

MINISTRY UPDATES

Greater Grace Newsletter from Mike Thompson

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Mike's InFaith Mission Focus

Here is a brief overview of my ministry focus with InFaith.

1. **Planting and strengthening residential recovery ministries** and rescue missions through developing, and coaching leaders and providing structure and gospel centered recovery related curriculum.
2. **Strengthening churches and non-profit ministries** by equipping leaders & teams to align their ministry with their God-given mission.

Front Lines Updates

GOSPEL CENTERED RECOVERY HOUSES

If you know of a church or group of people that are wanting to start a residential recovery center I'd love to consult with them at no cost. I have had the privilege of helping several recovery centers, ministries and churches from the ground up. I do this as a mission because I love supporting those who dare to do challenging things in the name of Jesus.

The Branches

Presently I serve (as a missionary & consultant) on the board of The Branches, which is a residential recovery center that is gospel focused. Our residential recovery center has raised significant funds and is looking at purchasing a large facility that will work well for the ministry. I have helped them incorporate, write curriculum for men in the program, developed policies and provided any guidance that might be helpful. Recently I helped develop a business plan that is available if anyone would like a copy.

Important Dates:

May: Dinner for community leaders and pastors to share the mission and vision

September: Open community meeting to introduce the ministry and encourage people to become involved in this wonderful effort.

CHURCH STUFF

I continue to serve as interim pastor of Fish Lake Chapel, which is an InFaith associated church. As an InFaith missionary I am serving this church beginning with a one year commitment as Interim Pastor.

We rolled out a whole church assessment which began with a church survey. We will summarize the surveys and make recommendations for the church.

I am also working on bylaws, which the church does not presently have. This will help spell out things in a bit more detail. It will help provide more detail on roles and responsibilities and job descriptions for key leaders.

OTHER MISSIONS WORK

I have been contacted by a missionary to Haiti and have been asked to help them with the incorporation process so they can exist as a 501c3. I look forward to helping them make their ministry more user friendly.

PERSONAL UPDATES

Dawn and I just got through a busy holiday season with lots of travel and visits with families. We are also making connections with many people. Dawn is such a blessing to her family and this community. I'm a lucky / blessed dude! Dawn is working overnight at a wonderful healthcare facility 20 miles away. We will be traveling to South Carolina for an InFaith Conference next month. Dawn will also try to work out a visit to her sister in Florida who has terminal cancer.

WORKSHOP To see wood products we make and sell to support our mission work check out our Facebook site: *"Mike and Dawns Wood Products"*

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61560611692441>

UPDATES IN PICTURES



Praise Reports Prayer Requests

PRAISES	PRAYERS
We sold several workshop items that help partially fund our mission work	Dawns trip to see her sister in Florida. Her sister is terminally ill with cancer.
Dawn's women's study is thriving and well attended	Many will come to faith in Jesus Christ
People are coming to faith in Jesus and others are growing in their faith.	We pray for conversions and growth at Fish Lake Chapel
Growing ministry opportunities to serve churches and recovery houses	Ministries that are asking for help to become even more effective

Contact & Other Information

MINISTRY PAGE: <https://infaith.org/ministries/michael-thompson>
 Michael Thompson
 411 Central Ave West
 Mora, MN 55051
 Mthompson@infaith.org
 715-661-3254



Note: Ministry page (QR Code and/or web site link above) has a ministry overview and a link/button for donations

InFaith Home Office: (send checks via U.S. mail)
 145 John Robert Thomas Drive, Exton, PA 19341 / 610-527-4439
<https://infaith.org/>

Bonus Devotional Thought

Ephesians 2:4-7

⁴ But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, ⁵ made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. ⁶ And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, ⁷ in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.

The holiness of God is his highest attribute. It is the only attribute highlight 3 times in Scripture. Isaiah 6 describes the LORD as Holy, holy, holy. Moses witnessed first hand the glory and holiness of God on Mount Sinai. After experiencing a limited display of his glory shielded by a rock, his faced glowed like a firefly. Angels when approaching the throne of God shield their faces with two wings (Isaiah 6, Ezek 1).

And 1 Timothy 6:16 reveals the unapproachable glory of God with this description: “who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To him be honor and might forever. Amen.” In the Old Testament temple the glory of God was hidden behind a 6” thick curtain. No one could enter but the high priest, and then only once per year with carefully followed purity instructions.

The message is unmistakable, God is holy, and approaching God on his level is impossible. That is why the message of union with God through Jesus Christ is astounding and radical. This unapproachable God is now approachable through Jesus Christ. The holiness of Jesus purifies us so that we may boldly approach the throne of grace in our time of need.

This new relationship with God through Jesus is so unexpected and was difficult to describe. Nothing like this work of God had ever been known or described. In fact the language to describe our relationship with God through Christ was lacking, and Paul needed to invent new words to write this passage.

The new words Paul invented for this particular passage had to do with our union with Christ. When we see the term “in Christ” it means we are united with him through the Holy Spirit bringing transformation to us and our relationship with God.

Paul combined the Greek term “sny” with the words for “make alive,” “raised up,” and “seated with” creating powerful descriptive phrases. Let me summarize below:

ALL THINGS NEW (results from union with Christ)

Made alive together with Christ (experiential) Dead person is unconscious of God and inactive and decaying. Now we are alive and growing. We have new disposition, not new faculties. WE direct our faculties a different way. We turn to a different direction and our faculties are guided and shaped through our union with Christ.

Raised up together with Christ. Raised up is not resurrection here, but ascension. Jesus is taken to heaven and we are raised into heavenly places with him. We have new life and a new outlook and disposition. A new environment exists beyond the sense. We live in spiritual categories and a new thought realm. A new standard of values. What is the value of things to our soul, not just valuing things by the “kick we get out of it”

Seated with God together in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus.

The seat next to God is a throne. Matt 22:44 It is about victory, security, privilege, accomplishment. But Paul chiefly had in mind John seated next to Jesus like John at the banquet / last supper. Jesus revealed truth and all things to him. John 13:25-26 We are seated with God in Christ and Jesus speaks to us intimately.