

Update on the Ministry of "The Jesus Chick"

onTheField



The Journey to New Mexico >>>

One of the most popular questions asked of me lately was "How on earth did you get an invitation to New Mexico?"

That invitation came through a social media connection with Pastor Dewey Moede, who at the time of our introduction, was a friend of a friend scenario and my desire to know a radio DJ which at the time Dewey was.

Not long after, Dewey quit his full time position at the Christian radio station for the grand adventure and uncertainty of the web based ministry FGGAM.org.

I began writing for his website and our friendship and ministry goals synched. We became fast and sure friends for life. And as they say, the rest is history.



Shari Johnson and Pastor Dewey Moede

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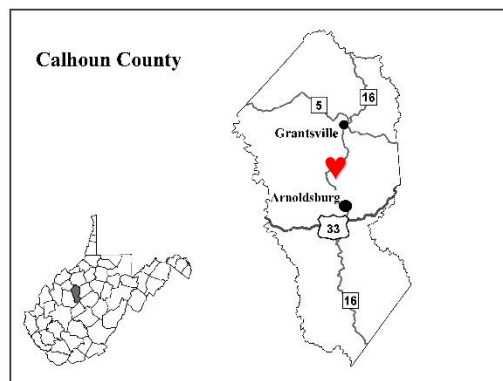
The Fields of Home

When the Mission Field Doesn't look like they thought it would

For most of the 365 days of the year my Mission Field is in the Hills of West Virginia. A great deal of it in the vicinity of where I live. I have family who are on the mission fields of foreign lands, which is not an easy lot in life either. But it's easier to explain. Even family and friends who know what I do, don't really understand why I consider it a job. I consider it that because that's what God told me it was when He called me to it. And when one is called to it, that means you're accountable for it.

Home is Where Your Heart Is

When my Brother in law and sister were called into the fields of Canada for mission work, I was upset for a few reasons. First of all, because we are a tightly knit family and we like it that way. Someone moving so far away was almost like the forsaking of the assembling of ourselves together. Not biblically, but familial. We love each other! But over time we adjusted... Well, some of us. Not my mother 😊. But another reason I was upset about their move to Canada was the fact that we would not be serving on the mission field of home.



I couldn't understand why they didn't feel the need to serve Christ here. And that is when, I felt God say to me, "The missionfield for which you've been called is the address that I give you, not one you've chosen for yourself. If you're so concerned, consider that your assignment." And so it is.

Over time my mission field has been expanded to the world via the super highway of cyber space. The assignment changes often. But it all feels like home.

Journey to New Mexico continued from page 1: >>>

First Stop: Magdalena

The First Baptist Church of Magdalena is Pastored by Paul Holt and lies a few hours and 75 miles south of Albuquerque. Pastor Dewey and Pastor Paul both share in their passion for small Southern Baptist churches and support each others ministries through encouragement and filling in for one another when the need arises. On Sunday, September 29th I arrived at the church where I fully believe God had sent me to encourage my brother and sisters in Christ to stay faithful in His service. And while I sincerely hope that was the end result, I was in awe by the power of the Holy Spirit that was waiting for us in that place. The Worship team, musicians and Pastor Paul ministered to mine and Gloria Jones spirits and encouraged us to continue



on in our calling as well. Is that not a perfect representation of the body of Christ.

As Paul wrote to the Romans in Chapter 1:9-13
For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers; Making request, if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come unto you. For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established; That is, that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me.



My very first church in the state of New Mexico served both opportunity to bless and be blessed.

As children of the living God, across the globe it was a lesson that I needed to remember. The body of Christ is indeed a body, though many members; and to encourage unity requires an understanding and acceptance of the differences in culture, denominations, and worship styles.

My first stop ended up being a fresh start in a lesson on unity!

Second Stop >>>

Back in Time

Living in rural West Virginia often gives us the idea that we are at the end of the line for technology updates. Not so! While parts of New Mexico is ahead of us in technology trends, there are many areas of the state that has little to no internet and wifi capability.



Even though Ella's Café in Reserve, New Mexico has some of the best food in the village, the marketed wifi is on again off again.

