

Following Good Advice

I've had the benefit of meeting many other missionaries over the years, and each of them have offered encouraging words and practical advice. Since I've begun the process of ministry funding, I've been able to try their advice, and I have found what I believe to be possibly the most effective way to connect with potential partnering churches: the pop-in. This advice was given to me by at least two other missionaries. On church days when I'm not scheduled to speak somewhere, rather than worshipping with my home church, I pop into a different church, worship with them, and meet the pastor and members face to face. This has proven to be one of the best pieces of advice, as I have gained very faithful, giving church partners this way, and I value the relationships we have. There is something to be said for a personal face-to-face meeting rather than a cold phone call or email.

Making Progress

Several months ago, I came to the realization that working my full-time job did not allow me the proper amount of time nor the proper times of day to connect with pastors and other potential ministry partners. Following the advice of my pastor and mission board, I kept my job, but reduced my hours enough to accommodate phone calls and meetings, but still keep my health insurance which is provided through my job. The adjustment has proved to be very beneficial, and I have been able to connect with many more churches and individuals. It has been a slow process, but I'm excited to report that I'm getting closer to my funding goal. In just the last few weeks two churches to whom I presented the Guyana ministry months ago have informed me they will partner with me, and one of them has already started giving! Also, several individuals/families have partnered with the Guyana ministry and have begun giving. With those who are currently giving, and those who have pledged to begin giving soon, I am now at 30% of my monthly budget, PRAISE THE LORD! Thank you all for your faithfulness to the Lord's ministry in Guyana and for allowing the Lord to use you to help meet my needs as well! As more starts coming in and as more appointments get scheduled, I'll soon be able to quit my job all together and devote all my time to the ministry.

Upcoming Guyana Trip

I am planning my sixth short-term trip to Guyana for this May. The dates are not in stone, but it's looking like May 7th-16th. This will most likely be my last short trip, as my launch goal is this September. For this trip, our entire team will be in Guyana together for the first time in several years. The team consists of Greg Mann, who started this Guyana ministry over a decade ago, Kristen Kilpatrick and Katy Denton, who have a goal of starting a youth center in the interior, and myself. During the trip, we'll be holding crusades in the villages, possibly teaching Bible lessons in the public schools, and helping/encouraging the pastors and their families and churches. One unique goal for this trip is for us as a team to meet with one another and with the pastors to plan and discuss the next steps of our respective ministries. If you would like to give a special donation for this trip, you can do so by following the giving instructions at the bottom of this newsletter.

Laying Foundations

The biggest unexpected blessing I've received during this stage of my ministry is being able to help churches take some of their first steps in world evangelism. One particular example is my favorite. I was able to connect with a church that is very active in their local community and are helping with other ministries in North America, but have not had much influence beyond our own continent. When I connected with one of the pastors, he invited me to share the Guyana ministry with their church and specifically asked me to preach "a message that would lay the foundation for missions" for their church. I was honored that he trusted me with such an important task and even more honored that the Lord would allow such an opportunity for me. That church prayerfully decided to partner with me with a very generous monthly pledge, and I'm excited to have them on my team! I know the Lord will bless them not only for their generosity, but also for their desire to learn, grow, and serve!

Road Trips & Car Wrecks & Battles, Oh My!

At the beginning of February, I was able to travel to both Florida and North Carolina to have ministry meetings with both churches and individuals. So many adjectives describe that trip: hectic, exciting, profitable, troublesome, difficult... just to name a few. I started for Jacksonville, FL to reconnect with friends from my alma mater, Trinity Baptist College; it was great seeing them again. Many of them wanted to meet to discuss the Guyana ministry, and some of them joined my team of financial partners. Also while I was in Jacksonville, I got to preach and give an update at one of my supporting churches. Leaving Jacksonville, I headed to beautiful Waynesville, NC to present at the very zealous Calvary Road Baptist Church, and we had a wonderful time together! After meeting some wonderful people and spending the night in the mountains, I drove back down to Jacksonville to have another meeting with a friend. The plan was to have that meeting, then immediately drive south to St. Petersburg, FL to have another ministry meeting with another friend. However, that didn't happen. On my way down, I was in an accident. Praise the Lord, no one was injured, but my car, Lucille, wouldn't be able to make a long trip without repairs. After getting a rental car, I decided to make the next day strictly fun and relaxing, so I spent a day and night just hanging out with friends in Lakeland, FL. It was a day that I desperately needed. I mentioned battles in the title of this section, but I will not elaborate on that topic in this newsletter. Instead, keep a lookout on nick4guyana.blogspot.com in the coming days, as I plan to write an entire post about the spiritual battles I've experienced and their outcome. For now, suffice it to say, that after a hectic road trip, many spiritual battles, and a car accident, I desperately needed a day of fun! So, after a day at Disney Springs with my friends, we went to church together the following morning, and I got to share some information with their pastor, and then I headed back to Jacksonville. I had gotten the bad news that my car wouldn't be the quick fix for which I was hoping, so I had to move the car to a collision center and leave it in Florida for repairs. Little did I know that this would lead to a divine appointment. To move my car, I solicited the help of my good friend who happens to be the associate pastor of Southpoint Baptist Church of Jacksonville. The phone call led to an opportunity to share the Guyana ministry at Southpoint just a couple hours later, and I must admit that the experience was very encouraging to me. The following day, I would head home to Louisiana in the rental car. I wasn't thrilled about leaving my car 500 miles from home, but I believe the Lord was in it. When Lucille was fully repaired, I returned to Jacksonville for a weekend which allowed me to connect with two more pastors, and once again reconnect with a beloved supporting church.

Prayer Requests

Please be in prayer as I continue to make appointments with churches and individuals as the Lord leads me to my goal of being fully funded by September. Pray for revival for my friends and family as many spiritual battles are in progress. Pray for a profitable trip in May and that funding for that trip will continue to come in. Pray for Bible studies that I am beginning with friends and new believers. Pray that my car insurance payments will not increase much after my accident. Pray for all the churches/individuals who are partnering with the Guyana ministry; we are all on this team together, and we must be unified in Christ.

“And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, they they may be one just as We are one.” ~ John 17:22

Two Ways to Give

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