ortiz and family

