

# Dickens Digest

Feb/Mar 2019

## Prayer Requests

- ◆ Evangelism
- ◆ New Converts and Discipleship
- ◆ Family Health
- ◆ Joel Smothers Family support
- ◆ Building and Construction
- ◆ Car Fund for vehicle in Brazil

### Days of Praise

During the past couple months I heard a devotion by a missionary friend discussing the idea from John 1 that Jesus was "full of grace and truth." That idea has captivated me and describes the last couple months in our ministry here. Our construction on the church has stalled so that we can gather more funds for the continued construction. Honestly, this can be frustrating, but God's grace shines through in seeing our people excited about the work continue as they grow through this process. At the end of January I made another seminary trip, but James Nash, our missionary colleague was battling pneumonia and could not make the trip. God provided

It is always nice to celebrate God's grace with others of like faith. About the same time Morgan celebrated his 18th birthday and Aydan turned 16. God give us grace! I was also able to teach another seminary class by video conference with the seminary and church in Salvador for three weeks. The great thing was that Morgan and two others from our church here were able to participate in the class. Morgan has actually completed two seminary level classes while here in preparation for what he feels the Lord may be leading him to do with his life. I have been pleased with the increased attendance at church and the increased giving as some new



### In Other News

God is sending RAIN! As many of you know and have been praying, we have been in a severe drought for the past several years. The water situation in the city has been critical, but the past couple months we have seen more rain than in the past 5-6 years. The water situation has improved and we hope to see it improve further. Also, we will be moving. Our landlord wants his house back so that he can make it into a clinic run by his daughter. We have been looking and we are waiting on the Lord, but in the next couple of months we should be in a new house. Please pray for the Lord's leading in this area. We would like something a little larger so that we can host visitors. This may be easier now since the new



another teacher in missionary Leland Johnson and it was a joy to rekindle a friendship and find common ground for future ministry partnership. During February and March Carnaval takes place. We try to hold some event so that our people can escape the wicked influences. We spent a day as Christians in fellowship together.

members are learning the importance of tithing. Faithfulness, especially in church attendance is always a struggle, but the Lord will give grace and we will continue to teach. The Lord has blessed us these past two months with promises and gifts for our church building from our home church and others like Clear Fork Baptist Church. We can't wait to see God's grace revealed in the coming weeks.



president is no longer requiring tourist visas for Americans! Come visit!



## Kidz Korner - Getting My First Glasses - Abigail Dickens



When I was in the ophthalmologist waiting room I was afraid. The liquid that the lady put in my eyes hurt, but that was soon over. What was happening to me was not exactly what I wanted, but it helped me. After we got out of the checkup room I was happy. Why had I been afraid? I still ask myself that. My glasses are helping me now. I had been afraid because of the pain I guess. Sometimes we need to go through a little pain so that we can take care of our body. Also I said that I did not want to be there. I had not resisted going except saying that I thought I did not need to. I was not being honest. I thought that the way I was seeing things was normal. I have not had my glasses for long, and I am glad Mommy and Daddy decided to have my eyes checked.

Editor's Note: Daddy and Mommy are glad, too!

## In Her Words - Cynthia Dickens



I'm reading a book right now in which the following declaration is made - when you love and trust someone ... you don't fear them. It referenced I John 4:18 in the context of not fearing that which God brings into our lives, since we can trust that He does everything for our good and His glory. THAT truth, of course, is incontrovertible and comforting. However, I was unsettled by the book's blanket assertion about love + trust = no fear. God surely tells us we are to fear Him, as well. So, while I already know my own stance on the question, I decided to look at some others' opinions. Some commentators I consulted agree that the "fear" of I John 4:18 is suggesting a cowering dread or terror, devoid of trust, rather than an attitude of obedience, respect, and reverence - an attitude that, unfortunately, so many people associate now-a-days with "bad" fear.

And that turned my thoughts to a problem/concept that has long been highlighted and debated ... redefining terms. When did "fear" come to be an exclusively bad thing?

When did "obedience" or "submission" become synonymous with "slavery" and "oppression"? When did "advocate" begin indicating "someone who always takes MY side"? No, it didn't happen overnight, but I believe that all of those shifts in meaning/perception HAVE occurred as a result of our me-centric society. See, I'm so thankful for Jesus Christ being my Savior and Advocate. But when I buy into the watered-down spirituality that is prevalent today and begin to think of Him as always championing MY side, rather than HIS purity and righteousness as He desires them to be in me, I grow more and more weak in my relationship with Him. He cannot defend me against the accusations of Satan, based on this life's circumstances (which turn into excuses for my less-than-Biblical behavior) or based on my own perceptions of what's right. How often have I forced Him to remain mute in my defense, simply because God's Word was not that which defined my actions?!

Yes, His blood covers every sin. I can't lose that, and it is my ultimate defense. But if I can vividly remember that He does defend and advocate perfectly for me - while still holding me to God's standard, rather than my own or anyone else's around me - then I will be led to the proper fear of God, that of obedience and submission to the only Advocate who knows and will continue to teach me that HIS side is far better than mine.

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