And while to some that may not matter or is a blessing for what it limits exposure to, it also limits the communities economic growth. New Mexico is tied for second with Louisiana in poverty. But before we get too proud, the State of West Virginia trails them at third place. We have the same issues, just a different vantage point geographically. It's why communicating the gospel face to face is so important.

The Danger of diversity in doctrines >>>

Baby Dividers

One thing that I've know for quite some time as a believer and minister of the gospel, is, if I set my mind to encourage the church, especially on the matter of unity; Unity's adversary has a reservation booked at the nearest hotel before I get to town. This trip was no different.

It was most troubling because within the Reserve church, which was the first of my 3 bookings in the state, there was a pocket of new believers and babes in Christ that were excited for what the Lord was doing in their lives. They were following in believers baptism, witnessing to their families and wanting their church to grow. They were doing exactly what Satan did not want them to do. And their church was packed the night I was there. Some in curiosity, others in genuine zeal for Christ!



As a ploy to create confusion Satan had sent men and women of other doctrines in among the new believers. My friend Gloria, who was my co-servant in the Lord had spiritually discerned two of them as having that intent. One claimed to be an Apostle, and to have the power of healing as well as other gifts and tongues. The other was of the same spirit and had the intent to begin a youth ministry out of that congregation. Both preyed on women and children and those who were not grounded in the faith.

There were few men of spiritual stature in the church body. Because Pastor Dewey Moede drives 4 hours to Pastor this church on Sunday, they knew that it was unguarded much of the time by church leadership which was lacking because of people failing to meet leadership qualifications and those refusing to step out.

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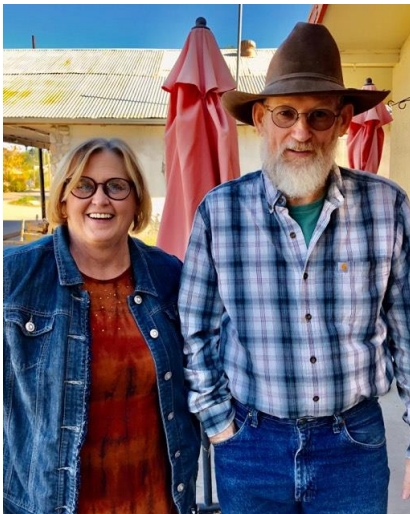
It wasn't that the people weren't there to bring the church through the attack, it was that they needed reminded that God had placed them there with purpose.

Those are the churches that Satan loves to get his hands on. It is those churches that need encouraged to stand together in unity and be taught sound doctrine. It was an honor and a privilege to share my testimony of conversion and the role that people had had in my discipleship and how vital that was in my spiritual growth and use by God.

The whole thing reminded me of the great and wise Solomon. When faced with the decision of who the natural mother of the baby was in 1 Kings 3:16-28; by announcing the baby would be split in half and given to each of the women, the natural mother was willing to give the child away in order to save it's life.

Solomon's discernment of a mother's love is the same wisdom needed in church leadership. We need to do what is necessary to protect the children of God from those who would not care if they were torn in half.

When a community has a church being torn apart, it's dying. And Satan loves to attend the funeral of a church. Dear God.... let us be burdened for a church in turmoil and love them back into unity.



The Miner, the Man of God

Prior to my trip west, I had spoken to Pastor David Schumm a few times on the phone. It's funny how you get a notion of how someone looks by their voice, and then that idea is totally shattered when you meet face to face. Pastor Dave was one such man.

His church is located in the mountains of Glenwood, New Mexico. The picture at the top of the front page is what you see when you step onto the porch of the Glenwood Baptist Church. It's surrounded by mountains and farmland for miles around. The folks who attend are few. The sanctuary has a total of 16 chairs which are filled with a few farm families in the

area who love each other and their Pastor. I sang and shared my testimony there on Thursday evening, October 3rd.

