



How beautiful are the
feet of those who

Proclaim the Good News



CHARIS

Newsletter | September 2022

Family Update

Charis Family,

Joy and I greet you all and we hope that you all had a blessed summer and were able to spend some quality time with family and loved ones. We had a very busy summer with 3 of our 4 children at home. As many of you know we are living in missionary housing in Wheaton, IL, which we are very thankful for. Ciaran and Kanye both had jobs stocking shelves all night at Mariano's grocery store and working as a veterinary technician, respectively. Tiara is working as a nursing assistant at a senior care living facility in order to obtain the 1000 hours of patient care that are required to apply to Physician Assistant (PA) school. Over the course of the summer, it was unreal how all of their work hours were organized. Kanye worked from 7 AM to 1 PM. Tiara works from 2 PM to 10 PM, and Ciaran worked from 10 PM to 6 AM. Every hour of the day was covered by their work schedules which resulted in a lot of driving for Joy and me.

Our oldest daughter Destinee is still working in Knoxville, Tennessee as an ER/Trauma nurse and continues to love her profession. Her husband Reece is managing home construction for a local construction company and is moving up the company management ladder. So, everyone is healthy and doing well. Both Ciaran and Kanye transferred schools as they were unhappy with the subpar Biblical teaching at the Indiana school, they attended last year. So, we drove Ciaran down to Sanford Florida, 25 minutes from Orlando, to attend the Reformation Bible College—a school that teaches only Biblical theology in the reformed tradition founded by R.C. Sproul. Ciaran is absolutely loving his experience there thus far. Kanye now attends the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) and is in his second year of a biology/pre-veterinary medicine major. He has a very challenging academic schedule but assures us that he will rise to the occasion.

Joy and I, in addition to a very busy summer with the kids, continue to daily manage the ministry of Charis in Haiti. Our plan is to return to Haiti in January, God willing, as we greatly miss our Haitian brothers and sisters. Please pray with us that God allows us to clearly discern His will in all of this. Despite the extreme danger, unstable government, and collapsed economy, we strongly believe that all the hardships and sufferings that are occurring in Haiti are Satan's best efforts to keep missionaries out of Haiti. Satan fears the preaching of the true gospel of Christ that results in the salvation of those who have been chosen by God. Salvation overcomes Satan's personal and national strongholds in Haiti, and it is exactly what is needed to propel the Haitian people from hopeless desperation into hopeful joy. This work remains absolutely critical in Haiti and none of us can let up even a little because that is what Satan wants. We must stay zealous and vigilant in this work!

How to process the events in Haiti

I know that many of you have questions due to the horrifying events that are continually unfolding in Haiti this year: the reports of gang takeovers, kidnappings, murders, and our inability to physically be there right now. Many of you have asked about the mental state of the Haitian people as they live in fear, danger, and isolation. We are also asked how we feel about being in the States for such an extended period of time when the ones we love and minister to in Haiti are enduring such suffering.

You need to know, as supporters, how you should process all of this as you watch and hear about everything from afar. These are all questions that I too would ask if I were in your shoes, so I want to utilize this newsletter to aid you all in your understanding and awareness of Charis' stances and ideologies in reference to these things.

Do not fall asleep

Let's first discuss the Haitian people and the very difficult situation that they have to daily endure with no hope of escape or relief. No escape because no surrounding countries want Haitians to enter their country and getting a visa in Haiti that allows travel is virtually impossible. No relief because there are no current plans for new elections. The gangs continue to successfully overtake the local police forces. The ports of entry that receive gasoline and food are all currently being controlled by gangs, making it close to impossible for Haitians to live, work, and eat.

We talk to literally hundreds of Haitians throughout a month, and they are desperate, afraid, hungry, and feeling abandoned by their country and other countries that used to offer help. Our Christian Haitian brothers and sisters are experiencing these same emotions and this is to be expected. Jesus gives us insight into this when He brings His disciples with Him to keep watch as He goes to pray to the Father in the garden of Gethsemane before His arrest and crucifixion.

After Jesus prays, He walks over to His disciples and finds them all sleeping. He tells them not to sleep but rather stay awake and pray for power to overcome temptations that are going to come. Jesus then tells them that "the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak" (see Matthew 26:41). This reveals that in this life on earth our flesh is joined to the spirit as the two coexist within us and are tethered together. This means that weakness in one will surely have debilitating effects upon the other and we all have experience with this. When we are physically exhausted or sick our spiritual life takes a hit, and we are less likely to have the peace, joy, and zeal that we have when we are healthy, well rested and strong.

