

FOR THE ONE

We have been living in San Francisco for a whole year now! I knew from experience that church planting was never a perfectly planned out thing but this has just been crazy. Haha. Nothing went according to plan this first year due to all the Covid-19 shut downs. Actually when this first happened I said to myself, "Just set a date that is so far out from the original Easter date that things HAVE to be reopened by then." So the date I set was September 20th. LOL. And...SF is still not open completely. But God knows and His plan is ALWAYS best. He also doesn't need me to fulfill his plans. He can make his will true without me, and that is a good lesson for me to learn as I grow in reliance and patience in the Lord.



Kelsie, Hali, Yulita, and Madelyn celebrating Yulita's birthday.

However, I can already see some of God's plans. 1. It has enabled us as a family and our team to become more entrenched in the culture of San Francisco. This enables us to better understand the needs of the city and the people we are ministering to. 2. It has given our team time to deepen our relationships. This was huge. I told them Covid was a grace because if we had launched on Easter I do not think we would have survived as a team. God has given us the time to really grow together in Him so that now we are strong enough to minister to others in unity. 3. God has done an amazing work in my heart....

The truth is I had no idea how much pride I had built up in my heart. One of the testimonies I shared while on deputation was that I had originally gone into church planting with a 'I got this' mentality and that God sending me to a hard field like San Francisco was a way of breaking that pride down. Well, him not allowing us to launch the church and exploding all my plans into a thousands pieces was just a continuation of him breaking my pride. Now I have to look myself in the mirror and admit that I have NO IDEA what I'm doing. I know that is a weird thing to admit to your supporting churches, but honestly I don't care. The ONLY way this church is going to survive and thrive is if God does the work. I no longer hold the notion that my skills or my abilities can somehow force God to act and will a church into existence. This is God's work, it is his church, and I am just simply his servant. The master makes the plans, the master has the power, the servant just obeys. I am ready to just faithfully obey, and let the Master lead.

You know we say many times in our churches that "If we just reach one person for Christ it would be worth it." I think we say that because Jesus gave the example of leaving the 99 to go after the One. I am thankful that God has already used Branches to reach the one...and more. Kelsie (one of our team members) was able to lead several of her students to the Lord last year. These are inner city kids that had no prior gospel knowledge and now have experienced the life change in Christ. This year I was able to lead a couple teenagers to Christ as well. One of my students just let me know a couple weeks ago that it was last year at the end of one of our classes that she accepted Christ as her savior. God is amazingly good.

And then there is Yulita. Yulita is an Indonesia woman who immigrated to SF 20 years ago. Although she was already saved she had been out of church for a long time. God connected us with her and she has become a faithful member of our church family. She tells us almost every week how this church has changed her life.

God has allowed us to reach the one. And we believe God isn't finished yet.

We Would Love to hear from you!

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