By the time I had reached this location my body was feeling the wear of the week. But I was strengthened

Pastor David Schumm

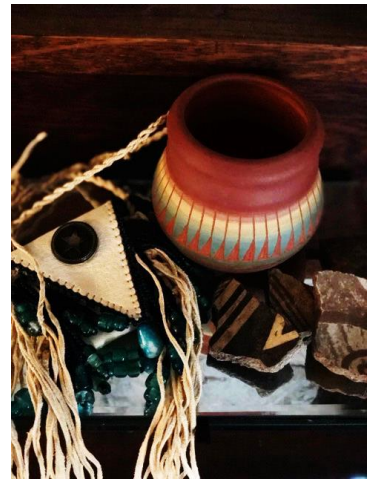
Romans 12:13 reads *"Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality."* Pastor Dave had that down to the art of a professional chef. He had prepared for Gloria and I the most amazing, melt in your mouth, BBQ Ribs, Jalepeno Corn Casserole that left me begging for the recipe, and dirt cake! What is a Baptist meal without dirt cake? 😊

He however was not a professional Chef, he is an equipment operator for a copper mine. He takes no salary from the church, but he is for certain worthy of one. He pastors, counsels, prays and studies. He's very wise and spiritually discerned. A joy to hear speak. I felt that there was more of a need to support Him as a missionary than myself. Because I wanted to be a part of what I could feel God doing there. Their generosity went beyond what I could have imagined.

The church is in a fairly new double wide trailer, very nicely done and creating an atmosphere of home. One of the bedrooms was a prophets chamber where Gloria and I stayed and the others were an office and class rooms. (Continued top of page)

Glenwood and Reserve are small towns like those in the area I live. But the difference between New Mexico and the part of West Virginia where I live is mileage. Where we may travel 10-20 miles to next little gas station and burg, they'll travel 100 miles or more. There was 40 or so miles between Reserve and Glenwood. The land is desert one minute and the next a mountain full of tall pine with Elk and Antelope running beside the road - damaging cars to more of a degree than our local deer population.

The communities are filled with artists of the Suni and Navajo tribes and I've never seen so many talented people in one place. The shops were filled with their wears of all manner of art mediums and it was there I wished I had money to burn. Because I could have!



The treasures of Gloria Jones and myself in the shops of Reserve and Glenwood



Final thoughts...

The intervention

Gloria and I arrived in Albuquerque, New Mexico on Saturday night, September 28th, 2019. Two very weary travelers. We met with my friend and ministry partner Dewey Moede on Sunday morning to follow him to Magdalena. But before that journey, we sat in the restaurant of the Holiday Inn, and so began an intervention that I did not know I was instore to receive. Unbeknownst to each other, God had been preparing Dewey and Gloria both to launch a much needed attack on my lack of self esteem. An issue I've struggled with since childhood. I however prefer to call it an instilled humility. But sometimes... okay more often than not, I transgress to the point of self loathing and criticism that tears at my very core, causing me to stand before the audiences for which I do, apologizing for my lack of finesse. I simply forget who trained me. God.

That intervention was warranted. And is perhaps a lesson I could now teach in kind. God places within us talents and abilities that most of us have yet to explore the full potential of. I've been discovering this week that my voice, writing, music, speaking and ministering skills are as unexplored as the miles and miles I traveled through to get from town to town in New Mexico. It overwhelmed my mind to view the vastness of beauty. I didn't know where to look... the desert landscape, the cliffs, the mountains, the wild life, it was all so much! And that is often how we all view our lives. We are so blessed, with so much! It does however all have purpose and that purpose needs explored and polished like the copper found in the mines of Pastor David Schumm.

Some of those unearthed treasures are the gifts of friends of the faith. Don't take yours for granted, and stand with them in unity so that all the world can see God's children's bright light burning.

This is only a portion of the story of New Mexico. There were other lives touched... even in the ailes of Walmart and in a gallery of Silver City, the light of Jesus was shined.



Ministry Partners

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This ministry runs on love and the support of partners who cannot go but believe in those who have been sent to go on their behalf. You can give directly or there is a contribution page on the websites of both the Jesus Chick and that of For God's Glory Alone Ministries.

We appreciate all you do in prayer and giving.