



*Enjoying Brunch with Hermanus Bible Church*

***“And we proclaim Him ...” (Colossians 1:28-29)***

Dear Friends,

May 21, 2024

Debbie and I want to quickly update you before the busyness of hosting a Shepherd's Conference overtakes us next week. Upon returning from the Shepherd's Conference at Grace Community Church in late March, our lives and ministry hit another gear. There has been much to do to prepare for next week's Cape Town Shepherd's Conference. Thankfully we have had some help and have delegated several responsibilities to others who gladly volunteered! Most of the work, except for the conference itself, is done and we now await May 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> with a men's breakfast scheduled for June 1<sup>st</sup> and use of the speakers in various churches on the 2<sup>nd</sup>.

The speakers for this year's conference include Dr. Brian Beidebach from The Master's Seminary, Dr. Carl Hargrove from Grace Community Church, and Dr. Steve Swartz a Master's grad and pastor from Bakersfield, California. As well, three of us from the Berean Bible Institute will be doing seminars in the breakout sessions.

As an added bonus, Grace To You has graciously donated 200 books for us to give the men who will be attending this year's conference. Because we needed the books well

before the conference, Grace To You had them shipped air cargo. I know those who attend the conference will greatly appreciate Grace To You's extreme generosity.

Our other ministries continue as usual with the addition of Debbie and I starting a young adult's study in our church once a month to reach the growing number of young adults. We had our first study 2 weeks ago with 15 young adults, ages 18 through 28, in attendance. We had a wonderful time of sharing a meal together before opening up the word of God as I led them in a first in a series on Knowing God's Will. When that series is finished, I hope to begin a series on how to develop a biblical worldview to help them navigate the many moral hazards that face us all.

For her part, Debbie just finished a series from the book of Philippians with the ladies at Everglen Baptist Church. Her teaching has been well received and has opened numerous opportunities for her to advise and counsel several of the women!

We continue to assist Mile and Rudi in the coastal town of Hermanus, 70 miles away. We recently spent a long weekend there so we could minister. I spent several hours on Saturday with Mike and Rudi discussing their ministry and talking through some of the issues they are facing in their part of vineyard. Then that evening we had a time of fellowship with them and their wives as we gathered around a wonderfully prepared dinner! On the Sunday I had the privilege of preaching at the church and then enjoying a Mother's Day brunch at the church.

If time and space allowed, we would love to tell you about a recent ministry opportunity in Khayelitsha (one of the largest black townships in South Africa) and another opportunity at the Stellenbosch Bible Church (SBC). We have ministered at SBC many times in its 8-year existence. It was so encouraging to see how much they have grown and how gospel vibrant they are!

Debbie and I are grateful for the strength and health afforded us to be able to avail ourselves to all the ministry opportunities coming our way. Amid all this, I have had to fight to carve out some time to keep plodding away at my PhD dissertation. I hope to finish the first of three long chapters by mid-September.

As Debbie and I evaluate the year to date, Acts 14:21-22 resonates in our hearts and minds where it says of Paul and his missionary entourage, "After they had preached the gospel in that city ... they returned to Lystra and Iconium and to Antioch, strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying, 'Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God.'" To this end, we remain committed to strengthen and encourage as many as we can while we can.

Thank you for your prayers and partnership in this strengthening and training ministry God has given us in the greater Cape Town metropolitan area.

Yours for the Master's Use

*Mark & Debbie Christopher*

### Praise and Prayer Prompters:

- We praise the Lord for all the ministry opportunities God has given us and the strength that is commensurate to the task!
- We praise the Lord for using Grace To You to help the upcoming Shepherd's Conference with 200 books for the men who will be in attendance.
- Please pray for next week's conference, May 30<sup>th</sup> & 31<sup>st</sup>, as well as the men's breakfast on Saturday the 1<sup>st</sup> of June.
- Please pray for the 15 or so young adults we are now ministering to. Some of them are in college while others are beginning their careers. Pray for their growth and their faithfulness to Christ as they seek to circumnavigate an increasingly more hostile world.
- Please pray for continued strength and health to do what we are doing while maintaining balance in all of it.
- Finally, please pray for South Africa as the country heads to the polls next Wednesday in the most pivotal election since 1994. Recently the ruling African National Party signed a "Hate Speech" bill and a nationalized health care initiative — all of which will be tested in the Constitutional Court over the course of the next couple of years.



*Preaching opportunity in Khayalitsha Township Good Friday Morning*