

Supporting Pastors by Ministering to Christians in Need of Guidance and Deliverance

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Dear APF Supporters,

Praising God must be the first priority of this newsletter. In July, I noted that a prayer concern was increasing the number of donors. God has been faithful in raising support as more and more are either pledging yearly support or giving a one-time gift. We are secure in finances through the summer! As always, the ministry support needs to be developed, but I have learned first hand that He will not let us down. I also praise Him for the many joys I've had this past month: being able to see friends and family at a number of family reunions and get-togethers, watching the garden grow and produce due to very timely rains, watching my children run and play (even in the mud when they are told not to ☺), watching my wife Angela adjust to being pregnant (for those who haven't heard, the baby is due February 11), and watching as people grow in Christ and be set free during counseling.

In the counseling, one topic that I have to address is found in John 10. In verses seven through eleven, Jesus describes the difference between Himself and Satan. He gives life, and life to the full at that. Satan comes to steal, kill, and destroy. The Enemy works to cause problems in our lives to keep us from having an abundant life that God desires. It is hard for some to accept this and realize that their troubles are due to the Enemy trying to destroy them! Many will make statements like, "I believe it is just the thorn in my flesh that God has given me," thinking it is like the Apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians 12:7. It may be a thorn in the flesh, but it comes from Satan, as it did with Paul.

If we look at Paul's life, it would be hard to say that he didn't have life to the fullest in Christ. Paul lived a victorious life and overcame that thorn. In spite of all that he went through, he lived a mighty life for God. I have to ask a question of this nature to the person: "Are you overcoming this thorn, or is it such a burden that it dominates your life? If that 'thorn' seems to be overwhelming and is keeping you from living life to the fullest, maybe we should look at it from a perspective of the work of the Enemy and not from God." Such a question can be scary for a person, so I have to reassure the person that even if it is the Enemy, the Lord Jesus has defeated the Enemy and the thorn can be taken away. Colossians 2:15 says that Jesus "triumphed" over the powers. Knowing He has triumphed is comforting to people, and upsetting to demons. Demons hate that verse!

Finally, when the person can come to the place of addressing the "thorn" by finding the cause and nailing it to the cross of Calvary, the abundant life in Jesus Christ can begin. How many "thorns" are Christians tolerating in their lives that could be addressed and allow them to live a more abundant life? I don't know, but I encourage everyone who has a "thorn," or even a small problem to look at it from the perspective of coming from the Enemy. If it is from God or a part of living in this world, then so be it. If it is from the Enemy, then appropriate the Christian's victory won at Calvary and address the cause of the "thorn." Such is what I do in counseling.

The joy of seeing a person set free is tremendous. Thank you all for supporting us and blessing me so that I can have the privilege of lending a hand to those in need. I continue to ask for prayer support for wisdom and strength to serve our Mighty God!

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ben Snyder".

Ben Snyder