

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



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Dear APF Supporter:

**Greetings!**

I'm thankful for another opportunity to share with you. God has richly blessed this ministry, which makes it enjoyable to write about what is happening with APF.

**Praises:**

I have a major praise this month, and that is for each of you and your willingness to support *A Pastor's Friend*. In spite of economical difficulties for many, the contributions have not decreased. I cannot tell you how grateful I am for that support.

A second praise is that more opportunities are developing for me to teach at different locations. In the next year, I am already scheduled to teach five different classes. When I left teaching at Clinton Christian, some asked if I'd miss teaching. The fact is, I haven't stopped; the great part about this kind of teaching is that I don't have to grade homework!

**Something to Consider:**

Over the last couple of weeks, it has increasingly been on my heart to write about repentance. I'm aware of some people in the area calling for repentance because the church is in trouble. When I hear about a call for repentance, I often think of Johann Blumhardt. He was a pastor in the Black Forest of Germany, an area known at that time for its darkness and evil. Friedrich Zuendel's book, *The Awakening: One Man's Battle with Darkness*, tells the amazing story of a revival due to Blumhardt's battle with the demonic and the repentance in the community that followed when a severely demonized woman was set free.

Confession and repentance was a major part of Blumhardt's ministry. The book recounts many experiences where church members, and even people from neighboring communities, came and confessed sins. The confession and repentance led to many miracles, and the miracles were physical, mental, and emotional. Pastor Blumhardt listened to the confessions and declared the person forgiven if he believed the person was being totally honest. When the burden from a guilty conscience was removed, healing occurred. This is the same approach I use with *A Pastor's Friend*. Helping a person confess sins and repent is tremendously beneficial to his or her emotional well-being.

Condemnation and attitude of judgment is the danger in discussing sin. Blumhardt, however, did not preach with an attitude of judgment and condemnation. He said, "No matter how much gossip I may hear about the sins of another, they are none of my business until they are brought to me along with a plea for forgiveness. I know them only in the light of redemption. My task is never to judge, only to forgive. Christ came to save the world, not to judge it" (page 88). In an earlier section of the book, when a situation in his household was causing problems, he said, "All of us must repent" (page 14). The entire household, himself included, spent days in prayer to discern if there was unconfessed sin. Even ministers need to examine with prayer personal issues. Before a ministry session, I try to make sure that my "slate is clean" (an expression of

Dean Hochstetler) and confess any sin. It's hard to minister forgiveness to someone when I feel guilty myself!

Another aspect of the ministry of *A Pastor's Friend* that is like Blumhardt's is his recommendation to confess sin to another person. He said, "I advise people...to open their hearts to a sincere and devoted friend, with prayer and in the presence of God, according to the words of the apostle James, 'Confess your sins to one another.' If they repent deeply and long for complete inner renewal, they can be assured of forgiveness." Confessing sins privately to another person gives a person a witness that the sin was confessed. The powers of darkness love to cause believers to feel guilty even of sin that is confessed to God. If there is a witness, then it is much harder for evil spirits to cause feelings of guilt. I often sign the paper that has the list of sins for the person to keep as proof of the confession. Others prefer to burn the list. Indeed, the emotional relief a person can experience when sins are confessed can be tremendous, and it is a joyful experience to see God bring healing to a person's wounded heart.

The story of Pastor Blumhardt is very inspirational for me, as he was obedient to God instead of man. It is often a challenge to talk about sin, confession, and repentance, but it is a necessary thing for a believer.

**Prayer Concerns:**

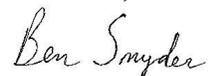
As I just noted above, it can be a challenge to stand for the truth and teach the truth. I ask that you pray for me as I teach in various locations so that I do have the courage to share the truth.

Also, please continue to pray for those who come for help. Pray for the Holy Spirit to be able to open up wounded hearts that are afraid to face the truth.

**Final Thoughts:**

I hope that my joy was apparent in this newsletter. It is very much a blessing to do this ministry. Easy it is not, but it brings much joy when a person is set free and healed. Thank you so much for you prayer and support!

In Christ,



Ben Snyder