

November 2021

Dear Praying Friends,

I hope you'll forgive me as I skip over the typical preliminary greetings. The last two months have been some of the most blessed and difficult of any we've experienced here in Dapitan. God gave us a tremendous conference in October, our people are continuing to grow in a wonderful way, and our new Bible institute students are doing great! However, we have faced extraordinary battles for every inch of ground that we have gained! Thank you for your prayers; you don't know the difference that they make.

Our First Pastors' and Workers' Conference

I could not begin to tell you everything God did through our first pastors' conference. Our theme was "The Tools of the Trade," and we were able to give the 24 pastors in attendance many practical ministry tools, including study materials, English/Cebuano songbooks, Cebuano Bibles, and a Cebuano translation of *How to Study the World's Greatest Book* by Pastor Allen Domelle. God really blessed the services, and many pastors told us that they are going to come back next year. I was so proud of our people throughout the entire conference! In spite of illness and every imaginable obstacle, they maintained a good spirit and worked diligently all the way through.

Health Concerns

I would like to ask you to pray for the health of our church right now. I think it would be accurate to say that more than two-thirds of our people have dealt with some kind of illness in the last month and a half, and close to half are still sick now. At our house, only Ruth has escaped unscathed. The rest of the family, including myself, are still battling with a flu of some kind that has absolutely swept through our church over the last several weeks. Fortunately, most of our people had COVID-19 back in July and August, so we don't have to worry as much about that possibility this time around. That being said, we would really appreciate your prayers right now.

AJ (Andrew James)

One of our greatest concerns over the last couple of months has been for our five-year-old son AJ. For those of you who haven't heard, for six or seven months now, we've noticed that AJ's heart will often begin to race with little or no stimuli. At first, we didn't think much of it, but eventually, we realized that we would need to get him checked out. We took him to a pediatrician and then to a pediatric cardiologist. Multiple scans and tests later, the official result is that he doesn't have a heart problem, so some other factor is causing his heart to race. We have been referred to a specialist in Cebu, a large city on another island, but I won't be able to travel until I am fully vaccinated for COVID-19. Realistically, we are looking at going to Cebu sometime in January. Fortunately, for now AJ is on a very safe medication that helps regulate his heart rate. Though not a real solution, it is helping to contain the symptoms until we can figure out the real problem. Thank you for your prayers. I hope this letter doesn't come across as dark or depressing. God is still good. He has a plan. Everything is going to be alright, but please pray.

Dividends on Your Investment

Have you ever noticed that some of the greatest soul-winning opportunities seem to come at the worst possible times? I had one of those opportunities on October 11, RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE of our Pastors' and Workers' Conference.

The story actually began the day before on Tuesday afternoon. Just hours before the opening night of the conference, the secretary for my attorney texted me and informed me that we needed to pay a sizable sum as a part of our property registration and that it was due the following day. They said that they needed the money in the morning so that they could make the payment in the afternoon. If we failed to make the payment by the end of the day, we would be penalized. Now that was a problem! We didn't have the money on hand, and the bank had already closed for the day. We were getting ready to start a full-scale conference, and we wouldn't be able to go to the bank until after the Wednesday morning service! We would have to withdraw the money and then take it to the attorney's office about 30 minutes away in a neighboring city called Dipolog. Hopefully, we could get the money there early enough for the attorney's assistant to make the payment before the end of the workday. So, that's how I found myself driving 30-plus minutes to Dipolog City in the middle of our first Pastors' and Workers' Conference, desperately hoping I would make it there in time.

When I arrived in Dipolog, the transaction went smoothly, and the attorney's assistant was hopeful that they would be able to make the payment in time. As it turned out, they did. However, my day was far from over. During that same time, I was also helping to plan a memorial service for one of our faithful men who had contracted COVID-19 in early September and passed away less than two weeks before the conference. After dealing with the attorney, I decided to call the man's wife and try to schedule a time for the service. While I was talking to her on the phone, I walked away from my motorcycle to a shady area under some nearby trees. As we talked, I walked back and forth under the trees. When the call ended, I looked up, and two young men were sitting in the shade no more than 12 feet away. I greeted them in Visayan and offered them both a tract. I had NO intention of witnessing to them! I was scheduled to preach the first message in the evening service—the evening service that was *rapidly* approaching, I might add. Nevertheless, in spite of my schedule, God wouldn't let me just walk away! I argued, but God won! I began sharing the Gospel with them. They were so incredibly open! They just needed someone to clearly explain the truth of salvation by faith in Christ. About 20 minutes later, I was heading home on my motorcycle, rejoicing that even in the midst of a crazy time, God can arrange amazing divine appointments. In the busyness of the moment, I failed to write their names down; but, praise God, they're written down in Heaven!

Yours for souls,


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Missionaries to the Philippines

"For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries." 1 Corinthians 16:9