

Words from the Woodward's

September-October, 2024

“You keep him in perfect peace
whose mind is stayed on you,
because he trusts in you.
Trust in the Lord forever,
for the Lord God is an everlasting rock.” Isaiah 26:3,4 ESV

What a blessing to find perfect peace in the Lord, even in tumultuous circumstances. My sister-in-law (who lives 40 minutes north of us) had to evacuate her home due to a rising river after hurricane Helene. Thankfully, the waters did not flood her home after all, so all of us emergency movers helped them return their furniture and essential belongings days later. May God provide comfort and resources in the ongoing relief efforts in surrounding counties and states.

On September 12–15 Linda and I flew west to attend the Connect Conference of the International Fellowship of Chaplains in Temple, Texas. We had a GFI resource table there and had many wonderful conversations to encourage and equip those serving in a variety of contexts. Our goal is to equip chaplains with basic Christ-centered counseling to enhance their ministry. Now that Linda is a licensed chaplain, she is increasing her activity with the Wellness Team at Dollywood and related properties. We pray that God will open the door for her to do chaplaincy there full-time (moving away from the new employee training and related responsibilities).

During September 2–October 14 I have had the joy of facilitating an online edition of our Exchanged Life Counseling Workshop. Seven participants enrolled, and we had additional alumni helping them as online “practice partners.” This was all done through online videos and reading, with weekly zoom meetings on Sunday afternoons for fellowship, review, and additional instruction. We give thanks for this fruitful opportunity.

On September 30 we resumed our Monday night zoom Bible study. Currently we are using John Best’s book, *When is Christ Being Seen in Us?* All are welcome. These meetings are also recorded so they can be viewed anytime.

I would appreciate prayer for a trip back to Alexandria, Virginia October 19-20. On that Saturday I am to present our Finding Peace seminar at Braddock Baptist Church and preach there Sunday morning.

The first week of October is birthday week around here. My family dates include brother Jamey (3), myself (7), my sister Suzy and our mother (9); and Mark McKeehan’s birthday is the 8th. Any excuse for cake is fine with me :-). I had the opportunity to drive to my sister’s home in Georgia October 4-5 for a family get-together. I’m also happy to report that our youngest twin grandson, Levi, continues to grow and improve.

Here at GFI we are staying busy with counseling as people call us from across the country requesting counseling, usually on a daily basis. What a privilege to provide Christ-centered counseling and training in these difficult days.

We are so grateful for God's faithfulness. The years fly by; I have served here at GFI now for 23 years. We are very thankful for our support team and intercessors. May you continue to be blessed with God's perfect peace.

Yours in Christ,
John

Mailbox

"I wanted to write and let you know I finished *Blessed Assurance*. It was such a great and easy read that brought Scripture to the questions that we have had. I thank you so much for recommending this book. I have many highlights all through it. I love the analogy in Chapter 17 about the moving walkway and how that correlates with our life in Christ. Also the last 2 *Glimpses of Grace* podcast episodes were so enriching—the one about "Faith" and "How to Forgive." Thank you to you and Mark for all you do. Praying for the ministry at GFI.

-M.H., Texas



John & Linda at IFOC Conference



John, Suzy, Dad W. and Jamey

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