

# Dickens Digest Sept. 2021

## This Too Shall Pass

Around October or November many of us wondered how long all of the craziness of Covid would continue. Even today, some wonder, but I like to remember what Abraham Lincoln recounted in 1859, "And this, too, shall pass away." How much it expresses! How chastening in the hour of pride! How consoling in the depths of affliction!"

We are seeing life begin to return to a more normal level here in our part of Brazil and although masking is still required in many public places, our church services are in a normal routine and we are seeing God's people returning to worship. God has been so good to protect our church people, but we have had some get sick. The Firm Foundations Bible studies are producing fruit with two young men making professions of faith after church two weeks in a row. These teen boys are fruit of their friend who was discipled by Morgan and whose parents were discipled through the efforts of Joel Smothers and my assistant pastor Lucas. It is always encouraging to see "fruit that remains" and know that "the sheep are reproducing". In conjunction with the Firm Foundations Bible studies, we have had the privilege to be involved in a Bible project.

A few months back, Bro. James Nash, in sponsorship with his home church Calvary Baptist in Colonial Heights, VA, and Pastor Ray Haskett, presented a project to print 30,000 Bibles for distribution to unsaved or those who are being discipled. We were



able to help financially due to offerings for Bibles that we received months ago. Also, we were able to help with planning and implementing the printing and receiving of the Bibles. On August 10th, Joel Smothers and I got to help unload more than 28,000 Bibles for people who need the Word of God. God is constantly opening new doors for Bible studies and with technology even as far as 3,000 km from home. Pray with us for Uytalo and Lenarte (new converts). Pray for all of those with whom we are having Bible studies. Pray for us to know exactly what we should do where our building project is concerned. Please continue to pray for the Lord to raise up a national pastor for this church.

## Prayer Requests

- ◆ Family Health
- ◆ Evangelism, discipleship in changing dynamics
- ◆ Smothers Family
- ◆ Church families/couples
- ◆ Lucas and family
- ◆ New Converts
- ◆ Guidance about building



## In Other News

God has been so gracious to protect our family in this Covid "season". That protection is not only in physical health, but emotional as well. There are pressures associated with being foreigners on the field, but we live in a relatively relaxed area of Brazil in relation to restrictions and even vaccine mandates. How long that continues we don't know, but for now it is the case. We have asked so many to pray for our building project and many have even given, but we are reevaluating how best to use those funds since the property that was purchased for the church had its access road closed by a land owner looking for money from the local government. As soon as we know exactly how the Lord wants us to proceed, those funds will be used to build a permanent building for the church here. Please pray with us for wisdom. Until that time, we will work to see "the church" (not the building) edified to be a strong group of Christians able to continue long after God has moved us along.

## Teenz Korner - Reaching other Teens - Daniella Dickens

We've had many new teenagers coming to church recently. We even had a couple professions of faith. One of the teenagers that has been coming recently is my new friend Mariane. She is thirteen years old, and I'm doing Bible studies with her. We only just recently finished studying the Creation, and it was fascinating watching her as I taught her different things about the Bible, God, the angels, and the Creation. Many things that most children in the States think are basic Bible truths were new to her. She's a very dramatic, excitable type; she invited two of her school friends to church recently. She also comes to Sunday School, and is enjoying what we're learning there. I hope some day she may come to know Christ as her Savior too.



## In Her Words - Cynthia Dickens - **10 ways to neither lose nor allow anything to steal your peace**



After the last prayer letter, in which I listed 10 things the Lord is teaching me about how to take advantage of and rest in His peace EVERY day, my husband has repeatedly requested that I elaborate on each point. So here goes ... :)

### 1. **To fill my mind with God's Word**

I think that phrase may be better stated as follows: "To IMMERSE my mind in God's word." Immersing my mind in His Word takes different forms depending on the day. I'll try to explain ...

- Some days are emotionally draining, and I find that I need a constant "drip" from God's word. HINT: the Bible in audio is a marvelous tool! I have cleaned the kitchen with my phone nearby, playing the audio Bible for hours. Many times, I have felt an overwhelming inability to focus on anything that "matters," but have then received a calm (that does NOT come from myself) as I allow my mind and home to be filled with God's Word read aloud.
- Some days are study days, when my time in God's Word is deep and compelling. How can one study God's Word and not be awed, not be compelled to change and correct oneself, not be motivated to share the revealed truth with others? I use the audio Bible here, too, but always alongside the written Word and, frequently, with various study tools, as well. (Be sure to choose these carefully, and always with the Bible as the preeminent "filter" for man's opinions and interpretations.)
- Some days I am so very busy that I do not have more than my "normal" time of Bible reading. Please note, there should NEVER be a day so busy that you cannot spend time in God's Word. No matter what sacrifice it requires on my part, I must spend time with the Lord every day ... as must any Christian who desires a vibrant, growing life in Christ.
- And then, some days bleed over into ... maybe not *sleepless* nights ... but certainly nights where my mind is so weighed down that my sleep serves virtually no restorative purpose. Once again, on such nights, my first recourse is my Bible in audio format. I play it all night long on VERY low volume, along with some relaxing sounds. (I have a Bible app that allows other music/sounds to be played with it simultaneously.) You may say, "How in the world can you glean anything from the Word of God while sleeping?" I cling to Isaiah 55:11, "*So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.*" Many studies have been done on the subconscious of even a sleeping person, and I figure that if I'm going to be absorbing anything while asleep, what could be better than the Bible?

These are just my own personal practices/experiences. I realize they may not work for everyone, but perhaps they may encourage someone who's struggling in their bid to consistently spend time in God's word. One thing I can promise - the Bible will never cease to offer truth that you need in that moment, every time you read it. Spiritual growth/reading the Bible is similar to a child growing. A toddler, standing before a set of shelves, can only see certain things at their height; but as they grow, they will have the ability to see other things on higher shelves, if they choose to look. Those things on the higher shelves were always there but were, simply, not able to be seen by the small child. As we grow in Christ, He will lovingly call to attention "new" things that we never noticed in His Word previously.

There is more I would say about the Word of God, but I'm pretty sure I've already exceeded my space in our prayer letter. :S Joel works diligently, every time, to scrunch text here or shift something there in order to accommodate my ramblings! :) And while my thoughts really don't deserve your faithful attention, God's Word does. Immersing your mind in it WILL bring a peace that passes all understanding. Philippians 4:7

### Personal Contact Info:

Joel and Cynthia Dickens  
CP 139  
Belo Jardim, PE 55155-970  
prjoel619@icloud.com  
(804)451-1327  
+55 81 98299-9177  
www.dickensstory.com

### Sending Church Info:

Roanoke Island Baptist Church  
Pastor Scott Baxley  
1234 Hwy 64/264  
Manteo, NC 27954  
(252)473-2892  
www.ribaptist.com  
ribc@ribaptist.com

### Mission Agency:

World Wide New Testament  
Baptist Missions  
PO Box 725  
Kings Mountain, NC 28086  
info@wwntbm.com  
www.wwntbm.com