

August Newsletter



Hiking at Pence Park in Evergreen, Colorado.

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Greetings

Hello friends and family! I hope you all are doing very well. There is never a shortage of things and events to update you on, and the month of August has been no exception. There have been some challenges along the way, but also many good and exciting things. Through it all, God continues to remain faithful to me and blesses me in ways I can't understand. It is my prayer that He is actively working in your lives, too, and blessing you all on your journeys of faith and righteousness.

Family Emergency

The Friday (8th) that we completed our first short course back at Bear Valley, I received a call that my uncle, Jeremy Pierce, had collapsed in his house and was soon found to have a brain tumor, which required immediate surgery. With permission from the Dean of Students, I spent the first four days of regular Q1 classes driving to Tennessee with my brother and sister-in-law so we could be at the hospital during his surgery (12th) before returning to Denver in time for class on Friday (15th). The surgery was as successful as we could hope, and we are anxiously awaiting lab results to see what the mass is. Jeremy is currently in a rehab center and seems to be getting stronger. Although under unfortunate circumstances, it was encouraging to see much of my family, some of whom I haven't seen in some time. I know many of you do not know Jeremy, but we would all greatly appreciate your prayers for his continued recovery and for strength and comfort for his family during this difficult time.

Update on Classes (And Other School-ish Stuff)

Though off to a rocky start, Quarter 1 classes have been beneficial and truly enjoyable. The *Romans* and *Epistles of John* classes have been two of my favorites this time around. Aside from the intriguing similarities between the separate works, the amount of spiritual meat uncovered in the first chapters alone has been nothing short of mind-blowing and life-changing (no, that is not an exaggeration); I truly believe the Bible has the power to change beliefs, fundamental understandings, and lives, whether you are new to the faith or a seasoned Christian, and these two have proved that in my own life. Other classes, such as *Biblical Counseling* and *How We Got the Bible*, have proven to be highly practical, and I'm excited to use both in my ministry. *Kings & Chronicles* and *Jeremiah & Lamentations* have provided great clarity on OT history, while revealing more about God, His character, and His will and expectations for His people. As you can see, we've got some powerhouse classes this quarter, and I'm looking forward to resuming them following the current "Research Week."

While not quite "school-related," there has been much opportunity at Bear Valley to spend time with our fellow classmates and those in the class above/below us. I believe my class has done a commendable job in being a part of our lower class's lives even outside of

school, and likewise, they with us. We've had school-hosted, church-hosted, and student-hosted events. There've been games, meals, UFC Fight Nights, hiking trips, etc. One of my favorites has been "Ministry Moments," which is put on by John (instructor) and Carla (ladies' instructor) Moore. This consists of a meal, some kind of entertainment (most recently, volleyball), singing, and some encouraging words from our instructors relating to ministry and spiritual matters. All things considered, it is a great time to be part of the Bear Valley Family.

Preaching Out & Ministry

I've talked about this before, but one of the opportunities students have (once they've completed two full quarters at Bear Valley) is preaching out at the surrounding congregations. Last year, I was able to preach out a couple of times, but due to a lack of transportation, I didn't get to preach out as often as I would have liked. Fortunately, God has provided me with a car, making travel much easier. In the month of August alone, I was able to preach at two different congregations, and I'm excited to continue sharing God's Word with the local brethren.

Another interesting opportunity presented itself recently, and I'm hoping more fruit can come of it. As many of you know, my family did mission work in Fiji, and that allowed me to work with the youth. A few weeks back, one of the men whom I served with reached out asking if I would record an encouraging video for the youth group. Of course, I was more than happy to, and from what I heard, the video was well received. I'm hoping this is a door into continued ministry to my church family back home, and should the opportunity arise, I would ask for prayers of guidance and receptivity.

Closing

Alas, concluding this newsletter comes the portion where I attempt but fail miserably to adequately express my gratitude. I recognize whether you are an individual supporter or congregationally supporting me, my being at Bear Valley comes at a cost, and you are paying that cost for me. Even as someone who "grew up in the church," it still blows my mind to see the generosity of the saints. I hope you know I greatly appreciate your support of me, my education, and, by extension, the work of the kingdom. My repayment to you is the promise to continue diligently studying, and to put the things I've learned to use for God's glory. Thank you.

But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness.

(Romans 6:17, 18 | ESV)