

May 2024

Miller's Newsletter

"Knowing God and Making Him Known...in the South Pacific"



Dear Brethren,

As always it is a joy to be co-laboring with you in the Lord's work. I was recently reminded how God sets up **these divine appointments** with people that come my way. Throughout the Bible we see these divine appointments. Time after time, God leads the faithful to cross paths with people. Scripture declares that **"the steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord"** (Ps. 37:23, NKJV). God orders, arranges, and establishes the details of His children's lives, including some unexpected divine appointments. After decades of walking with God, I can tell you that seeing Him set up such "appointments" is a thrill without comparison. How often do we experience **delays, changes of plans, or redirections** and regard them as intrusions? It could be that God is detouring us so that we can do something different or new for Him. Consider Paul's trip to Philippi in **Acts 16**. He had gone to Macedonia because of a God-directed vision (**vv. 9, 10**). How could he know that he would end up in prison there? But even that trip to jail was God-led because He used Paul to bring salvation to a jailer and his family (**vv. 25–34**). The Bible records many such divinely directed appointments. The story of Phillip and the eunuch is a beautiful illustration of the special encounters that God orchestrates for the Christian who walks in the Spirit (**see Acts 8:26–39**). Philip could have ministered just to the crowds in the cities and village, but God sent him to the desert for a divine appointment with a single individual. We must always seek God's leading and let Him determine where we are best suited to serve Him. I was recently flying from Auckland (our largest city) to Nelson (South island) to preach and encourage the brethren there. On the plane I sat next to a lady who had her headphones on. I prayed **"Lord, you will need to help me break through this one."** As the water was being handed out, I asked the lady if she would like a glass and she took off her headphones. **So, we began chatting**, knowing I better seize the moment. She explained she was a medical doctor, a surgeon in the local hospital in Nelson and had been at a conference in Scotland. She got around to asking me what I am going down to the Southland of our country for. I told her I was **"a Christians and I travel to encourage other Christians"**. She asked which church group, and I told her I was with the church of Christ. She immediately said she was raised in the church of Christ in South Africa. But she said I have some sins to confess and shared her broken life. I got a chance to share with her God's plans, love and hopes for her if she came back to the Lord. I asked her if I could pray for her. She said, **"would you?"** So, after the prayer she grabs my arm tightly and with watery eyes and said, **"thank you so much for doing that for me"**. I reminded her that this a divine appointment and that God wants her back.

God has a divine purpose for each one of us, it's just remembering, as I often must remind myself too, **1. Pray for divine appointments.** When I get up, as I put my feet down on the floor, I pray “**Lord give me a divine appointment today**”. In fact, I do it several times a day. **2. Prepare for divine appointments.** The Bible says in **2 Timothy 4:2**, “**Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season**” (NIV). Also, in **1 Peter 3:15**, “**But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect**” (NIV). If we all start looking for those “divine appointments,” we will find them. I’m having to often ask God to prepare my heart for them. By making ourselves available to God, we will see things happen that we would have never expected. **3. Act on the opportunity of a divine appointment.** The story of the Samaritan woman is another example of a divine appointment (**see John 4:5– 42**). Jesus met the woman at Sychar’s well and **seized the opportunity** to minister to her. The result was that she and the whole village believed in Him, and it changed all their lives. We know that this was truly a divine appointment because of the results. I believe that Scripture recorded this story for us to realize that God desires divine appointments in our own lives. He wants us to realize that they happen in the regular course of events, but we need to be prepared. They will be the most **satisfying experiences that we will ever have.**

Recently we had a retreat for the elders and their wives to get away and look at ways to emerge new leadership for the future. Jay Jarboe helped us work through ideas how we can do this.



In May, I headed to the South Island of our country. My goal has always been to do what Paul did in **Acts 14:22 to strengthen the disciples and encourage them to true to the faith.** It allowed me to preach and teach in different settings and hear the hearts of the brethren. I took Paul Mafi (right) with me for 3 days. Paula has been preaching in the Nelson church and encouraging them. Paula wrote these kind words to me.

Dear Brother Chris,

I would like to thank you so much for your commitment to visit my family in Blenheim and spending 3 days with you in Nelson encouraging one another from the Word and prayers including



Christ, Paula and Mina.

I also went to visit with the brethren in Christchurch. Grant Stanton leads and preaches at the church in there. I also got to meet some of his fellow workers, James and Suma Muppidi who recently moved there from India. James is helping Grant in the preaching and leadership of the church there. Grant spent eight days travelled with me, and I got a chance



our walking exercises but also preaching on Sunday and spending time in our luncheon fellowship with our brothers and sisters in Nelson Church of Christ. It's very encouraging to my personal walk with God and growth in my faith. Keep up the awesome work in the Lord and May His abounding grace be always with you and Melinda and your family as well. Co-Laborers in



to be encouraged by Grant as we tag teamed together.



We also visited brethren in Dunedin and Matura. Each of the situations are different but my prayer was that I could be there to encourage and strengthen the church and individuals along the way. It is always encouraging seeing and meeting new families and individuals.

Recently Deon Connaway, who works at the local city council and is one of our members at Otumoetai church asked me if I would study with him as he is wanting to grow more. Deon and his family moved to NZ

from South Africa a few years ago. It's wonderful to have them among us. We meet at 6:45 a.m. at his office to study from the book of Colossians.

Our church family camp this year was wonderfully attended and a great way for families to connect with each other.

This year some of the church families are going to Fiji to



help minister to the church there. We had a fund-raising evening and the Thai students

cooked Thai food and shared their journeys to faith. They raised the money needed.



Melinda and I have been enjoying our time with our new grandson. He is now 4 months old and is growing fast. Melinda loves taking him for walks. We count our blessings that they live in the same city and country as our other grandchildren live in California and are busy teenagers now.

As always, we appreciate the prayers that go up for us and for the financial help for our work in New Zealand and beyond. Please pray that we continue to have the health and strength to be about the Lords work as long as we can.

In His service

Chris Miller

