

PRAY FOR THE HEBERT FAMILY

MISSIONARIES TO TORONTO, CANADA



Dear Pastors and Praying Friends,

March – April 2020 Update

Thank you so much for your continued support. The crazy world we're living in now has made things all the more difficult. We don't take your faithfulness for granted. The world changed on us faster than we had ever expected. At the beginning of March, things were moving along quite well, I thought. We were moving along nicely teaching on soul winning in our teenIMPACT program. I was even starting to see some very encouraging things happening in the discipleship of two of our teen guys. Paul, one of those guys went soul winning with me one Friday night and watched me witness to a Chinese man in the cold for 45 minutes or so. He never complained or fidgeted around to show his discomfort. The man didn't get saved, but when we got back into my van, Paul said to me, "That was really good! It's just like Pastor said, 'Trust and obey.'" I was so encouraged by that interaction and his excitement over the process of witnessing. In an interesting twist that I never saw coming, that same young man, Paul, got saved the next day after admitting to me that he wasn't really paying attention when he first heard the Gospel many months ago. There has been some confusion over the "Sinner's Prayer," so I had him pray in his own words. He prayed a powerful prayer of faith to call on the Lord to be saved. These developments had me riding on air; however, COVID-19 hit and put a bit of a monkey wrench into our plans. We have not met as a church since March 12.

From the time we found out we couldn't meet at the school we rent until today, we've been doing everything online. Pastor Johnston and I have had to increase our knowledge of online stuff more than I ever thought we'd have to. Two months ago, I had never heard of Zoom, but now I have a very good working knowledge of it. Two months ago, our church was posting small clips of messages on Facebook to draw people to our website, but now we're not only livestreaming services to Facebook but to YouTube as well. In some ways, we are reduced in "attendance," and in other ways, we've had Gospel preaching go out more than ever.

In some ways, we've struggled with some individual efforts to reach our teens, but in other ways, we're seeing growth. In teaching on soul winning, I challenged the young people to find 10 prayer warriors who would pray for them to have boldness in witnessing. I thought this would be tough with the quarantine in place, and I even said as much to them, but one of our young men suggested that we already had enough to meet that challenge right in our own youth group. That day, all the teens and my wife and I committed to praying for boldness in each other! Our teens seem to be catching a burden to reach other teens in the Greater Toronto Area, and that has me encouraged. Yes, I've been teaching on soul winning, getting a burden for souls, and redeeming the time that we have left before Jesus returns; but to hear them, of their own accord, say to me and each other, "We need to go after more teens when this virus clears" is very encouraging. The camaraderie amongst our teens is very good, and I thank the Lord that this trial has brought us closer together as a youth group and a church.

Are there challenges to all this COVID-19 stuff? Absolutely. We are not immune to the discouragement of it all, but I'm seeing the sun start to break through on the dark days we've seen. God is doing things; we just need to open our eyes. Liz and I recently finished implementing an idea that I found on Facebook; we left each of our neighbours a card offering our services to help with grocery/medicine pickups, prayer, urgent errands in case they were self-isolating. We included a Gospel tract and a church invitation with each card. (Email me if you'd like a template to make your own.) No one has yet to take us up on the offer, but we're praying that through all of this, we can see souls saved and God glorified. Please pray for us that what God has taught us in tough times will not be wasted because better times are returning.

Pressing toward the mark,

Brian Hebert



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