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Dear brethren in Christ,

Greetings from upstate New York! December brought us a lot of snow, but January was quite mild in comparison. Now, February is kicking the snow machine back in gear and it feels again like a typical winter. Since my last letter, my wife Sonia completed her round of 20 radiation treatments to the tumor in her chest. She did very well with no significant side effects. She will have a scan of the area on February 22nd to see exactly what effect the radiation had. The doctors are hopeful that the cancer tissue has been terminated. We visit with her radiation doctor on February 24th to get the results. We appreciate so much your prayers for her. We know they make a difference. Prayer has sustained us these 6 1/2 years that Sonia has been dealing with recurring cancer. Her confidence and hope in the Lord is strong. We are thankful for the many blessings from God that have come our way in this difficult time.

About my health: I've been having some colon discomfort related to my Crohn's Disease. Sometimes I feel really well, then other times I don't and become fatigued. I've doubled my medicine, and that seems to help. It's something I have to live with, and frankly, it's better than a lot of other ailments. I rarely talk about my own health since Sonia's health issues are more severe. But I would appreciate your prayers as well.

Speaking of prayer, I'm working on a series of lessons on prayer to be presented later in 2017. I've learned some important things about prayer these last few years from God's word. Our circumstances have made us think more carefully about the subject. I'm always excited to dig deeper into God's word on any topic, but this one is special to me. So far, I have 8 working titles: 1) The First Principles of Prayer; 2) Prayers that Properly Praise God; 3) Talking to God in the Best of Times; 4) How to Pray in Times of Adversity; 5) Confessing our Sin in Prayer; 6) Prayer and God's Providence; 7) Prayers that Work for Spiritual Growth; 8) Prayers Necessary for Evangelism. I feel these are necessary to consider when addressing the subject. What a great privilege we have to speak to the Almighty God through His Son!

The congregation here that meets in Canastota is doing well. Our attendance number remains just below 20. Outside of the "core" families here, there are a few who struggle to remain faithful and committed to the Lord. Our efforts lately have been trying to strengthen some of these weak brethren and help them overcome their discouragement. One of them has recently repented and recommitted himself to serving the Lord better. Last Sunday we had a visitor from the community who found us online and wanted to learn more about what we are doing. Our neighbor regularly attends our Wednesday evening Bible study in our home. Our Friday morning Bible study in Cicero continues. So, good things are happening.

Since Sonia is doing so well after her radiation treatments, I am able to go to the Florida College lectures next week. She will stay home with our son Joshua (who, by the way, turned 16 and got his driving permit). I am taking David Barry (one of the members here) with me to Florida for his spiritual encouragement. If any of you are going to lectures, please look us up. We would love to see you. It will be great to see my son Samuel who is attending school at FC, and to stay with my brother Brian who teaches there. I'm happy that Sam is very active in one of the congregations there in Tampa; he preached there last Wednesday evening.

We are so very blessed. We are blessed beyond measure. The Lord has done so much in taking care of us physically and spiritually. We rejoice in His name! Brethren, you are a great blessing to us. Your fellowship and friendship mean a lot to us. I pray we can see you soon. We love you!

Your brother in Christ,