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Journal

Dear Friends and Supporters,

Head covered, barefoot and weeping, King David hurriedly left the city he had helped to conquer and build. His kingdom was in turmoil. Government officials betrayed him, friends became traitors, and David and his family found themselves on the run. Absalom, David's estranged son, was the culprit behind the coup, and he and his entourage of soldiers were quickly making their way to overthrow the kingdom at Jerusalem (2 Samuel 15 & 16). Leaving the comfort and protection of his Jerusalem palace, David crossed the brook of Kidron and ascended the Mount of Olives on his way to the desert of Judea. His tearful ascent up that fateful hill would not be the last time that this hallowed ground would feel the weight of sorrow, and come to be known as a mountain for tears.



A view of the Mount of Olives from the Temple Mount. "Dominus Flevit" is visible in upper right—with the gray teardrop shaped roof and white base.

One thousand years after the reign of David, Jesus also wept as He traveled down the Mount of Olives. But instead of running away from trouble and into the wilderness, as David had, five days before His crucifixion the Son of God descended in painful tears toward a city that would torture and murder Him. His cries, however, were not for Himself; but for the people of Israel whom He loved so much (Matt. 23:37). On the night before His death, at the base of this historic mountain, sweat drops of blood poured from His brow, and with "loud cries and tears" He offered up prayers and supplication (Heb. 5:7). As the songwriter Samuel Reed said, "Long in anguish deep was He, weeping there for you and me."

2021 Schedule:

[December 1](#)
Fall Series
San Marcos, TX

2022 Schedule:

[January-March](#)
Bear Valley Bible Institute
[March 6-18](#)
BV Israel/Athens Study Tour
[March 19-April 2](#)
BLPT Israel/Rome Study
Tour

The Mount of Olives was a place for tears. Even today, a small church building designed in the shape of a teardrop has been erected on its slope. It is known as "Dominus Flevit", which means "The Lord wept". Its purpose is to remind those who visit this cherished site of the sorrow He bore some two thousand years ago on that hallowed hill near Jerusalem. Each time I see the site, I am reminded of both the tragedy of sin and the love of our Savior. I am also reminded that Jesus wept, cared, and suffered so much to reveal to the world His immense compassion and emotion-filled heart, especially when, at times, I cry a mountain of tears of my own. While tears are a part of this life, we look forward to the day when God will "wipe away all tears" from our eyes (Revelation 21:4). But with every tear we might experience in this life, we take refuge in knowing that our Lord understands and is touched with the feelings of our infirmities.

Our dear brethren, we know that you have sown tears of hard work, prayers, and faithful service to God. We also know that you have made many sacrifices so that others like Carla and me can continue in the work of ministry. Because of your support and the strength of the Lord, we are blessed to be involved in numerous tasks. Some of those tasks include our work at the Bear Valley Bible Institute. At the beginning of October, we completed the first quarter of classes, administered exams, graded term papers and notebooks, and calculated grades. Most of our students did well, and we look forward to teaching them in the third quarter beginning in January. We also spent time with them in our Denver home, hosted them for several activities, and provided mentoring and counsel to several, especially to some who are nearing their graduation, and likewise provided counsel to some at the Bear Valley congregation.

Other works this past month have included several speaking appointments. At the Linder road congregation in Meridian, Idaho, I delivered two lectures on Archaeology and the Bible. In Moundsville, West Virginia, I delivered three lessons at the West Virginia School of Preaching lectureship; all of them from the Psalms. In Mechanicsville, Virginia, I delivered two lessons at the Cold Harbor Road congregation. I also delivered a lesson online called “Son of David, Have Mercy on Us,” for the Connect Digital Bible Study Program, wrote five articles for the 2022 Daily Devotional Series published by the Jenkins Institute (see <https://www.thejenkinsinstitute.com/shop>), recorded a video lesson for the Four Seas Bible College Lectures to be broadcast next month, and wrote my monthly article for the Excel Still More Bible Workshop program (see <https://www.esmbibleworkshop.com/>).

