



Hello, Charis family! I wanted to first thank all of you for your responses to the last newsletter. Your suggestions and comments revealed just how invested and interested you all are in this ministry that God has assigned to each of us in Haiti.

If I have not responded to you yet it is only because of our very busy schedule right now—please have patience as I plan to respond to every one of you who wrote to me. We have spent the last month (June) in the States getting our daughter Tiara registered for college, attending important meetings and conference calls that could result in Haitians being greatly aided, and speaking to several churches. Additionally, we celebrated our son Ciaran's birthday, our daughter Tiara's birthday, our daughter Destinee's birthday, and Joy's and my 22nd wedding anniversary. We have had a very busy month! It was fruitful and blessed thanks to all of your prayers and the generous giving from the churches we visited—thank you!

Updates from the field!

The new church that is being constructed in Deba's community in Jacmel is near completion as the foundation, floor, walls, roof, doors, and windows are all in place. The construction crew, made up almost solely of local members of this body of Christ, are currently smoothing the walls and finishing the bathroom and small office behind the church.

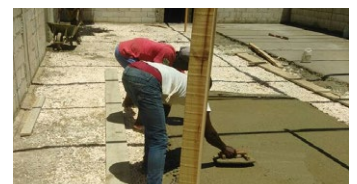
This is such an exciting time within this community as they are witnessing God's blessings and answers to prayer in response to their strong and unwavering faith despite their difficult circumstances.

*"Unless the Lord builds a house, its builders labor over it in vain."
(Psalms 127:1)*



People are also continuing to come to saving faith in Christ within this community secondary to the boldness and willingness of this small group of believers who are not timid when it comes to sharing the gospel, and desiring that their friends, families, and neighbors be released from the lies and bondage of demons. Joy and I are so proud

of this community, as we consider each one of them as our spiritual sons and daughters. What an honor to raise them in the Lord and witness their transformed lives through the power of the gospel and the Holy Spirit who now lives within each one of them and directs their lives.



The Marigot church is strong

Another exciting occurrence for us is the level of sustainability that is being demonstrated on the field in our absence. Joy is in contact with all of our leaders on a daily basis. She daily receives reports, photos, and voice messages pertaining to all of the discipleship efforts, church services, construction advancements, and individual concerns occurring in all of our communities in Haiti.

This level of sustainability is the highest it has ever been as God is placing His stamp of approval on the evangelism efforts that have been continually performed on the ground in Haiti for the last 6 years. This confirms what God has been placing on our hearts, as discussed in the last newsletter, to now travel to a new location in Haiti that needs to hear the gospel and leave the church that has been established in and around the Marigot area in the arms and guidance of the Holy Spirit!

These are exciting times and we are very much looking forward to continuing this journey with every one of you who God has chosen to be a part of this ministry. Please pray for God to prepare the area that He will send us to—to prepare the hearts and minds of the people to receive salvation through the words of the gospel of Jesus Christ!

The power of prayer

When praying about what God wanted me to discuss in this newsletter with all of you, He placed the following on my heart. Over the course of the month of June we had the opportunity to visit with many of you, speak at your churches, and break bread together—which was a great blessing for Joy, our kids, and I. Thank you for your constant hospitality, encouragement, and support.

There is another aspect of our visits that also exists as a constant, and it is this particular ‘constant’ that I would like to discuss. In a concise assertion, many of you place Joy and I on a lofty, undeserved pedestal, considering us to be something we are not. We are not some type of super-Christians; we don’t have special prayer powers that other Christians don’t; we don’t have all of the answers; and we are far from perfect. We are frequently entrusted with deep hidden sins that many of you are struggling with, sins that your pastors and families don’t even know about.

We are asked to pray about very serious matters in your lives that you haven’t talked to anyone else about. We are asked many questions about demons and Satan and how to successfully battle against them/him. I could continue, but I believe that you all can appreciate what I am saying.

Before I continue, I just want to let you all know that Joy and I love all of you and consider it an absolute honor to pray with you and for you concerning the struggles in your lives. We also greatly desire to pass on certain knowledge that we have gained on the field in relation to the demonic, and we are honored to know that you trust us enough to be raw and honest in terms of your addictions and sins.

This writing is in no way purposed to deter any of you from asking us questions or asking us to pray—please continue to do so. I am writing this because the mentality that causes many in the church to elevate Joy and I to an undeserved status, coupled with what I am generally seeing within American Christianity, is disturbing me to the point that it must be addressed. Today, the people of God (the church) look no different than the world, and many are dealing with the exact same problems that non-Christians are dealing with. I want to discuss this because if we don’t break free from this great deception that is occurring in our privileged society, then how will we ever even be able to begin to discuss God’s will for our lives, and the work He has prepared for each of us before the foundations of the world were laid?

Biblical blessing

In America we consider ourselves to be privileged and blessed, both of which are true by worldly standards. The problem with this statement is that we are Christians, and that means that we have denounced the world and its prince (Satan) and chosen to live Biblically which means our standardizations find their existence and guidance within Scripture. This should radically change the way that we think and look at our world.

