



Dear Brothers & Sisters,

In Bible class last week, we studied Romans 16:1-16 where Paul asks the Christians to greet certain people. We focused on the “workers” listed in these verses – how the work of Christians often goes unnoticed but that Paul makes a point to commend them and be thankful for them. As I studied through these verses, I thought of many of you. Thank you for being workers for the kingdom. Thank you for being “a patron of many and myself as well”. Thank you for those who were “in Christ before me” and set an example for me and my family. Thank you for your encouragement and prayers. Greetings!

Work of Evangelist

Lately I have been preaching sermons through 2 Peter. In one lesson early this month, I was preaching about Peter’s warnings regarding false teachers. I discussed how they often twist (or pick and choose) Scripture to offer special knowledge or to teach something new. Later that evening, I met with someone who was a victim of just such teaching.

Edgar reached out to me stating he was looking for Christian fellowship. Before we met, he shared some of his beliefs with me, which allowed me to think and pray about how I would respond. He and his wife have been a part of a religious group with very different teachings about Jesus – specifically that Jesus is not God and that he did not exist before his physical birth (except in God’s foreknowledge). When I met with Edgar, we read through Col. 1:15-20. As you know, this Scripture tells us that Jesus was in the beginning and that he created all things – which shows that Jesus existed before his physical birth. We also read John 1:1-18 together, where John explains that Jesus was in the beginning with God and was God. Edgar read to me from a book in their religious teaching, explaining how these verses did not show that Jesus was God nor that he was the creator. It was obvious that the author was pulling these verses out of context or not allowing simple grammar rules to explain what is meant in the text. The author even stated that someone will try to say these verses are talking about Jesus being the creator, but that it is not true. I explained that I was not saying it – the apostle John and the apostle Paul were saying these things to be true. I’m thankful to the Lord that Edgar and his wife had humble hearts to see God’s truth. We are planning to meet again to continue studying through the Scripture. Please pray for them as they continue to seek God. And pray for me to have wisdom as I study with them.

Personal

Our December ended quite a bit differently than we had planned. We had scheduled to visit Texas for ten days at the end of the month and were looking forward to seeing both of our families and many friends. We were also planning to meet with several churches that help support us in the work. However, the day before we were to fly out, we found out that my Dad had contracted Covid and was pretty sick. Since we were planning to stay with them and wouldn't be able to see them while we were there, we decided to cancel our trip. We were saddened that we didn't get to go, but we are hoping to reschedule within the next couple months. Thankfully, my Dad is recovering and my Mom did not get very sick.



Great Bennett Baking Competition!

Since those plans were changed, we were able to join some of the Christians here for a holiday gathering on the 23rd. Our family enjoyed a quiet day together on Christmas Eve, and we had our third Great Bennett Baking Competition. We each baked shortbread cookies but were able to change up the flavors with anything we had in the house. Flavors included pumpkin chocolate, orange cranberry, lemon rosemary, and more. Then, we all voted for who had made the best, and Sarah was the

big winner! Christmas Day, the Cook family invited us to their home for dinner and games. So although it wasn't the holiday we had anticipated, it was still filled with fellowship and love.

Another personal note – we have added a new family member to our household this month (and of course it's another girl 😊). One of our dear Christian sisters, Vanessa, moved in with us while she finishes up her doctorate degree at Worcester Polytechnic Institute. Vanessa is such a bright light wherever she is. She is a great “big sister” for all of the girls. They truly love her, and we're thankful for this time that we get to share our home together. We know that Vanessa will be a blessing to our family while she is with us, and we hope to be a blessing to her during this time of transition in her life.

To God be the glory in all that He has done!

His Servant,

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“Sister” Band with Vanessa