

Be filled with

Wisdom

and understanding



CHARIS

Newsletter | June 2021



Charis Family,

Hello everyone! We pray that all of you are healthy and taking this opportunity to be true salt and light in this world that is becoming more evil and perverse as we progress toward the return of our Savior, Jesus Christ! These times in which we are currently living are difficult. We are personally experiencing discouragements that are frustrating due to our inability to do anything about them.

Early in January, as Joy and I were preparing to return to Haiti, we had gathered all of our passports and realized that mine was due to expire in June of this year (2021). We were shocked that we had not noticed this earlier as Haiti has a law that states your passport cannot be due to expire within 6 months of the return date on your plane ticket, and unfortunately my passport fell into this category.

The next morning, we sent it off for renewal and paid an expedited fee to have it completed within 4 weeks (the quickest pre-Covid expedited enabled passports to be renewed in 1-3 days, but now COVID has extended this time to 4 weeks). Well, to make a long story short, to date I still have not received my renewed passport.

We had originally changed our plane tickets to 4 weeks from the date we mailed the renewal form in—but 4 weeks has turned into 5 months, and there is no way to get information pertaining to the

delay nor status of the renewal. While this is very frustrating, Joy and I have made the decision to rest in the Lord knowing that He has allowed this to happen for some reason that lies outside of our understanding. Rather than complain, we have prayed that He show us what He wants from us where we are. Now we are involving ourselves in local ministries and we are still leading the ministry in Haiti remotely as, despite being in the States, we are daily involved and in communication with our Haitian communities.

On an average day Joy will receive over 40 messages from Haiti that we sit and listen to. After considering all the requests and needs contained within each message, we prioritize the difficult decisions and then answer accordingly. The messages that we receive are becoming more and more desperate and serious secondary to all the problems occurring in Haiti right now. Due to government unrest and increasing frustrations with the President and those around him. The Haitian people are rising up in a violent and aggressive way. Kidnappings of foreigners (including priests, nuns, doctors, and children), kidnappings of locals, violent demonstrations, and gun violence are at an all-time high. Hunger, food shortages, starvation risk, sickness, and homelessness are all increasing, plus the overall morale and hope of the people is in decline.

It is honestly tough to hear all the needs daily as the burden is often overwhelming and, at times, too great to bear. We thank all of you for lightening the burden through sharing it with us. Your continued prayers and support have been very encouraging. It's not all doom and gloom though as we do have several good things to report to you all.

Group weddings

Many of you are aware of the group wedding we performed in April. This was a real blessing to 10 couples who otherwise couldn't afford to get married. Several of those who were married will now begin to be trained as leaders/deacons in their respective churches.

The issue of marriage and cohabitation has prevented many otherwise capable individuals from entering leadership in their church. Since leadership is so desperately needed in our churches, this has provided an answer to the need. The wedding was so

well performed and so well received by all those communities involved that everyone is begging us to offer another one in the fall.

There are many more couples wanting to be married and this greatly excites us to use this as an opportunity for Biblical marriage to be upheld, supported, and desired by Christians in Haiti. This wasn't the case before as cohabitation and fornication has previously been passively accepted by those in the church. Of course, we absolutely could not have done any of this without all of your donations of wedding dresses, wedding rings, men's suits, shoes, and decorations for the church. This is when ministry feels like

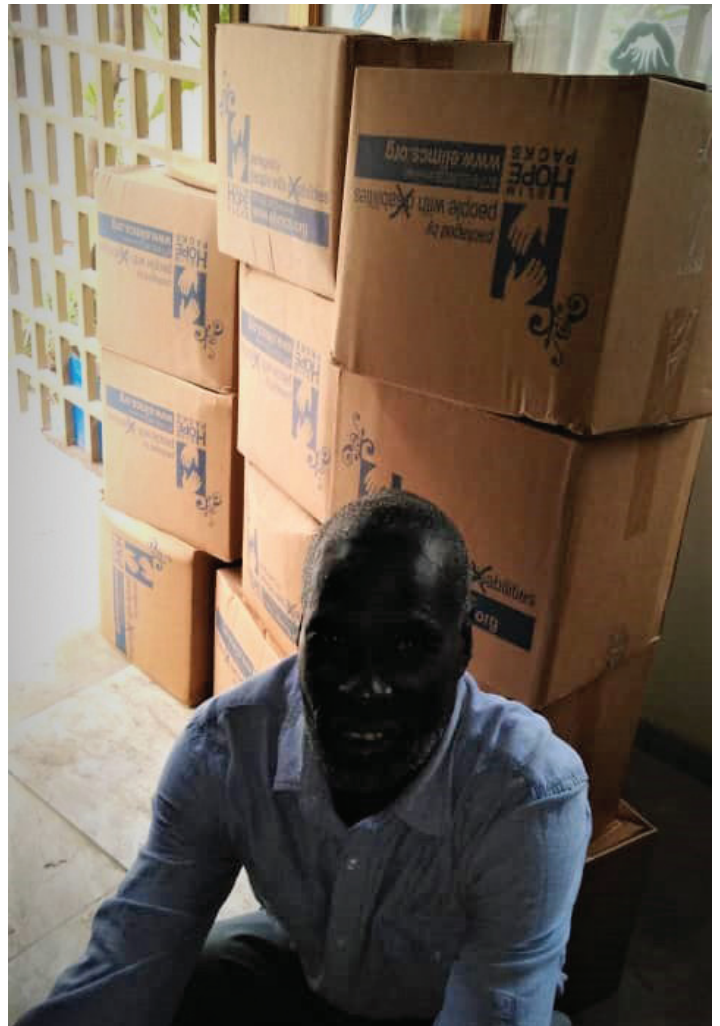
family, and all of you are part of this Charis family assignment with aiding Haiti spiritually and physically.