Conversely, when we are depressed, anxious, or in some other sort of spiritual decline, we become physically weak and unwilling to perform even the most basic physical tasks. So, despite the Haitians knowing that they are saved,

forgiven, and adopted into God's family with heaven to look forward to, they have been so physically deprived and beat down that it does affect their spiritual fervor. What I tell them, and what I want all of you to remember too, is that when we see those we love suffering and living on the brink of physical death, we must remember Jesus' words as He addressed this issue in the 13th chapter of Luke. Let's read this passage together:

“Now at that same time there were some present who were reporting to Him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices. And Jesus answered and said to them, ‘Do you think that these Galileans were greater sinners than all other Galileans because they suffered these things? I tell you, no, but unless you repent you will all likewise perish. Or do you think that those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them were worse offenders than all the men who live in Jerusalem? I tell you, no, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.’” –Luke 13:1-5

In this passage we see two horrible incidents referenced. First, we read that a group of Jews were making sacrifices to God, most likely in the Temple, and Pontius Pilate (a Roman leader) came and slaughtered them in a show of power. We also read of a building project in which a tower was being erected. During the construction the tower fell and killed 18 people. Jesus asks the crowd if they thought that these men who were slaughtered by Pilate, and killed by the falling tower, were greater sinners than other men based on the gruesome way they died?

Jesus answers no, these men weren't greater sinners and goes on to say that our concern should not be focused on how or why a man dies, but rather on whether or not he had repented and been saved before His death. We must remember that the primary consideration facing the world around us is death which produces fear, but the primary consideration for the Christian is eternity! Our thoughts of eternity will surely lead to joy and anticipation of heaven when we think of ourselves and our brothers and sisters in Christ. However, when we consider the unbelieving world and the reality of an everlasting hell, these same thoughts of eternity should result in feelings of deep sadness and an urgency to bring them the gospel.

When we consider the Haitian people, their current physical situation will undoubtedly create sadness in our hearts, but what is most important is the state of their soul. This may sound harsh, but it is true. If my best friends in Haiti (Andrelli, Destine Mevoy, Pastor Abony, Latigue, etc.) were to pass away secondary to the physical sufferings they are enduring in Haiti, I would be sad but not in despair. This is because I know without a doubt that upon their physical death angels will usher them into the perfection of heaven, and all their physical suffering will be eternally over, and they will enjoy being in the presence of Jesus forever.

Joy and I remind them of this when we talk to them in their dire situations. We can't possibly help everyone from a physical standpoint, but we surely can ensure that they all have heard the

gospel that has the power to save their immortal souls. We must remember this too and allow it to comfort us as we think about the Haitian people. Also, know that all your prayers and financial help are ensuring that as many people as possible are hearing the gospel on a daily basis as we support the sending out of our leaders to win souls for the Kingdom of God through the sharing of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

We miss our spiritual family in Haiti

Many of you have been lovingly sensitive to us and asked how Joy and I are dealing with not being able to physically be in Haiti right now with the ones God has given us to love and disciple. I'm sure it comes as no surprise that this time is very difficult for us. Joy and I consider our Haitian brothers and sisters in Christ as our spiritual children. When you share the gospel with someone, and upon hearing it the person's heart is regenerated resulting in saving faith, something supernatural occurs in your heart. This supernatural movement of the Holy Spirit places a love for your new spiritual brother or sister within you that transcends culture, race, ethnicity, and socio-economic status. At that moment you come to the realization that God has given you the honor of now having a spiritual child that you are to disciple and model the Christian life to.

This is no small thing, and a missionary must take the raising up of their new children in Christ seriously. If this discipleship is performed in a God-honoring, biblically-instructed way, then the one you're discipling will soon be discipling others who have come to know the Lord through their witness. Paul shared this sentiment as he speaks to those Corinthians who came to know Christ through his witness to them,

“For you may have countless instructors in Christ, but you don't have many fathers. For I became your father in Christ Jesus through the gospel.” –1 Corinthians 4:15

Just as a father or mother would greatly miss their biological children if they were separated for a period of time, we, likewise, greatly miss our spiritual family in Haiti and our hearts ache to see them all, especially as they endure so many hardships and trials. Despite our sadness, Joy and I can never allow ourselves to forget the absolute Sovereignty of the One we serve, and we are very aware of the fact that His purposes do not require our approval or understanding to be enacted.

