

THE BOZEMAN REPORT

January/February 2021

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Then Jesus said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men." (Mark 1:17)

To the relief of many, 2020 has come to an end! For us, it came to a screeching halt with a bout of COVID for 3 of us, but thankfully we were all able to overcome the virus and have returned to good health. It did mean that we arrived back home a few days later than we anticipated from our trip east, and that we did not have the opportunity to see brethren we had hoped to visit with.

We returned to a very busy time here in Bozeman. While we took a bit of time off from some of our regularly scheduled studies over the holidays, they were restarted at the first of the year. I have been amazed and encouraged by the many folks from all over the world that have joined in with us in at least one of our weekly studies. Some have been attending more than one. We have had some very good discussions, and we are hopeful that even if these are people who are in other places, we will have opportunity to pass their information on to local evangelists when the time is right and they are looking for more local studies in scripture.

I am continuing a study in the book of Acts on Friday mornings. We have, recently, been talking about the work of Philip the Evangelist in Acts chapter 8. We have been having a couple from Vermont join us pretty regularly, but something has deterred them for the last 3 weeks. I really wish they could have been in these last studies, as we have spent considerable time covering the role of baptism in God's plan of salvation. Jim and Marianne Leach have had one in-depth study on the topic of baptism with me and Dale Pennock (who is located near them in Vermont). We are supposed to have a second study with them on the topic, but that has been delayed by them for a few weeks. It appears we may have to push them more substantially to make a decision to talk about this important subject. I have the feeling that they are hesitant to do so at this point because they are, as they have stated, very "vested in their church." Please continue to pray that they would respond to the message they have found to be true in the scriptures, despite what it will so obviously cost them. As I have stated before in these reports, I believe if we are able to convince Jim and Marianne, and they respond favorably to the gospel message, then most likely their son whom I have been trying to work with since we came here will also accept the truth! This feels like very much of a "domino" type moment.

We have had another interesting couple join our studies the last few times. They are a husband and wife who are living in different locations due to college and immigration issues. The gentleman (Sterling) is currently living in Utah, while his wife (Allison) is living in England while finishing up University. They are currently trying to make plans for her to move to the US, where they are hoping to be able to start a home in Montana. Sterling is Crow Indian, and so they are looking at moving over into the eastern part of the state, which will make working with them in person a bit more difficult, but may actually put them closer to the small group that is in Ranchester, WY. Sterling seems to have a very good foundational understanding of scripture, so we are looking forward to continuing our discussions with him and his wife.

We have also had several other visitors join in our study both on Friday morning and Thursday evening. We've had folks from Alabama, Kentucky, West Virginia, Canada, and South America...and probably a few I am forgetting. Zoom provides a good medium for these studies, and certainly brings in people that we would never have had opportunity to study with. However, I am still most excited about the locals with whom we have been able to continue to have studies and discussions. Having reach is great, but Christians always have

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Average Attendance:

Sunday: 20

Wednesday: 18

a month or so until we wrap this one up and start the next. While we have not made a definitive decision, we may study the book of Genesis in this time slot next.

For the last few reports, I have told you about my uncle, Ray Hall, who was battling cancer. Ray passed on from this life to his eternal home on February 18th. Justin and I were able to fly back to West Virginia for the funeral and to spend some time with family. While it is difficult to lose someone close, I am thankful that his suffering is over and that he has attained his reward. Please continue to pray for his family during such difficult times.

I am currently making plans for another trip for the Exton Two Day Study in the middle of April. This year, due to COVID the arrangements have been altered a bit, and we will be meeting up in Elmira, NY, rather than Exton, PA. Travel arrangements have been a bit more difficult to get set up, as all of the reasonable airports are smaller than our regular destination of Philadelphia. Lord willing, Jacob and I will leave here on Sunday, April 18th in the afternoon and arrive back home on April 21st. I look forward to these studies each year, though it definitely feels like things are going to be a bit different this year. Most significant (and the thing we will miss the most) is that we won't be staying with Patricia Miozza and enjoying the comfort of her home, and the wonderful environment of visiting with her and the other men who stay in her home during the week.

Let me close by conveying my thanks for your interest in our work here in Montana. We appreciate the financial support, the prayers, the cards, the emails and words of encouragement that you all send our way. We continue to see great opportunities, and good things are happening here in Bozeman. May God's kingdom be expanded, and God glorified!

the greatest impact on those who are in their communities!

We have occasionally had some of you from churches that are interested in our work join us in these online studies. It is always good to see you, and we enjoy your participation and encouragement. The link to join is: <https://zoom.us/j/5523936848>. We start these studies at 7:00 on Thursday evenings, and 10:30 on Friday mornings. These are, of course, Mountain Time. Pop in some time and join us!

I am getting close to wrapping up the series of studies we have been doing on "Walking Worthy of Your Calling." I have enjoyed leading these discussions in our Bible study period on Sunday mornings. Most recently, we have been discussing the types of relationships that we as Christians should have with those who are in the world. Far too often, Christians allow friendships with the world to drag them away from their commitment to Christ. I probably have about 2 more lessons planned to complete this series of studies. While it could potentially go on indefinitely, I feel like it is time for us to move on to a different study. We will probably still have about