Joy and I are humbled and beyond thankful for each of you and your generous, giving hearts! Eleven couples are living in committed marriages under the authority and blessing of Christ because of your love and generous hearts—we thank you, and the Haitian newlyweds thank you so very much!



42,000 lbs of beans!

In March we miraculously received 42,000 pounds of beans to distribute to those living with extreme hunger in our churches and mountain communities. The port-of-entry in Haiti has been very resistant to the reception of foreign containers due to the government issues and multiple attempts made by Haitians in other countries to ship guns and other contraband into the country through the shipping ports. Despite all of this, our container was allowed to enter with nothing getting stolen—hallelujah!! Special thanks to my uncle who continually sends food relief to the Haitian people through Charis and financially covers all costs associated with the container, shipping, and port fees!



New church construction in LaRoca

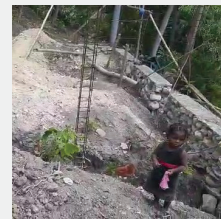
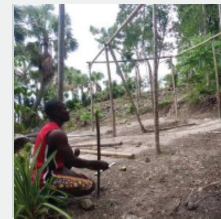
Another piece of good news to share involves the construction of yet another new church! We have written about the community of LaRoca in previous newsletters. We have been involved with this community for about 2 years as we learned about it through a young man named Wandy who lived below us in a 2nd story apartment we were previously renting.

Over several weeks, Joy befriended Wandy and she gave him a Bible that he began to read and consider. He also began to attend some of our community Bible studies. This led to his salvation after which he asked us to please come to his community in the mountains to bring his family and friends the gospel. We gladly obliged.

After meeting Wandy's community and seeing that they were open to the gospel, we agreed upon a weekly Bible study on Friday afternoons and that Bible study has endured for 2 years. Over these two years, the gospel of Christ has defeated vodou throughout the village, as the priests and priestess have burned all their demonic possessions, magic books, and temples, and has led to nearly the whole community surrendering their lives to Christ.

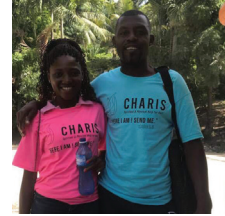
Several months ago, they asked us if we would start a church service for them, in addition to their Friday afternoon Bible study, as the area has no church. We installed one of our pastors, who was willing to travel up the mountain on Sunday mornings, to perform a church service for the community. We purchased large tarps and chairs to create a makeshift church which has been their meeting place for many months.

Recently, a dear friend of the ministry called and informed Joy and I that he had money he wanted to donate toward a cause and wanted to know what we had in mind. We met, informed him of the situation in LaRoca, and he agreed to give toward the construction of a church building! So, construction has already begun, and soon another building dedicated to the worship of God through Christ will stand on land where the devil's temples once stood. Another victory for Jesus Christ!



A new mountain community

Two additional bits of good news are that Deba has found another area beyond Cap Rouge (one of our newer mountain communities where we have initiated evangelism efforts), and she feels God telling her to initiate gospel efforts there. This community is named Morija, and we would greatly appreciate your prayers as we begin efforts to evangelize the people and vodou practitioners who live in this village that has no church and no witness for Christ.



Lorvelie heads to America

The last piece of good news is that Lorvelie has been granted her student visa, was accepted into a university in Indiana, and is currently living with us as she is enrolled in a language school for 11 weeks of intense English language classes purposed for foreign students who are entering American universities.



For those who don't know, Lorvelie is one of 18 children fathered by ChrisNova who is the 2nd most powerful vodou priest in our area. I have been bringing him the gospel of Christ and studying the Bible with him for over 5 years. He has not become a follower of Christ yet, but I believe he will—and the fact that he has allowed his daughter to come and live with Christian missionaries in another country is unbelievable.

