

Cuernavaca News

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Dear Ministry Partners:

Last week I went to a Rosario (Rosary). A regular attendee of my Bible study, (I.) asked me to come to a Rosario which I found out was a Catholic prayer meeting for a dead loved one. One of her friends, (M.) suddenly died at 40 y.o.. (M.) was in the hospital at 4 a.m. on Sunday March 21, had her baby at 4:30 a.m. and was dead at 7 a.m. due to hemorrhage from child birth. I barely know (M.) but because (I.) comes regularly to our church and to my Tuesday Bible study I went.

The whole time, the prayer leader begged for God's mercy. There were times when the prayer of, "Our Father, who art in Heaven, hallowed be thy name," was mentioned. Some of the prayers that were said were, "Oh Mary, mother of Jesus, have mercy. Oh, Jesus, Son of God, have mercy." There was an altar of flowers, photo of the dead loved one, candles and ribbons to decorate the place where the Rosario was being said.



Sample photo of an altar for the dead (from <http://www.questconnect.org/images/cemaltar5.jpg>)

During the Rosario, the leader was reading a prayer and the guests responding with, "Oh, have mercy." My mind was able to identify some of the lies the enemy puts in a culture like here where I live. One of the biggest lies I was able to identify was that the people who are grieving the loss of their loved one can beg for God's mercy to save this dead person's soul. Scriptures teach us that we are all sinners (Rom. 3:23) and that because of God's love and mercy He sent His Son to

die for our sins (John 3:16). Each of us is responsible for our own sins, to repent from them and to believe in Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior. Believing in Jesus gives us eternal life. (John 1:12, John 5:24).

After the Rosario, I asked the ladies if they wanted to have coffee. We went to a nearby coffee shop. One of the gals that came is a non-believer and we started talking about how tragic the death of (M.) was. I could not help but mention Mary as her name was mentioned many times during the Rosario. The prayer leader kept repeating, "Oh Mary, mother of Jesus, have mercy!". I casually mentioned that Mary, mother of Jesus was also a sinner. Oh boy! Did I cause a stir!

The non-Christian raised her voice saying, "How could God choose Mary, mother of Jesus if she was a sinner? How could God choose one unrighteous person to be the mother of God?" I suddenly found myself in deep waters. Virgin Mary here is considered almost equal to Jesus. I realized I probably made a mistake mentioning this but I defended myself with Romans 3:23 saying that "all men are sinners". Mary, mother of Jesus was a human being and therefore a sinner. This non-Christian gal kept insisting, how could God choose a sinner?" I led her to read John 4 where the Samaritan woman, who also was a sinner, was chosen by God to witness to a whole town. She could not believe that God would use a woman who had had five husbands, but really not married to any one of these men. I mentioned that God is free to choose whoever He wants to choose, not because these people are righteous but because God is merciful. The Lord chose the Jews as His chosen people not because they are righteous, but because God is free to choose whoever He wants. I had no clue how I would get myself out of this discussion but by God's grace, one of the gals that comes regularly to our Tuesday study started talking calmly to this non-Christian gal explaining who God is.

I kept my mouth shut the whole time. I have realized many times it is best to let the gals in my study share, and for me to just listen and add Scripture to defend their statements.

It was almost 10 p.m. The waitress came with our bill and I ended up saying, "We will pray for you." Now this non-Christian gal said, "Why would you pray for me?" Oh my... it seems like whatever comes out of my mouth is now met with all kinds of resistance. I just said, "We will pray that you would know God." She said, "But, I know God!" I said, "that you would know the God of the Bible personally." She said, "Oh, OK." I kept my mouth shut from the restaurant to the parking lot knowing I might cause another stir.

In my car, I prayed that the seed sown in this non-Christian gal's heart would not be sown in vain. I thanked God for giving us the opportunity to share and how exciting it was to see two ladies from my Tuesday group share their faith. I asked forgiveness from the Lord, for not being wise in being critical of Mary, mother of Jesus. Truth is Truth. Many times when people hear the Truth, it hurts! May God give me wisdom to always share the Truth in a loving way.

As always, thank you for your love, prayers and support.

Happy Easter!

**Please send gifts to Crossroads Community Church.
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Kindly designate gifts for A. Velasco- Mexico.
You may donate on line by logging on to www.angievelasco.org, go to
"Get Involved" and click on the donate button.
Thank you.**

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John 15:5 "I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing". Pray for me to daily abide in Christ. Thank you.