

Newsletter Date

January 2010

Familia de Dios

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East Orange Gospel Meeting

Every year the East Orange Church of Christ hosts a Gospel meeting geared for the young people in the area. They ask several of the younger preachers in the area to preach lessons on a single topic.

They invited my brother Daniel, John Focht, Roger Polanco, Brigham Eubanks, and myself to teach about Exodus 34:6-7 which describes the nature of God. We each selected a different aspect listed and expounded upon it. It was very nice to hear a series of lessons focused on God. So often we are more concerned with ourselves and talk about what we need to do, how we need to grow, how we can be encouraged, etc... and although those things are very important, we tend to focus more on ourselves than the Lord sometimes. These lessons were all about God. Who He is and what He does. We need to do this more often, because serving God is easier when you are reminded of how awesome He really is.

Hit the Ground Running

After my nice winter break it was easy for me to feel rested and get back to work. Plus I had about a million things to do and necessity has always been a great motivation for me.

I had to write my sermon for the East Orange gospel meeting as well as write four lessons for my series I was teaching in South Carolina (I will discuss that in my March report). Those several weeks of January were also great for my personal classes. It seemed like everyone was available and almost no classes were canceled. I love when my weeks are open and I can have a strong schedule. That's what helps me work the best.

My topic was "who leaves the guilty unpunished". I'm not sure what led me to pick that topic, but I knew that God's punishment is often enigmatic to me and I wished to better understand it. Like most things Biblical, simply further investigating is made it much more clear. I was surprised to see how quickly embraced and learned to appreciate God's strong judgment. In short, we need a God that defends His standard of morality, a God that defends His Christians, and a God that defends Himself. If God wasn't so, He wouldn't be quite so awesome. As it is, He does defend all of these things with His fierce judgment. We need to respect and fear this aspect of God until it incites us to be better people and see the dire need to evangelize to others so they don't continue to anger our awesome God.

Roger, Emily, and I spent a lot of time in the car getting people and taking them to the meeting, but East Orange church was so kind to reimburse us for our travel expenses. This was a very generous thing for them to do.

However, I've recently returned for FI, and after pushing myself for several weeks I find myself to be pretty useless. I can't concentrate. I'm constantly sleepy, and I'm lacking motivation. This is frustrating. My father says this is just a pattern that happens for self-employed Bible teachers. It's tough to be in charge of yourself at times like these, because there's no one else to push you along.

I need to remember the great task God has entrusted to me, and the faith my supporting churches have in me. That needs to be my motivation to work as hard as a can as much as I can. I need to pray to God and trust Him to give me the strength to do so.

Weekly Classes

Sunday:

Attend teen class at Sherman Ave. Take kids to Washington for worship and teach teen class afterwards.

Monday:

Take kids to Bible class at Rosie's.

Tuesday:

Study Mat with Chris. Teach I Corinthians for Sherman teen class.

Wednesday

Visit Aida. Study OT with Melissa. Study Matthew with the Cruz boys.

Thursday:

Study Mark with Grace. Study Eph with my Dad. Study II Cor with Kelvin. Study Mat with Carlos & Mercedes. Teen class at Sherman Ave.

Friday:

Study Mat with Suweena. Study Mat with Christyn & Alysha.

Saturday:

Study with Mat Ibys. Study OT with Carol. Drive kids for two classes in Fairlawn, NJ.

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20 Something Christian of the Month



January's 20 something Christian of the month goes to Megan Duke. Megan converted to Christ five years ago and is now a member of the church at Washington. She is very passionate about the word of God. She has done an excellent job completely conforming her life to God's standard, and she is always leading others around her to do so as well. She commonly finds herself in great evangelistic opportunities because she boldly confesses her faith everywhere she goes. She is a school teacher and is a good example of how to balance secular and spiritual responsibilities by making everything we do for God. She has been an amazing friend to me, and I'm very grateful for that.

Staying Spiritual

It's a challenge to consistently stay spiritual over long periods of time. We had quite a revival over the past years and our relationships with our kids have been entirely spiritually based. Time has passed and we have developed closer relationships and friendships. I've recently found this a challenge because it's tempting to focus on non-spiritual things too much.

I need to discipline myself to lead my kids to get God back as the focus of our relationships. Everything we have is due to God. Our friendships only exist because of God. We owe it to Him to love Him more.

I think the best way to do this is to incorporate prayers and singing into our days more often. We have to stay spiritual than just during weekly Bible classes and worship. Pray that I do this well please.

Depending on God

Recently I've found myself in some relatively dire situations. I've had some financial stresses. I've had to travel cross-country in BAD conditions. I'm learning what it means to depend on God.

I'm about to drive 14 hours through ice and snow and I feel how great it is to be a Christian with God on my side wanting me to make it through so I can work for Him. If I wasn't a Christian, I'd be on my own. The best part of being a Christian is the fact we have God to depend on. If we don't depend on Him, we are missing a necessary facet of our faith.

I also need to depend on Him for finding a spouse. I simply can't do it myself and it seems near impossible, but then I remember how He led me here to this lifestyle, and I know that He wants the best for me. I can depend on Him to lead me to a spouse.

How am I supposed to lead these people to change their lives? God! I can depend on Him to make me the teacher that I need to be.

Depending on God is what makes prayers effective. If you're bored with prayer, you don't really believe it makes a difference. Depend on Him and find yourself fully utilizing prayer.

Back to Schedule

The new year has brought some great events. There's been the Indiana Trip, Lectures, gospel meetings, and next week is winter camp; however, now I'm excited that things will be back on schedule until the chaotic summer comes.

The weekly personal Bible classes are probably the most valuable thing that I do. When you consistently meet with someone to investigate God's word, that's where the true growth and relationships come. We can't depend on weekend retreats and occasionally events. Those aren't as productive. The beauty is everybody can have personal classes. Not just me.

Do you know some Bible? Who in your church needs the weekly class? The young person? The visitor? The new convert? Step up and work wonders for God.

I Own My Car

Again, a great deal of time and money was put into my car this month. The good news is that I'm now the owner of my car. Juliet donated her car to me, but kept me on her insurance plan until I turned 25 to save money. This was very kind of her; however, there were certain problems.

She was still responsible for my car because she had the title, so when my car got towed before, I had to get her involved to get it back. What a hassle for her. Also, I was constantly getting pulled over because I drove a trashy looking car with a bunch of kids in it and the cops would see it as being registered to a woman. This is pretty suspicious so I would get pulled over and interrogated relatively frequently. Now that the car is registered to my name, that should change.

Unfortunately owning the car has been a big hassle and expenditure. My insurance is over twice as much now. In the end it is still an essential tool for my work so it's easier to invest in it knowing that it helps me as a servant of God.

As a side note, for all the challenges and inconveniences that NYC has to offer, the DMV is not one of them. They have the most organized and efficient DMV's I've ever seen. So that's a plus.