

The Agonizomai Striver

**“And we proclaim Him ... And for this purpose, also I labor,
striving according to His power, which mightily works
within me.”**

Colossians 1:28-29

Dear Friends and Ministry Partners,

June 12, 2019

Wet and chilly greetings from Cape Town! Winter has finally arrived in Cape Town and with it some much needed rain to slake the drought parched landscape!

The last few weeks have been an absolute blur of activity. A few weeks ago, I traveled to Christ Seminary in Polokwane (1200 miles from Cape Town) to discuss the way forward for plans for our satellite seminary here in Cape Town. Shortly after returning home, we hosted Jim and Pam Elliff from the US for 3 days as Jim ministered to both our men and church. No sooner did we see Jim and Pam off and our church hosted the Cape Town portion of the South African Shepherd's Conference. Now with the conference still visible in our rear-view mirror, Debbie and I are preparing to leave next week for a four-week trip to the Los Angeles area to attend the Grace Ministries International Conference at Grace Community Church.

While in the LA area, I will participate in the ordination of one of my Timothy's, Denver Solomon, who recently graduated from The Master's Seminary. Denver will soon be returning to Cape Town with his family and resume the pastorate at Living Hope Bible Church. He will also be an integral part of Christ Seminary Cape Town! During this time there will also be meetings related to Christ Seminary Cape Town and the PhD I am pursuing. We will stay on in LA for a few extra days so we can spend a bit of time Janelle and Micaiah and find out how they are doing before heading home.

Upon returning to Cape Town later in July, we will begin preparation for starting a foundation phase next year for those interested in the seminary. One of the take-aways from my recent trip to Christ Seminary Polokwane was that we cannot officially begin as Christ Seminary Cape Town until the accreditors approve our facilities. Because we will share Christ Seminary's program, curriculum, and administrative protocols, the primary consideration for the accreditors relates to our facilities and the library.

So next year we will be working concertedly on the necessary building requirements. Simultaneously, we have decided to offer a foundation phase next year to help prepare the men for seminary studies. We are calling this, *Foundations For Ministry*. These will be non-accredited courses in English Proficiency — based on the Bible, Biblical and Theological Research Methods, Basic Bible Overview, Basic Bible Interpretation, and Systematic Theology Overview. We are praying for a beginning class of 12 to 15 men to begin in early February 2020.

Based on our plans for 2020, the second half of 2019 will be busy making plans for the necessary building renovations, fund raising, and planning and development for next

year's foundation phase. Of course, we will still keep our foot in the door of local church ministry at Everglen Baptist.

The political situation here in South Africa remains much the same as it did in our last update. In light of the recent national elections four weeks ago, not much has changed. The economy is unravelling and is basically in recession while threats of land and asset confiscation still loom large. It goes without saying that this has produced an atmosphere in which crime and violence has worsened this year. Understandably, this all weighs heavy on the hearts and minds of our people. Please pray that God will grant us much wisdom and grace to minister appropriately in this stressful context. Further, pray not only for our safety, but the safety of our flock.

May the Lord richly bless you all as you enjoy your summer break in the northern hemisphere!

Yours for the Master's Use

Mark & Debbie Christopher

Cape Town, South Africa

runningrev@mweb.co.za

Prayer Prompters:

- For all the plans related to Christ Seminary Cape Town and the prospective student body.
- For our trip to the Los Angeles and safe passage back to Cape Town.
- For the ongoing political concerns here in South Africa related to land and asset confiscation, crime, and safety.
- For Janelle and Micaiah as they continue to make their way in the world apart from Mom and Dad. Micaiah has one more year at The Master's University and Janelle now has a serious boyfriend who Mom and Dad will meet shortly!