For instance, our culture praises and strives after wealth and power, but Jesus chose to identify Himself with the poor and weak, not the rich and powerful. In fact, He calls the poor blessed and says it is nearly impossible for a rich person to enter heaven, (Matthew 19:23).

In America, comfort and ease have overtly positive connotations and we desire them, but the Bible says something very different. Zephaniah 1:12 tells us that God will, “punish those who settle down comfortably”, and in Amos 6:1 we read, “Woe to those who are at ease in Zion and to those who feel secure on the hill of Samaria—the notable people in this first of nations”.

“In Your presence is fullness of joy; in Your right hand there are pleasures forever.” (Psalm 16:11b)

As we read these things in Scripture why do we continually refuse to see and acknowledge the truth? Money, comfort, and ease are not Biblical blessings, but rather quasi curses, or at the very least agents of temptation that serve to create spiritual complacency which always leads to spiritual inefficacy.

“And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.” (Philippians. 4:19)

The questions that these set of truths demand are simple ones: where do you find your satisfaction, from the world or Christ? Is Christ ALL satisfying to you? Furthermore, if Christ isn’t all satisfying to us, then what are we showing the world about Christianity and how are we representing the one true God on an earth that is saturated with false gods?

First, is Christ all satisfying to you? I guess an appropriate pre-requisite question would be, is Christ supposed to be all satisfying to Christians? Let us look to Scripture for the answer to this question.

“But whoever drinks from the water that I will give him will never get thirsty again. In fact, the water I will give him will become a well of water springing up in him of eternal life.” (John 4:14)

“Though you have not seen Him, you love Him; though not seeing Him now, you believe in Him, and you rejoice with inexpressible and glorious joy because you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls.”
(1 Peter 1:8-9)

We could include many additional verses here, but I believe the response to the question, should Christ be all satisfying to a confessing Christian, has been provided by King David, the apostle John, the apostle Paul, and the apostle Peter, as they collectively answer with a resounding YES! Knowing, and being indwelt by Christ produced so much satisfaction within the hearts of the apostles that they needed nothing, nor sought anything, from their culture, their surroundings, or their government to produce any additional satisfaction in their lives—Christ was all satisfying!

This may seem to be a simple truth that we are all familiar with but truth exists in two forms. There is observational truth, and there is inciting truth. Observational truth may be observed with no further expectation from the observer. An example of this would be that the sky is blue, or a ball is round. Both of these observations are true, but neither provokes or requires any kind of active response.

On the other hand, there are inciting truths that incite a response once they are discovered. Examples would be: it is very hot today, which would produce the action of seeking a place that is air-conditioned; there is an attack dog over there, which would result in the action of avoiding entering the dog's area, or; there is \$20 laying on the ground which would incite one to walk over and pick it up.

The kind of truth we are discussing when stating that Christians should find Christ all satisfying is inciting truth. The action that should result from this truth is visible, active obedience to His Word as the great truth of Christ and the cross cannot remain apathetically hidden. Our lives, under this truth, should not give the world any impression other than we are all satisfied with Christ. I fear that we are not giving the world this impression by any stretch of the

imagination, and to prove this let's look at our American lives as Christians.

When we go on vacation and spend \$1000s to spend a week somewhere, like Barbados, we are telling the world that Barbados is more satisfying to us than Christ. When we buy vehicles and homes that are beyond what we need, we are telling the world that cars and homes are more satisfying to us than Christ. When we look at pornography and practice fornication in any form, then we are announcing to the world that sex is more satisfying to us than Christ. When we are overweight from gluttony we are telling the world that food is more satisfying to us than Christ. When we attend our kid's soccer games rather than go to church on a Sunday morning we are telling the world that our kids are more satisfying to us than Christ. When we want the sermon to end so we can get home and watch the football game then we are showing everyone around us that sports are more satisfying to us than Christ. When all we can talk about is our country, the President, or politics we are showing the world that patriotism and politics is more satisfying to us than Christ.

I could go on and on, but I am confident that we understand what is being made glaringly and regrettably obvious here—in America we, as Christians, are not all satisfied with Christ, and our lives loudly proclaim this to our communities, our neighbors, our children, our spouses, and most certainly God!

Before you get angry, just think honestly about this. In all of the examples above consider what is actually being done. If Christ was all satisfying, and your mind was completely consumed with Him and His mission on this earth—to share His name and gospel with all people in all nations—then why is your money and precious time going toward vacations, cars, and homes (all things that are concerned with status, pride, and unnecessary excess); why is your mind allowing sexual sin, food, consumerism, sports, the country, or politics to compete in any way with Christ and His agenda on this earth? Do you look at this planet as a playground or a mission field?

