

the Pierce Report

A Newsletter from Jason and Devan Pierce

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2 TIMOTHY 2:2

"...what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men."

Graduation is Next Week!

It has been a long process to get the Bible Institute at Raiwaqa up and going. From spending more than two years raising the funds to move to Fiji to jumping through all of the government hoops necessary to enter into Fiji and get the school registered with the local government, our efforts to establish a school for training preachers, teachers, and evangelists in the South Pacific has certainly seen plenty of challenges. But, all of those challenges are finally about to bear their first fruits! On Saturday, November 3 we will be celebrating our first graduation! Lord willing, we will have five students who will be graduating next week. By then, these students will have completed two years of full-time instruction in forty-eight different courses that have covered the books of the Bible, Bible backgrounds, and ministry related courses. They have worked hard, made great sacrifices, and proven their love for God's word and kingdom time and time again. We are so proud of each of these students, and we cannot wait to see the great works that they will do in their future service to God's kingdom! Please join me in praying for these graduates as they complete their two-year training and begin applying the things they have learned in their service to God!



Graduates and Instructors

School News from BIR

CAMPAIGN TO SAMOA

From August 3 to August 11, our students participated in a campaign to Aleisa, Samoa. Ten of our students were able to make the trip! They were joined by Rocco and Debbie Pierce (who led the campaign), four local members from the Raiwaqa church of Christ, and Devan, Austin, and Cory Pierce. The Samoa brethren had requested that our students conduct a workshop on the Old Testament book of Job. While our initial reaction was concern for our students being asked to speak on such a difficult topic, the students themselves were not the least bit concerned about it. By all accounts, the students did an outstanding job speaking on the workshop. The Samoan brethren were very pleased with the workshop. Perhaps the greatest thing to come out of this workshop is the knowledge that we have an absolutely outstanding group of students in this program. They are great teachers and leaders. But, more importantly, they are great Christians who love one another and love the Lord!

Unfortunately, I was unable to attend the workshop due to some school responsibilities that kept me at home. But, Devan and my older two sons were asked to specifically make the trip. Devan was able to teach women's and children's classes. Austin and Cory were asked to teach the youth classes. I am so proud of my sons. They have worked so hard and helping to build the youth group in the church in Raiwaqa. Now, they have spread those efforts to helping with the church in Samoa! Their example has been especially encouraging, because the youth are often not very involved in the worship services in the local churches in Fiji. It is good for the youth here to see young people who take their faith seriously.

THIRD TERM OF 2018

It is so hard for me to believe that the third term has already come and gone. Unfortunately for me, most of the third term was marred by sickness that made it difficult to teach and keep up with all of my other responsibilities. But, things worked out and the classes turned out to be some of our most popular classes yet. This term, I taught three classes: 1) *1-2 Timothy and Titus*, 2) *New Testament Foundation for Missions*, and 3) *Greek Grammar II*. The students did an excellent job in all of these classes. Dad (Rocco) actually ended up teaching four classes this term: 1) *Revelation*, 2) *Church History* (A History of Preaching), 3) *World Religions*, and 4) *Introduction to Critical Thinking*.

A special note should be mentioned about the Greek and Critical Thinking courses. After two terms of offering Greek, we decided that some of the students might be better served with an alternative class. So, seven of our students continued with a third term of Greek, while four students took the class on Critical Thinking. For those electing not to continue in Greek, if they thought they were choosing an easier option, they were mistaken! While the Critical Thinking course was challenging, all four of the students greatly enjoyed it. In fact, the course was successful enough that we have chosen to add it to our regular curriculum for all of our students to take in the future! I really appreciate Dad taking on the extra course load this term. In the future, we have been able to rework the schedule so that he will not have to take on so many classes while also trying to keep up with his responsibilities as the school's director.

School News from BIR

SHORT COURSES

From July 23 to August 3, we had our second round of short courses for 2018. This time, we were pleased to have Paul Merideth to come and teach a course on the topic, *The Cost of Discipleship*. Paul is an outstanding teacher, and his class was very well received by the students who took it. Paul did a great job of not only teaching them the subject matter, but he also challenged them to think more deeply about their own faith and service to God. Not only was Paul a great teacher, but he was also a big encouragement to me personally. Paul and I have been friends for a number of years, and it was great to be able to spend time outside of class fellowshiping with him. Paul, who has experience teaching on a university level, was also very helpful in giving us advice on ways we can improve our curriculum and classroom instruction in the program.

Our second short course of the term was taught by Rocco Pierce. He taught a class on *New Testament Worship*. The course focused on two things: 1) teaching the students what the Bible teaches on the subject of public worship, and 2) teaching the students how to effectively lead people in the various acts of worship. The class was very practical, and the students did a great job with it!

