

# Pray BFF #224

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*Biblical Foundations for Freedom*



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*Rev. Paul J. Bucknell*

**“COUNT IT ALL JOY!”**



## “Count it all joy!”

*“Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds” (Jam 1:2).*

Dear Prayer Partners,

This past weekend was the wedding of our daughter Elizabeth Joy. It was a tremendous time of testimony of the LORD's glory and grace. She was stunning, as you can see for yourself! But not everything is so easy to take joy in.



### **Many trials**

Thank you so much for your prayers. They are so needed. The verse above says, “Count it all joy....” I have faced so many ‘trials’ before heading off for this STM to Peru on Wednesday. James said it all, did he not? “Count it all joy.” He was convinced that the very trials in our lives, though instigated by the evil one, are all perfectly overseen by our loving Heavenly Father. His intention is that we might not only find strength and wisdom to endure, but also to gain extra grace in our lives. Here are a few recent trials:

- Last Thursday night, my hands were black with sewer gunk as I attempted to clear out our drain before guests arrived.
- Battling with my two printers which agreed on troubling me at the same time, or
- Paypal making one small change that caused me three days of intensive work.

I could go on with administration hassles and so forth, but they would only blindsides me to the opportunities to be filled with joy from God's extraordinary grace keeping me through these trials.

These trials pop up so regularly before I go on a STM (short term mission) trip that sometimes they remind me of a trip coming up. “Why are all these things happening now? Oh, I am going off on a STM in a few weeks.” But no matter how many and how hard they come, God has provided the extraordinary oversight of our situations to delight in Him so that we can be filled with joy. Amazing.

While some of these trials are resolved, several of them will persist until I return. Even though these distractions are minor, what God is going to do in the lives of His servants in Peru are not. We are targeting the enemy lines, running in and lifting up the truth of God that the en-

emy's head might be crushed. God wants us to take back the ground God's people have compromised. We do not tolerate half-sour marriages but insist on God's greatest and best.

I will be holding two three-day seminars on "Building A Great Marriage" but also will hold one on discipleship, "Initiating Spiritual Growth in the Church". With regards to the later, we will provide tools to enable these ministers of God to catch a vision for how to cause the Spirit of God to surge in and cause His mysterious and wonderful life to grow no matter where a person might be in his or her spiritual growth.

## **Much work**

Though much time is spent working and praying through the translated materials, converting slides, raising funds and working through the many details for each seminar, we have greater goals. And it is because of these that the enemy tries to undo our work. We persist, however, under God's gracious care.

Most of my preparations are complete. The funds, (praise the Lord!), have come in on this side. The marriage slides and handouts are finished, but having just spoken with the Peru coordinator, many things there are yet to be done. They seek your prayers. The other set of slides are being translated (12 sessions times 15 adds up to a lot of work). We are also praying for the leaders and their spouses to come with prepared hearts. Many will face struggles to register or even to come. Do pray!

Just think. If one pastor and his wife could correct their marriage. Long term blessings would flow from that couple instead of so much distrust, ministry conflicts, etc. So we understand why these distractions/emergencies, trials, strange things, etc. arise and are not caught unaware.

Please pray. Our first marriage seminar starts **this Thursday** (May 9<sup>th</sup>) at noon.

## **Interesting side story**

Many years ago, I was planning to go to South America and join Andes Evangelical Mission on a short term summer training. If it went well, I probably would have joined them in their work. I could easily envision myself going from mountain to mountain preaching the gospel. Something happened, however. My application was, unknown to me at the time, held up. Meanwhile, I had applied to OMF and because of time issues, agreed to go with them (which later led me to join OMF and go to Taiwan) and learn Chinese. This was in the day when phone calls were expensive, out of the country calls exorbitant, emails or texting non-existent. Well, AEM finally came to the campus and their representative said to me, "So sorry. Somehow, and we do not know how, four of your applications were hidden away until now." But I had already committed to go to East Asia. Decades later, I now have this opportunity to go. I might even stay at the AEM mission home if it can be arranged.

Life would have been extremely different for our family, but God works out all things, including mistakes, to accomplish His greater plans.

## Praise!

- Praise God Elizabeth Bucknell is now Elizabeth White!
- I am leaving in 48 hours for Peru, Wed **May 8<sup>th</sup>**.
- The Redemption series is finished!
- Rev. Worku is much better and returned to work again at his church.
- A solution is coming to help the pastor family in Malawi.
- The marriage handouts and slides that I and a translator worked on are completed.
- The funds needed for the Peru trip have come in.



## Pray!!!!

- Pray for me as I begin a heavy speaking schedule this Thursday.
- Keep praying for the coordinators, Peter and Bianco, as they work hard on the other set of slides and handouts. Someone didn't carry out their work.
- Remember the main goal: for God to release His powerful truths in these people so that they are greatly encouraged, changed and helped.
- Rev. Godstime still has stomach pain.
- We are sending more papers in to the IRS to secure our federal nonprofit status.

Thanks so much for all of your prayers! Paul

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