



The Harris Happenings



11 Year Anniversary

and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also. 2 Timothy 2:2

June

UPDATE

Dear friends and family,

One of the areas of teaching that we go through in discipleship class is called: “Inductive Bible Study.” The basic principle is to make **observations** regarding the particular passage of Scripture we are studying, **interpret** the meaning of the text, and then make **application** to our lives. I am really grateful to some friends of ours who shared a book with us, sharing this method of Bible study in such a simple and basic (and even culturally appropriate) way. We were making a lot of progress, learning to go book by book, chapter by chapter and verse by verse. This was working very well for us here, where a lot of the pastors don't have computers nor do they have commentaries or other tools to help them study the Scriptures. But one of the challenges I am finding, is that these men don't understand Bible words. For example, as we came across some of the introductory greetings of the apostle Paul's writings, he refers to himself as a “*bond-slave*” of Jesus Christ. Some versions of the Bible simply say “*servant*” while others may say “*bond*

servant.” This does not seem/sound like it should be such a big deal, right? However, to most of those pastors/people that I am working with, a servant is simply someone who works for another...and receives some form of payment for their labors. There is this big misunderstanding/misrepresentation/misinterpretation, that the Lord’s work is a business opportunity for health, prosperity, and wealth. So, this translation/interpretation of this particular word works well for what they would like it to mean; for themselves and for others. But actually, Paul is referring to being a **slave** of Jesus Christ. My Bible translation says “*bondslave*.” Paul is referring to himself as a slave to His Master. He is not working for pay - but rather he has been bought and paid for (by the blood of Jesus Christ). He loves His Master, and loves serving His Master with his life. It was really eye-opening for them to see and understand the word from this perspective.

It is good for us all to remember that we have been bought with a price. Jesus Christ bought me with His own blood, out of the slave market of sin. This life no longer belongs to me-but to Him. He is my master - I am His slave. My identity is no longer found in my own personal talents, failures, gifting, shortcomings, etc...my identity is only found in Jesus Christ.

Please pray for these men (and for me too) as we all grow in knowledge of the Lord and understanding of His Word. And please pray too, that we would learn to look to the Lord for our answers. It can be hard to put faith into action-actually acting on what we say we believe. We know with our heads that we have the Wonderful Counselor, the best Teacher, and Guide, and His very Words...to “rightly divide the Word of truth” - but do we really believe that is enough? We still sometimes feel like we need more: commentaries, internet, books, programs, etc...none of which are bad in and of themselves - unless they are taking away from His ultimate authority in our hearts, minds, and lives. Please pray for us all, that we would really believe in our hearts that He is willing and able to teach us and change us.

I want to share with you about another way in which I have been encouraged recently...which goes hand-in-hand with the first part of this letter. Apart from the consistently faithful few men who make it to most of our meetings, we also often have those who drop in every now and then. We are glad of course for anyone who wants to come anytime, but this also means that they miss out on most of the teaching times. This

kind of attendance happens in each of my 3 groups-but the other thing that is also happening lately (in each of my 3 groups) has been quite encouraging. I am seeing the “faithful few,” be the ones to take the initiative to try to explain to the visitor the answers to his questions and comments...from Scripture. Just this week, a man came to class as a part-time visitor, as we were talking about salvation. The man has been taught that to be truly saved, one must be water baptized. I began to share with this young man Scriptures regarding our salvation; how it is ALL of God’s grace. That through faith in Jesus Christ, His Son, and the payment He made for us on the cross ALONE, can we be saved. As the one who is leading and teaching these “classes” I have just always assumed the responsibility of answering their questions and trying to help them understand. But imagine my surprise and delight to watch the ones who have been there, listening and learning - to teach others also! I was truly blessed by the way the other men in the class took it upon themselves to try to share (even in their own language) with this man, through God’s Word, that water baptism does not save us. I actually sat back, watching and listening, as they sought to show him the truths of Scripture.

The men from this class are not “well-educated” with any formal training, certificates to speak of, or even a variety of “tools” and privileges such as commentaries, libraries, internet, etc. But they are born-again believers; who have God Himself (the Holy Spirit) living inside of them, and His Living Word in their hands...and are learning to hide it in their hearts, and apply it to their lives! Praise God!!!

Please do keep praying for these pastors/people in the villages that we are seeking to reach by teaching them the truth of God’s Word. Please pray that they would keep learning and growing in the Word of God, that they would continue to put their faith into action, and continue to share the clarity of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. And please remember us in your prayers also - for the very same things. Thank you for your love and support of our family, and for the Lord’s work He has us doing here. We are so grateful to God for you, and all that you do. Thank you for *your* faithfulness to the King of glory.

In Christ,

Brad Harris

Prayer

- Safety, protection, and peace for our family, and the country-as we draw near election time (August).
- For the pastors as they learn to live out their lives for Christ.
- Health in the family
- For continued growth in our own personal walks with the Lord
- For continued cultivation of relationships

Praises

- For the faithfulness and forgiveness of the Lord
- For 11 precious years of marriage
- For the works that He is doing IN and THROUGH our lives
- Abundant provision from the Lord
- For all of your support, love, care, and prayers