



# THE Rasnake Family

## Church planting in California

Sep. – Oct. 2011

Dear Faithful Supporter,

Fall has officially arrived, and here in Merced, California you can see it in the air. It has been a wonderful couple of months learning how to effectively minister in this new area. The end of October and the first of November, we discovered more about the role of a pastor. Throughout the last couple of months we have had the opportunity to teach an adult Sunday school class. We recently had our first Sunday school class activity. It is amazing to think that in just a couple more months we will have been here for half a year. Time flies in the work of the Lord.

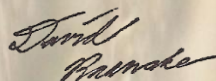
Here in Merced, California, Fall is marked by a haze in the air from all of the harvesting that has begun across the central valley area. Because of all the particles in the air, this stirs up respiratory and allergy problems for many people. We have learned that asthma affects a much larger percentage of the children in the valley because of the pollution in the area. A recent article listed the Top 10 Dirtiest Cities in America in terms of pollution; four of the top ten are within a two hour drive of where we live. Eight of the cities on the list are here in California. Here in Merced the unemployment rate is around 20% and poverty can be seen around every corner. Each week on visitation we see the “Jehovah’s Witnesses” knocking on doors in many areas of the town. The Mormons and the Catholics are also very dominant religions throughout the city. While on visitation I have discovered that the people seem to not have a middle ground. What I mean is that when you ask about salvation the people respond one of two ways; they are either very open to talking about salvation or they are quick to cut you off and say, “It is none of your business”. For most people, they are open to talk about it but still closed minded toward God. Much of the work is done through building personal relationships. Please pray that God will open up and develop these opportunities to be a testimony and witness for Christ.

The end of October and the first of November led us through a whole new world of experiences. During this time, we were responsible for taking care of everything at the church while the pastor was gone. We were very thankful for another family in the church that was able to work with us during that time. I was able to preach both Sunday night services, while Bro. Root preached the morning services. We were able to alternate leading music during these services as well. During the first Wednesday night service, I was suddenly found without a music leader or a piano player because of work conflicts. God showed me both the responsibility as well as the flexibility that is required to be an effective pastor. God helped us during the services and allowed us to have a wonderful time studying His Word. I am so thankful that we were able to help the pastor during this time and that God allowed us to get a better understanding of the ministry.

In the adult Sunday school class, we have been studying the last half of the book of Matthew. It has been a wonderful series and has shown us many things about our life as well as how we as Christians interact with the world around us. Through this series I have learned that many of the people in our class still do not have a firm understanding on what they believe and why. Please pray that God will give me wisdom and guidance as I gather material together for our next series on ‘Our doctrinal belief.’ I believe that this is one of the weakest areas in a Christian’s life today. As the world grows darker, we must understand what God teaches us to stand upon. Please pray that God will teach me how to teach each lesson to effectively and compassionately proclaim the truth of God’s Word.

Thank you for your continued prayers and sacrificial giving as we strive to serve the Lord here in California. We wish you a happy Thanksgiving and a wonderful Christmas on the Lord’s Day.

Reaching California,



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