Thank you so much for all your prayers and support. Your help has allowed us to continue in the work of ministry. We know that those who sow in tears will reap with shouts of joy” (Psalm 126:5). Thank you for caring and working so hard. We deeply value your partnership and fellowship in reaching the lost, edifying the saints, and defending the faith. In Him, *John*



From the Jenkins Institute, the 2022 daily devotional guide: His Family. This is a year long study on the church. Order here: <https://www.thejenkinsinstitute.com/shop/his-family-2022-daily-devotional-guide>

It is humbling to ask, but if you or your congregation are seeking to support a good work, would you please consider Bible Passages? Contact us if you have any questions!

Check out our newest “Connections” videos!



Follow this link or type in your browser: <https://video.wvbs.org/program/bible-land-passages-connections/>



L-R: Just a few of the students and faculty who came to sing at our BV house...John spoke at the West Virginia School of Preaching lectures...while in WV, we visited Bethany, the home of Alexander Campbell...we hosted a "Cereal Night" for the students - they loved it! (so did John!)...a quick trip home for, among other things, Emmy's 4th birthday!...We enjoyed some time with Don and Teri Harris while in West Virginia's beautiful rolling hills...another reason for our quick trip home: the wedding of dear friends Logan Summers and Lacey Deaver...the home of the West Virginia School of Preaching...We enjoyed dinner and games one night with Wayne and Weezie Burger— Wayne is an Instructor for Bear Valley and preaches for the Conifer church of Christ (Weezie calls him the "Energizer Bunny"!)



Carla's Comments

Dear friends,

Earlier this year, when John and I were filling in our 2021 calendar, to be honest, I remember dreading October just a little bit! There were several things on the schedule that had been postponed from 2020, on top of some new things, plus preparation for some other things, and then packing up our things to head back to Texas—I was afraid there were too many “things”! As always, though, God overruled those fears and blessed us with such **good** things. In Idaho, we were able to sit in on some great lessons at the Linder Road lectureship, as well as spend time with dear friends (Gary and Michelle Massey) and meet a number of people who, Lord willing, will travel with us to Israel in March. We also loved taking part in a meal at one of the elders' homes, where a number of the congregations' kids (see below) waited on us hand and foot. They were adorable AND efficient, whisking away our dirty dishes and replacing them with the next course. They had such servant hearts! The following week, at the edifying West Virginia SOP lectureship, we enjoyed meeting Andy and Marsha Robison (Andy directs the West Virginia School of Preaching) and so many others, and we spent a sweet afternoon in the gorgeous, autumn-splashed WV mountains with Don and Teri Harris (their children and our children are good friends.) When I sometimes start to feel a little overwhelmed by all the things, I have to remind myself to take in moments to breathe in the blessings.

We did some especially fun things, like a quick trip back to Texas to celebrate our sweet Emmy's fourth birthday and the joy-filled wedding of Logan Summers and Lacey Deaver. While there, John was able to do a recording at WVBS of his lesson for the “virtual” lectures in Singapore (isn't technology great?) One particularly fun thing we did in October was a “Cereal Night” with the BV students. Everyone brought their favorite kind of cereal for supper and we all shared. Lots of the guys, John included (actually, ESPECIALLY John!) were very excited to mix up numerous bowls full of sugary cereal! We also enjoyed a singing night in the little BV house—the acoustics are wonderful and we sang until our voices were scratchy.

I have begun working on a scripture writing plan for 2022, and already have permission from the copyright owners. I'm still working on details and design but would love for any of you to join in. Hopefully next

month I will be able to share a link where it can be downloaded. Writing scripture has helped me grow and has kept me accountable in my daily Bible study. I highly recommend it!

Our family is doing well. Mom is settling into her little apartment next to Doug and Karen. Jordan and Erin have moved their growing family into a roomier house (very close to their former home in Katy). Jake and Alyssa are venturing into the world of AirB&B with a house in Gatlinburg. AND - happy, happy news: Micah and Courtney are expecting their first child in April! God is so good! And we are so thankful for the blessing of YOU!

Love, *Carla*



One of the best aspects of social media—you make friends in faraway places, and eventually you meet face to face! While in Idaho, I was able to hug my friend Deanna Myers for the first time.



This sweet group of kids were our “waitstaff” for a beautiful dinner at the Linder Road church of Christ lectureship.