It is high time that we confess something that may be difficult to confess—in America we control, dictate and determine what we do with our money, time, and thoughts secondary to what we determine to be

satisfying to us outside of Christ—thus Christ is only partly satisfying as the completion of our satisfaction lies within the carnally driven grasp of our worldly fallen nature that we refuse to crucify if we are even convicted enough to deem it worthy of crucifixion. Our hearts and minds have been seared by the deceptive pleasures of the world and thus what the Bible clearly defines as sinful, we have determined to be cultural, normal, encouraged, and even celebrated. Our sins are sins of self-indulgence, and these sins have become so prevalent and powerful within our society that they have not only become definitive of our culture, but also our Christianity, and this is an unfortunate abomination!

God has placed this topic very heavily on my heart to the point that I can relate to the prophet Jeremiah who said, in reference to all that God was telling him to say, “His message becomes a fire burning in my heart, shut up in my bones. I become tired of holding it in, and I cannot prevail.” (Jeremiah 20:9b). Due to space, I cannot say all that God is putting on my heart to say in this newsletter. So, next month I plan to put out a special large devotional on this topic, because we have to awaken from our spiritual sleep. Our sins of self-indulgence have become normalized, and when we aren't convicted by our sin we are in a VERY dangerous place spiritually. When Jesus stated very clearly in Matthew 7:21-23, that there will be hordes of people who say “Lord, Lord” on the last day, thinking that they lived a life on Earth very worthy of heaven, only to hear Him tell them, “I never knew you, depart from Me you who practice lawlessness”, He meant it, and thus this will be a regrettable reality for many. I don't want any of us to be in that damning situation. I want all of you to live the lives that you currently think you can't live.

Rather than looking at Joy and myself like we are doing something exceptional, my prayer is that you stop selling your own Christian walk short and attempt exceptional things for God yourself in absolute obedience to what you hear Him telling you to do. William Carey, who is referred to as the father of missions, famously said,

*“Expect great things from God.
Attempt great things for God.”*
(William Carey)

Please, wake up and see what Satan is doing to us in this country of excess, and refuse to allow the 'pleasures of this world' to rob you of heavenly rewards. I look forward to writing to you more about this next month. Have a blessed summer and please start praying for God to open your eyes to sins that our culture has unfortunately indoctrinated us all to believe aren't sins. Pray as King David did,

"Who perceives his unintentional sins? Cleanse me from my hidden faults. Moreover, keep your servant from willful sins; do not let them rule me. Then I will be blameless and cleansed from blatant rebellion. May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable to you, Lord my rock and my Redeemer." (Psalm 19:12-14)

Chaos in Port au Prince

As many of you probably already know, Haiti was in chaos, July 6-11th and was extremely dangerous in the capital of Port au Prince. What initiated the outbreak in violence was the government announcing a 49% increase in gas prices. This resulted in 1 gallon of gasoline now being \$4.75, a lot considering that the average daily income of a Haitian is less than \$2 per day.

Upon hearing this the people went into an uproar and mob violence began. Blocking roads, burning down buildings and businesses, pulling foreigners from cars, etc. occurred and it was very dangerous for any foreigner to be in Haiti. The airport was closed and flights were cancelled and many mission teams were stranded at the airport unable to get home.

The prime minister announced that he would delay the gas price hike, but delaying it was not what people want to hear. We see this as Satan at work and we appreciated all the prayers for us and Haiti! There was some mild violence in our area near Jacmel, but nothing like what was experienced in Port au Prince. All of our leaders,

communities and your prayer families are safe and are doing fine. Thank you again for the covering of prayer during this tumultuous time.

Personal prayer request

As you know, when we are back home in the States it is not uncommon for us to drive thousands of miles in a very short period of time to get to all of the churches and meetings around the country that we must go to in order to represent the Haitian people and to raise awareness concerning how God is powerfully working through His gospel in one of the darkest spiritual countries on Earth. Recently we were involved in a fender bender on the highway which resulted in front end damage to our Durango that already has almost 200,000 miles on it. We are asking for your prayers concerning this, and if any of you have knowledge of a late model vehicle that someone would be willing to donate to us it would be greatly appreciated. We drive almost everywhere to save money (since airfare is much more expensive), so a good vehicle is vital to our work in the States. Thank you in advance for your prayers, understanding, and help.

Counting our blessings



Funds donated to build a church for the new believers in Jacmel



Funds donated to purchase a much-needed motorcycle for Pastor Abony, our lead pastor.



Baptized 24 new believers in April and May, all former voduists



Received and distributed 400 boxes of Mannapacks (protein rice meals), 300 boxes of beans and 30 boxes of Back-to-School kits!



Hosted 2 medical/dental mission trips and 3 on-the-ground evangelism mission trips.



Received 10K pairs of new shoes from the FiveTen company and have been putting 100s of shoes on people in our Haitian communities and several homeless communities in Chicago. Additionally, we will be sending 2,500 shoes to Turkish refugees as well!



The Henderson kids, Destinee, Tiara, Ciaran and Kanye, would like to invite you to follow them on Facebook as they walk through their journey as missionary kids in Haiti: <https://www.facebook.com/hendersonkids.henderson.3>

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.