Do we need to be physically present?

This time away from Haiti has actually allowed God to teach us many things about the ministry that, if we were still physically in Haiti would have remained well outside of our intuitive discernment. As I think about this my mind goes to Scripture and the times that Jesus wasn't present despite His work still being accomplished.

In Mark 7 and Matthew 15 we read about the Syro-Phoenician woman whose demon-possessed daughter was healed by Jesus. In Matthew 8 and Luke 7 we read about the Centurion's servant who was sick to

the point of death and Jesus healed him. Finally, in John 4 we see a Capernaum official's son who was also sick to the point of death and once again we see Jesus completely heal the young boy. The one thing that all these healings have in common is that they were all performed by Jesus from afar.

Jesus did not physically come to any of them. These distant miracles were performed by Jesus in conjunction with the faith of the one interceding on behalf of the sick. This is comforting to us in our current situation not being able to go to Haiti. Like the Syro-Phoenician mother, the Centurion, and the Capernaum official, we are called to intercede on behalf of the Haitians right now and have complete confidence that God not only hears us but will act.

Jesus did not have to be physically present in order for His work and purpose to be accomplished, and neither do we. God's purpose is not bound by space or time, and His work does not require that we are present 100% of the time. God is with the Haitians whether we are there or not, so the question really becomes—did we leave Christ and His saving gospel present with the people? And we know that we did.

This is why we continue to see new communities of believers being formed, two churches being constructed now, our evangelist church leaders still zealously going out to win people and villages to Christ, and Satan's vodou being defeated. This is all occurring in our absence, revealing that God, in His almighty Sovereignty can take a seed, planted in Haiti by our gospel witness, and grow an entire forest from it. This is a powerful testament to Joy and I, so much so that we can now go to a different area in Haiti and start planting seeds again.

While we are definitely saddened by our inability to see our brothers and sisters in Haiti right now, we are also thankful to God for the reminder that this is His work and He loves the Haitian people more than Joy, you, and I ever could—so we rest knowing that they are in the best Hands that they can possibly be in. We look forward to the near future to see what other miraculous work God has for us in Haiti!

Stay vigilant

Thirdly, let's discuss what all of this means to you all. I want you all to know that your prayers and financial assistance in this ministry are resulting in literal salvations on a continual basis. This work requires extreme dedication and commitment by all of us; we go, you send and support, and we all pray. I think that Paul sums this up very well in Romans 10:

“Whoever calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher? And how will they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who proclaim good news of good things!’”
—Romans 10:14-15

This passage should encourage us all! What an awesome assignment God has given us—and through the performing of this Divine assignment, we can live within the pages of Scripture and obey what God has instructed us to do. I pray that this encourages all of you to stay vigilant at a time when I know it's difficult. Even though the news you hear out of Haiti is morbid and tends to produce a sense of hopelessness within us—we must always remember that God is bigger than all of this, and none of these circumstances and hardships hinder His plans at all. He actually uses them to propagate His plans for us and this world.

To encourage all of you I will relay a quick story from our early days in Haiti in which Joy and I felt hopeless and frustrated, but God was working the entire time. We were experiencing a spiritual dry spell and things were very bad from a physical point of view—people were hungry, gas prices were high, and many were sick. I was called to a home where a very young infant was sick. When I arrived, I found a baby only a few weeks old breathing rapidly, starving, and very sick. The situation was grave and I knew that this baby was on the brink of death. So, I put my hands on the baby's head and cried out to God to spare this baby's life and heal him. I prayed for a long time, and shortly after this the baby died.

I was very disheartened and wondered if God was with me or not. The family came and asked me to preach the funeral. In my sadness and despair, I agreed to perform the funeral for the sake of the family who couldn't afford to go to a church and have a formal funeral service. When I arrived, there were over 100 people there and God told me to disregard all my speaking plans and simply share the gospel. I listened to the Holy Spirit, and I put my notes down and shared the gospel of Jesus and His victory over death, which we didn't have to fear anymore if we were saved.

Many people gave their lives to the Lord that day and at that moment I learned the lesson of Job. Job didn't understand what God was doing or why God had allowed Satan such seemingly great power over his life. All the while God was at work, and when Job's trial had ended, he found himself closer to God, having more faith in God, having a greater understanding of God, and everything he had lost returned to him in a double measure.

We must never allow our actions, decisions, obedience, zeal, or love for Christ's Kingdom building work to be confined within the boundaries of our fears, lack of understanding, or frustrations. Those things are all determined and fed by our carnally conditioned observations of situations, which are not attained with God's Sovereignty, omnipotence, and omniscience in mind.

