

Words from the Woodward's

December, 2018

"For unto us a Child is born,
Unto us a Son is given;
And the government will be upon His shoulder.
And His name will be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." Isaiah 9:6



Dear friends,

We've turned the page from Thanksgiving to the Christmas season once again. And as I write this, the Hanukkah celebration is underway. This year I taught through the book of Daniel on Sunday mornings in our local Grace Class. What an adventure! The historical context of Hanukkah was prophesied there: the oppression of the evil Syrian king and the desecration of the Temple in Jerusalem (Dan. 8:8-26; 11:21-35). The heroism of the warriors who reclaimed and cleansed the temple is still needed today: "but the people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out great exploits. And those of the people who understand shall instruct many..." (Dan. 11:32-33; see Phil. 4:13).

Today we booked a plane ticket for our coworker in Kenya, Charles Ambaka. He will be joining our alumni / friends, Hans and Elly Timmermans, for a ministry trip to Malawi, Africa on Feb. 4-11, 2019. To hear about the exciting advance of Christ's church there, see their blog at NorthernMalawiNews.com.

We are glad to welcome new GFI team members, Don and Leis Steve. They were able to move here from NJ last month and anticipate moving into their house (between Pigeon Forge and Knoxville) by mid December!

As we counsel people here at the office or by phone, we are privileged to see how many of them make major progress through a deeper encounter with Jesus as Savior, Lord and Life. Many times we only have a few sessions with a counselee, then trust that their local church will continue to support them in their discipleship journey. Sometimes we have the blessing of a letter that reminds us of how God has used His word which does not return void (Isaiah 55:11). One such letter is on page 2.

We thank you so much for being a vital part of our support team through prayer and giving. We wish you a joyful and meaningful Christmas season!

Love in Christ,

John & Linda

Dear Dr. Woodward,

I personally wanted to thank you and GFI for a great work that was done and is continuing through the Lord in the life of my son C____. He was depressed and not believing he was saved even though he had given his life to Christ. I remember you counseling him for 4 days straight when on the fourth day he came out of your office in tears and you said that you had reached a point of understanding in the Word of God that guided C____'s path to recovery.

I don't think I can ever repay you for the words of encouragement and bringing the profound truth of God's Word to deepen C____'s understanding of God's love for each one of us and helping us both to know better and more fully that God provided the path for us through Christ. He loves us and had mercy on us and provided grace for us and then He sealed us with the Holy Spirit. We cannot UN-do *HIS* act of grace and love. What a wonderful truth that I hold onto daily when the world gets crazy and *seemingly* out of control.

C____ has grown from that point and now is serving as one of the pastors under Max Lucado at Oakhills Church in San Antonio, Texas!!!

He married _____, who is a blessing, a real answer to prayer, and an absolute polished jewel of a godly woman ... They now have four children...What wonderful children and by the Lord's blessing, our grandkids! We love them all so much! We give praise to the Lord for all his blessings!

I have thought of the time with you in Pigeon Forge, with my son, and I am just so thankful that there are real men of God who know and love the Lord ... as all who form Grace Fellowship International do, who make it--and have made it--what it is ... What a real blessing you all are! Thank you!

Sincerely,

D.

[to God be the glory - JBW]

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