

Newsletter Date  
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# Familia de Dios

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## Delegating Monday Night Classes

Monday nights we go to the Grado's (a family from the Sherman Ave.) for another young people's Bible class. This evening class is especially helpful because we use that time to talk about very relevant problems and issues going on and things we need to work on. It's more of a spiritual workshop than Bible class. However, even though I was fully aware of the value and worth of the class, I never enjoyed doing them. It was one more class. It takes about 5 hours from picking people up to taking them home. In short, it was a lot of responsibility and hassle on the one day that I try to get some rest. But, putting the need of the class over my own, we continued doing it. Things have recently changed though. Now I enjoy the class much more.

## Election Day Study

This year we had another long study on election-day. It's a good opportunity because all of the kids have off of school. About 20 some kids from NY/ NJ showed up.

The theme of the class was heaven. We spend a lot of time telling our kid the demands and expectations God has for us. But being a good Christian is hard, and living in this world is extremely hard. We wanted to spend some time talking about the reward God has for us. I taught a class about the troubles of this world, and how heaven will be our salvation from them. Roger also spoke about why we need to work so hard to get to heaven. We also spent a lot of time singing hymns.

The reason is because I'm no longer the one in charge. The first step was Bill Sanchez teaching a couple weeks for me. Then he started getting others to teach as well. Now we are at the point that Bill is in charge of picking who leads songs and who teaches classes. I just pick kids up and take them there. Then I get to be encouraged by the worship led by my young students. It's an awesome feeling. I get so proud seeing them step up and take charge of their own spiritual welfare. This is great testimony of how much they've been growing lately. So far Bill Sanchez, Gary Peralta, Anthony Payero, Kelvin Arias, and Chris Santana have all taught. They've been good and encouraging lessons. It has also given the other students a chance to speak up in class more. Since the teachers have less to say, there is more time for comments. Over all, it's been one of the

Another valuable part of that study was it helped us get back to taking our worship seriously. We've had a lot of new kids coming to church since last year at summer camp. It's been a challenge. Some of them have taken things very seriously and grown closer to God. Others still don't understand or care as much, but they enjoy being with friends and learning about the Bible some, so they continue to come. After a while, the integrity of our worship was hurt by the abundance of those that didn't deeply care in their heart. We used that time to tell the whole class the importance of worshipping God, how much it means to us, and how discouraging it is when others ruin it by being disrespectful. It was a serious but gentle exhortation, and it was taken well. I think many of the kids didn't see how much they were affecting the worship. Once they were honestly told, they have been more respectful and worship has been very encouraging once again. I'm thankful for that.

## Weekly Classes

### **Sunday:**

Attend teen class at Sherman Ave. Take kids to Washington for worship and teach teen class afterwards.

### **Monday:**

Take kids to Bible class at Rosie's.

### **Tuesday:**

Study Mat with Chris. Study II Cor with Kelvin. Teach I Corinthians for Sherman teen class.

### **Wednesday**

Study Mat with Christyn & Alysha. Visit Aida. Study Hebrews with the Cruz boys.

### **Thursday:**

Study Mark with Grace. Study Mat with Carlos & Mercedes. Teen class at Sherman Ave.

### **Friday:**

Study Mat with Suweena.

### **Saturday:**

Study with Mat Ibys. Study OT with Carol. Drive kids for two classes in Fairlawn, NJ.

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## Christian of the Month



December's Christian of the month award goes to Michelle Sharp. Michelle has been a core member of the UWM Church of Christ for over five years. She is a schoolteacher, but spends a great deal of time working for the Lord. She often goes to evangelistic trips and has even traveled to Samoa. Here in NY she has taught multiple women's Bible classes. She is also very active in working to get Christians together to spend time as a family (which is a hard thing to do in this city). She is often carrying a load of Christian responsibilities and seldom receives the reward or respect that she deserves. In my eyes she embodies what a servant of Christ needs to be. I'm very thankful for Michelle and all of her hard work.

## Happy Birthday Genesis

It might seem a little weird to write about a birthday party in my report, but then again, what's normal about anything with my evangelistic work here?

As you may or may not know, Genesis is the best person in the whole world. She was the only girl attending the classes at Sherman Ave. when I first started teaching and she was my first real friend in NY. Now she's 16. Crazy. In Spanish culture it's custom to make a big deal about the 15<sup>th</sup> or 16<sup>th</sup> birthday. And believe me, it's a REAL big deal.

The court for the party was made up of a bunch of kids from church. They've been getting together for several times a week rehearsing for hours to prepare for the production the night of the party. It's been very time consuming and not spiritually based in and of itself, but it's had some real positive effects. We've been so busy that we've been growing apart and divided somewhat. This party got everyone back together and we've had some real good quality time together. Everyone is very close again and these relationships are so important in keeping us encouraged and faithful. It's good to live and act like a real family. The party was a lot of work for everyone, but we all kept saying, "It's only worth it because it's for Genesis."

## II Chronicles All Day Study

I've been working on my next all day study. I've chosen II Chronicles. It is full of many stories of kings that start off strong and close to God, but end falling short. It's an intimidating book. How could Solomon be so amazing, and then so wicked? How could Asa become so prideful? How could Joash kill the prophets? I'm very proud of my kids and the growth that has been made, but this book reminds me that two or three years is a blip in someone's life. We have a long spiritual road ahead of us, and we need to be aware of the many dangers and threats lurking ahead. I hope to place some fear and humility in our hearts so we see the importance of trusting in God ALWAYS.

I'm also using a lot of visual aids charts and even animation to help teach. We will be covering a large portion of text so I hope that these visual aids can help my study be more interesting and efficient.

## Upcoming Trips

There's a lot of traveling this time of year, but I'm excited about some real good trips coming up.

First, I'm going away to MN during this December. That's strictly for vacation.

When I get back, Emily and I are packing about 15 teens in a van and heading to Indiana for Gary Fisher's lessons on the Gospel of John (I'm super pumped about this).

At the beginning of February I'll be going to South Carolina to work with a group of young people in that area for the weekend.

After that weekend I'll be attending the lecture series at Florida College.

I need to teach and edify others a lot, but I sure do love when I have some real edifying lessons that I get to listen to in the future. It's good to be encouraged.

## Teaching the OT

One of the first series of lessons that I've ever written and taught is my OT survey leading up to Jesus Christ.

It's the first series of lessons that I taught my kids at Sherman over two years ago. Since I've taught it to Leah Ann Dement, Bill & Kelvin. I'm finishing it this month with Anthony Payero, and Carol Funez. I will start studying it with Melissa this coming month.

It is such an essential and often overlooked series of classes. Sometimes we think that people will become Christians just by hanging around Christians and hearing good moral teaching. Yet the Gospel is so much more than just the best moral teaching on earth, it is years of history, prophecy, and fulfillment. It is a love story that has inspired millions of stories and films being produced to this day. Ever watched Star Wars? We love those stories, and yet, we convert people to Christ when they don't even know the whole story (PART 1 as well as part 2).

I get such satisfaction reviewing the OT for three weeks with my students. I admire how much they retain. How much more they understand. In fact, I'm a bit envious. It's so good to know the story from Adam to Jesus. Make sure all those whom you are accountable can tell you in sequence all the highlights from Gen to Mat. If not, do something about it!