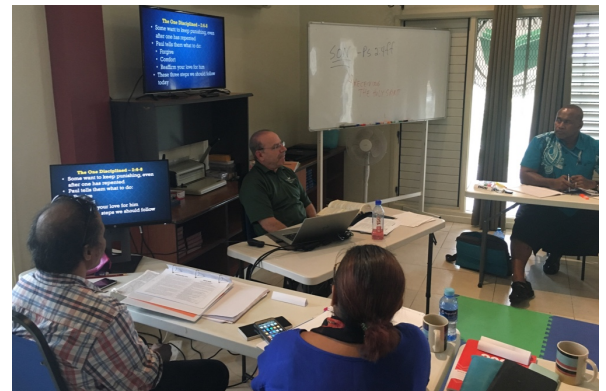
Currently, we offering our third (and final) round of short courses for the year. This time, we are very blessed to have two teachers who represent some of the biggest supporters of our work here in Fiji. Brother Denny Petrillo serves as the President of the Bear Valley Bible Institute of Denver. The school here in Fiji is an extension program of Bear Valley. He is teaching a course on the New Testament book of 2 *Corinthians*. Brother Ron Butterfield serves as an elder for the Henderson Church of Christ in Henderson, Tennessee. The Henderson congregation has served as my overseeing congregation since January 2017. He is teaching a course on the New Testament book of *Galatians*. He is accompanied by his wife, Edna Butterfield. Sister Edna will be teaching a ladies' class here at the school on Saturday which is open to the women of all of the congregations in the Suva area. In addition to helping teaching short courses, Brother Petrillo and Brother Butterfield will both be participating in the graduation ceremony. We are really excited to have them here with us!



Paul Merideth Teaching



Ron Butterfield Teaching



Denny Petrillo Teaching



Rocco Pierce Teaching

School News from BIR

FHEC REGISTRATION

One thing that has come up recently with the school is the need to complete the process of *Registration* with the FHEC (Fiji Higher Education Commission). We have already gained legal *Recognition*. Registration is the next step, and it is good for five years. Mainly, it involves a considerable amount of additional paperwork! However, the process is moving along smoothly. We are hopeful that the process will be completed by the time we return to the U.S. for our reporting trip. Please pray that there are no hurdles which will interfere with this process!



Samoa Campaign Group

A GENEROUS GIFT TO OUR LIBRARY

I want to give a special thanks to Paul Merideth and the congregation where he preaches (the Northside Church of Christ in Temple, Texas). While in Fiji teaching a short course, he spent some time reviewing our school library. He wanted to do something to help us in our efforts to build a useful library for our students and future graduates. After returning home, he was able to raise enough funds from the members of the Northside congregation to be able to purchase the entire set of the College Press Commentaries (both Old and New Testaments), a dozen or so other books, and the funds to cover the shipping for them! Words cannot express our gratitude for this generous gift!



College Press Commentaries



REPORTING TRIP TO U.S.

Lord willing, Devan and I (along with our boys) will be visiting the United States over the upcoming school break. We will be in the U.S. from November 17, 2018 to February 11, 2019. During that time, we will be reporting to at least 28 different congregations who support our work here in Fiji. Over the next two weeks, I will be seeking to contact each of our regular supporters to try to set up a time for visiting and reporting on the work. We are really excited about the last two years of our work! We look forward to sharing our past work with you, as well as discussing our plans and goals for the future. We truly believe that the Bible Institute at Raiwaqa is a much needed work in the South Pacific, and we look forward to expressing our appreciation to each of you who support our work in person.

Ministry and Family News

PREACHING IN FIJI

In addition to working with the school, we continue to take part in the local work here in Fiji as we are able. Over the last three months, I have been blessed to travel to Nadi to worship with the church there on two different occasions. On both occasions, I was asked to teach the Bible class. As always, the church in Nadi was very friendly, and I enjoyed being able to worship with them. I have also been able to visit with the Naila church of Christ a couple of times. Naila is a village located about a thirty minute car ride away from Suva. Two of our students, brothers Kitone and Semi, are members of the congregation there. In July, Paul Merideth was asked to preach on Sunday morning. I was able to drive him to the village and worship with the brethren there. On October 14, I was asked to come a preach during the Sunday morning worship service for the congregation. I preached on the topic "Jars of Clay" from 2 Corinthians 4:7. Afterwards, the congregation invited our family to share a fellowship meal with them. It was such an encouraging day of worship! That Sunday night, it was my turn in the rotation to preach for the Raiwaqa church of Christ. I spoke on the topic of, "David and Absalom: When Children Rule the Home." On October 21, I preached during the Sunday morning worship service at Raiwaqa. In that lesson, I preached on how Satan works to tempt us from Matthew 4:1-11. It is such a joyous blessing to be able to worship with the different congregations here in Fiji!

GIRLS' PURITY DAY

Last month, Devan hosted a "Girl's Purity Day" for the youth girls of the area churches. The theme of the event was, "Less of Self and All of Thee." Devan taught three lessons on the topics of: 1) All of Self and None of Thee, 2) Less of Self and Some of Thee, and 3) None of Self and All of Thee. In total there were 35 girls who attended the event from 4 different congregations. Devan has really tried to make an effort to connect with the teen girls in the church in Fiji. Many of them are struggling with the same problems and temptations that are assailing girls in the U.S. However, there has not been a strong focus on helping the young ladies to navigate through these temptations. Many times, these young girls are too shy or embarrassed to open up with older Christian women to discuss their struggles. Devan has shown an amazing ability to connect with the young girls and get them to open up to her. She often refers to them as "my girls," because that is how she sees them. Please pray for Devan as she continues to work with these young women!