Remember that God is in control, even when the situation is dire and grim, “If a calamity happens in a city has not Yahweh done it?” (Amos 3:6). Do we believe this verse? It is very easy to see a bad situation and give the devil credit, but don't put the devil on a throne which he has never sat on. God is King and Satan is His pawn—God's purpose is always being accomplished, even when we can't see it—this is true Christian thinking, and we must remain in this state of mind that is given to us by the Holy Spirit which we must remain in continual surrender to.

So, when all seems lost, know that within our confusion God is being found by those who wouldn't find Him if the situation was any different. So let us all agree to stay strong for the Haitian people! Continue to pray without ceasing for them and their country; continue to give so that we can ensure that people are eating, our clinic can keep functioning and treating the sick, and that our church leaders can continue to serve the people and evangelize those who need to hear that there is an eternal hope beyond their transient suffering.

This is a war, and we cannot afford to lay any of our weapons down now. Joy and I can't even begin to thank each of you enough for arming this ministry to fight successfully against the evil that is working hard to destroy Haiti and its people. We have God on our side, and with Him there is absolutely nothing we can't accomplish. Let's continue to work together to give Haiti hope—the only true hope on this earth—Jesus Christ!

The Lord continues to sanctify Nestor's life

Four years ago God saved Nestor and brought him out of the bondage of vodou, but he didn't tear his temple down. Despite not using it, others would enter and attempt to practice ritual magic. The Holy Spirit convicted Nestor about this and in obedience he, along with several brothers and sisters in Christ, went to the temple and tore it down. Now it can never be used again for the devil. Here is Nestor tearing down his temple and pulling the stake from the ground that symbolized allegiance to a demon.



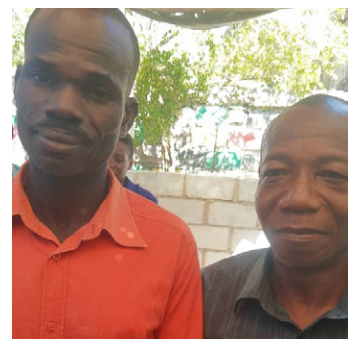


The Gospel continues to spread

This year our Haitian pastors and leaders have entered 4 new villages bringing the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They have started 2 new communities of widows, began a new children's group and supported a new blind & handicapped group. They have led many to the Lord and are baptizing the new believers.

For though I am absent in body, yet I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your good order and the firmness of your faith in Christ.

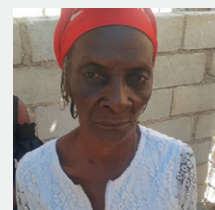
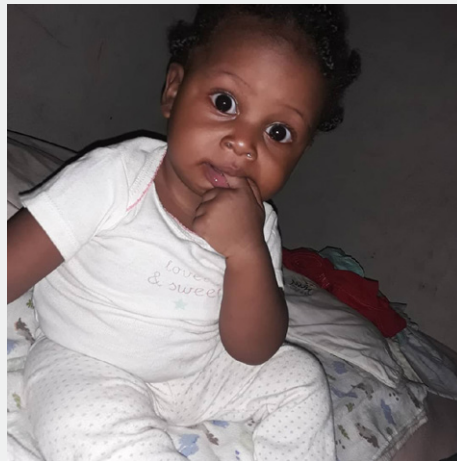
-Colossians 2:5



Mobile mountain clinics

Our Haitian medical team has independently facilitated mobile mountain clinics and coordinated the care of numerous medical emergencies. They have made house calls to widows who were too weak to come to a clinic. They have assisted many pregnant women in delivering their babies. The medical team has come alongside the mothers with food, formula, vitamins and medicines which is a critical service to ensure the future health of the children and the stability of the family.

And oh the joy to see our churches in Haiti unifying together to continue identifying more places in Haiti where the Gospel of Jesus Christ has not been preached. Caring for souls is the highest type of love one can give. Our churches are constantly letting us know which families are without food, or shelter and we work together discerning, directing and utilizing the funding that you give to fulfill the needs in the communities. We have been tirelessly working together with the Haitian leaders to distribute the food and aid. Members of the church act as one body, praying with those in the body of Christ who have lost their loved ones—strengthening them through the days of mourning. Through all the trials and tribulations we must continue to have faith that NO weapon formed against us shall prosper.





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.