Lorvelie is one of only 3 followers of Christ in her immediate family, and it is our hope and prayer that she will lead her father to the Lord. Lorvelie has wanted to come to America to study for many years. She was first in her graduating class and then went on to medical school in Haiti. The school was poorly run with professors only showing up a fraction of the time. Lorvelie left the medical school and began to pray about coming to America to study. For 2 consecutive years the embassy wouldn't grant her a student visa for various reasons. We kept telling her to wait on the Lord as we want to be in His timing, not ours. She accepted this, but not after shedding many tears.

This year was different though as God strongly affirmed His will for her to come to America. Many things confirmed this, but probably the greatest confirmation was her reception of a full-ride academic scholarship that is only given to two entering international students at her school. Her tuition is covered for all 4 years! Many other amazing Divine affirmations occurred, but for consideration of the length of this newsletter I'll save those stories for another day. Lorvelie begins university in mid-August with the goal of becoming a nurse. Adapting to American life, American food, and American English has proven to be more difficult than she expected and she is missing her family—so please pray for her as we are sure that God's hand is on her.

The state of Christianity today

As I was praying and considering what to write about from the Bible, God brought to my mind the spiritual and mental state of many Christians in today's dark and perverse world. As I interact with my Christian brothers and sisters, read the news, and view the world, it is obvious that Christians are angry and fearful, uncertain of their role amidst all this evil in which we are living. It feels like we are being aggressively and intentionally pushed out of social discussions, while a disdain (in some cases a hatred) for the name and person of Jesus Christ is more prevalent than I have ever seen it in my lifetime.

Christians are angry at the government, angry at demonic social agendas, angry about Covid mandates, and fearful that our freedoms being taken away will lead to communism, extensive government oversights, etc. Many Christians are very angry and unsettled in their souls. As I found myself falling into the same irritation and resentment, God let me know that what I was feeling is wrong and displeasing to Him. I will continue and conclude this newsletter by sharing what God, through prayer and the reading of His Word, spoke to me as it is my desire that we, as Christians, are set free from the chains of anger, chaos, and fear that powerful demonic forces have successfully bound our minds with.

The role of the Holy Spirit

As born-again believers we all have the Holy Spirit of God living within us (see 1 Corinthians 3:16). The Bible tells us that the Holy Spirit plays many roles in our lives and these roles, as they come to fruition through our willing surrender to them, are what successfully differentiates us from the unbelieving world.

The Holy Spirit counsels, teaches, and reminds us of Christ's teachings. (John 14:26)

He gives us revelations. (1 Corinthians 2:10-11)

He gives us power. (Acts 1:8)

He gives us knowledge and truth. (John 16:13-15)

He intercedes for us in prayer. (Romans 8:26-27)

He gives us a renewed nature and spiritual life. (Romans 8:10-11)

He marks and seals us for Heaven. (Ephesians 1:13)

What an incomparable gift the Holy Spirit is. There are several words we could use to condense all these functions of the Spirit into a singularity. However, I believe one sure way to describe what we receive with the entry of the Spirit into our lives is 'Wisdom'. Isaiah 11:2 makes this clear when the Holy Spirit is referred to as "the spirit of wisdom and understanding." The Holy Spirit fills us with wisdom; but how does this help us in our world today that hates Jesus and those who follow Him?

Fill us with wisdom

As we stated above, the world wants to strip Christians of any and all influence they may have in society. Unbelievers don't want to live under the Lordship of Christ and care nothing for His Word. A society that hates Jesus is also a society that hates Christians. Therefore, this

society will likewise persecute Christians as they persecuted Christ. This is such a sure fact that the Bible tells us to expect suffering and to not be surprised when it occurs (see 1 Peter 4:1,12).

At the beginning of James' epistle (James 1:2-3), he instructs us to find joy in trials. If this Biblical joy is foreign to you, James gives us the instruction required to grasp this elusive joy.

"If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given to him." – James 1:5

We need to obtain a Biblical mindset in our world from the wisdom that is from above. All we have to do to receive it is ask through prayer. The Spirit of God within us will then begin to reveal the things that we must pay attention to if we are going to live right in this world during times of trials and persecution of Christians. Since we are currently living in times where disease, evil, sexual perversions, hatred, spiritual darkness, and anti-Christ sentiments appear to be controlling our country and world, we must keep Divine wisdom, not worldly wisdom, at the forefront of our mind.

Divine sovereignty

The first thing the Holy Spirit of Wisdom will help us comprehend is that everything we are experiencing in our world today is allowed by God. Satan never has, nor ever will, have autonomy on earth. This fact is oft repeated in Scripture.

"I form light and create darkness; I make well-being and create calamity; I am the Lord, who does all these things." – Isaiah 45:7

"Who has spoken and it came to pass unless the Lord has commanded it? Is it not from the mouth of the Most High that good and bad come?" – Lamentations 3:37-38

"Does disaster come to a city unless the Lord has done it." – Amos 3:6

The Holy Spirit teaches us to recognize that all of the trials, tribulations, frustrations, and sufferings that we endure come from God's hand, and those people and institutions that cause us trouble in this world are simply instruments in God's hand, purposed to discipline, chastise, or sanctify us. This insight greatly helps us, the children of God, as we walk through life in an evil and perverse generation.

If we keep this understanding of God's Sovereignty in our minds as we endure the evils of this world, it will shift our thinking in a Biblical direction that's pleasing to our Creator. Keeping focused on the fact that all things are allowed by God will allow our focus to drift away from the means and agents of our difficulties and sufferings in this world. This will also prevent us from being irritable or impatient as we experience direct or indirect afflictions.

Since we know that God allows all things that occur in this world, including the things that inflict us, we as Christians should never claim that our troubles are random events or chance occurrences. It is thus foolish to allow ourselves to become upset at the people and things that cause our afflictions. If we know that God allows certain people and circumstances to function as instruments to teach us, test us, or fulfill His will, then we should never react against the person or circumstance by which the trial comes to us.

To aid us in understanding the practical appearance of this, let's consider Job. If anyone had a reason to react or become angry over occurrences in his life, it was Job. Over the course of a few days absolute catastrophe strikes Job as God allows Satan to test him and his faith, and Satan does so by using various means. The Sabeans (an ethnic group of Arabs) killed all of Job's servants and stole his oxen and donkeys. Fire fell from heaven and consumed all of Job's sheep and servants in his pastures. The Chaldeans (tribes that roamed the area between the Jordan and Euphrates rivers) stole all Job's camels and murdered his servants. Finally, a great storm came and killed all of Job's sons and daughters who were gathered and feasting in the same house.

Despite all this suffering Job never expresses any anger against Satan, the Sabeans, or the Chaldeans even though they tormented him terribly and caused him great suffering. Rather, Scripture tells us that Job "fell on the ground and worshiped. And he said, 'Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return. The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.'"

Job knew that nothing in the universe occurs outside of God's allowance. Even though Satan, the Sabeans, the Chaldeans, and the weather were the instruments and means of Job's sufferings, Job looked past them to God Who he knew loved him, cared for him, and had allowed these things with Job's sanctification in mind. Despite God's reasons for allowing these tragedies remaining unknown, Job's faith in God's love and omniscience led him not to question God, but rather to worship and pray.

We should all learn a great and beneficial lesson. As redeemed sons and daughters of God through our Savior Jesus Christ, we should

not behave foolishly in front of a lost world by reacting in anger when we undergo affliction, trials, or unfair situations. We know that what we are enduring is being allowed by our Lord. We know that it is both futile and vain to struggle against God in His omnipotence and omniscience! It will also help to remember Romans 8:28 and frequently recite it to ourselves,

"And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to His purpose." – Romans 8:28

All the evil and darkness that we are currently observing in this demonic world and enduring on a day-to-day basis has purpose—a purpose that is known by God and centered around born-again believers.

Let us allow the wisdom of God through the Holy Spirit, to dictate our reactions, control our tongues, govern our behavior, oversee our social media posts, and manage our thoughts as we navigate through the evil and dark waters of this demonic age. This is the only way we will please our Heavenly Father, and it is the only way people will see Christ in us—and that will attract some (the elect) and repel others (the unbelieving lost). Either way, we MUST suffer well in a world that is trying to break us. Jesus suffered well, and He expects nothing less from those who claim Him as Savior—and that's you and me!

“

Hello Mrs Joy, how is everybody? Thanks be to God first, second to all your family and to all the Charis mission teams. You do not realize the full value of what you are doing to help the Haitian couples, like me and my wife, get married. To us, it is such a great privilege. Now our church is trusting us to lead services. My wife is leading the ladies in the service today and last Sunday I was the preacher. Thank you very much for everything. This is a wonderful blessing, we really appreciated it."

Simeon Vincent

Charis translator for our mission teams that come to Haiti. He and his wife were one of the 10 couples that were married on April 24, 2021 in our first ever GROUP wedding.



Mission Statement

Charis (Greek for God's Grace) operates in complete obedience to God, giving Him His rightful place in determining the path and goals of His ministry that He has, by grace, allowed us to perform. Charis primarily focuses on the unseen spiritual needs in Haiti, and secondarily on the seen physical needs, always remembering that our success is completely dependent on the will of God, the gospel of Christ, and the power of the Holy Spirit working effectively through us, His willing servants.

