

January- February
2025



GLOBAL TRAINING
NETWORK

Our Itinerary



Jan 5: Northgate Church, Ottumwa, IA

Jan 9-Feb 1: Philippine Ministry

Feb 23: Valley Baptist Church, Yuma, AZ

Feb 28-March 2: Global Training Network Leadership Gathering, Phoenix

March 2-5: Bible Conference, Calvary Baptist Church, Wickenburg, AZ

March 9: First Baptist Church, Page, AZ

March 16: Ponderosa Bible Church, Payson, AZ

In His Grip

Learning Contentment

In December's newsletter, I wrote about the universal quest of the human heart for peace and rest, the very thing that Jesus came to offer. For Christ-followers, peace with God is a fact. "Ay," to quote Hamlet, "there's the rub." We *have* peace with God, but our *sense of peace* often seems elusive. I've been thinking a lot about this lately.

Eileen and I had a wonderful holiday season. For me, it may have been the best Christmas ever. There was no obvious outward explanation, but for some reason I *felt* God's peace more than at any time in my life that I can remember.

It is in my nature to constantly ask "why?" (When I was a small boy my father ultimately resorted to answering my constant

queries with the simple statement, "It's to make little boys ask questions.") My current 'why' question is not so much, 'Why did I feel so peaceful this Christmas?' as it is, 'Why don't we Christians feel more peace more often?' After all, we have every reason to feel that ultimately things are good—even when we are currently facing difficult trials.

Paul said it beautifully, "*in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.*" (Romans 8:37-39)




(Continued on page 2)

Where in the World Is Bob This Month?

I am spending most of January in the Philippines. I have four different classes on three different islands. Here in Quezon City, I am teaching Hermeneutics (Biblical Interpretation), and Foundations of the Christian Faith III (Doctrines of Angels, Demons, the Church, and Future Events) at the Conservative Baptist Seminary of Asia. In Mindanao I will be teaching Biblical Preaching in a church based training event; and, finally, in the Visayas I will be teaching Sustainable Development (advanced Christian Stewardship) at the Berean Bible Institute of Cauayan. This will be the final "Timothy" course for this group of BBI students, and I will be awarding certificates to many of them. I will also be discussing future plans with the director of the institute. By God's grace I plan to arrive home on February 1.

For her part, Eileen is producing newsletters (something we normally do together), handling correspondence, dealing with ministry financials, and generally preparing logistics for our upcoming trips to Rwanda, Cameroon and Arizona. I am praying for good weather at home, but knowing the chances of adverse conditions, I have given Eileen a tutorial on operating our snow blower. Speaking of weather, my host asked me if I have ever been in the Philippines for a typhoon. I said, "No, but I've been present for two earthquakes." He was not impressed. He seems to think that I'm not

really an honorary Filipino until I have experienced some extreme weather (and eaten balut). Again I wonder, can I experience God's grace and peace even with those twin threats hanging over my head like the sword of Damocles? Time will tell. 



Learning Contentment *(cont'd)*

This truth trumps any trial you may face, small or great. God has done all that is needed. Your place in His family is secure. Your relationship to Him rests on an infallible footing: God Himself. You are the apple of His eye. While this life includes suffering and trials of many kinds, God's plans for us simply overwhelm our temporary pain. These promises *ought* to give us great reassurance and peace. Why do we find it hard to live in the radiance of this kind of grace? I may have a partial answer.

It has something to do with trust. I've often been blessed by the splendid ministry of author Dr. Bill Thrall. One of his signature sayings concerns our inability to feel love in the absence of trust. He says it uniquely: "If you don't trust me, I cannot love you no matter how much love I have in my heart for you." Lack of trust makes us doubt motives and blunts our ability to feel



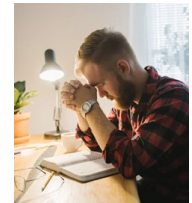
loved in any relationship even though that love is very real. I think this simple and sensible concept applies in our relationship with God. If our trust in Him is weak for any reason, even simple neglect of our spiritual life, then His promises don't ring in our hearts as they should. Oh, His grace and love are always present to be sure. Nothing we can do will ever change that. It is bedrock reality; but our senses can become dull to it. We find ourselves unable to *perceive* grace, to rely upon it, to rest in it, to allow it to fill our hearts with contentment. It need not be so. The Psalms repeatedly demonstrate that *deliberate trust* in God changes one's

perceptions, bringing peace in the midst of trial. Psalm 13, for example, begins with David's sense that God has somehow forgotten him, but it ends very differently: "*But I have trusted in your steadfast love; my heart shall rejoice in your salvation. I will sing to the Lord, because he has dealt bountifully with me.*" (Psalm 13:5-6) Our awareness of God's grace can shift with the ups and downs of life. But when we, like David, deliberately choose to remember and *trust* in who God is, what He has done, and what He has promised yet to do, our awareness of His grace increases. Peace is the result.

So why did I feel this peace so strongly this Christmas? Perhaps it is because God graciously surrounded me with reminders: a warm and comfortable home, good food, a loving and companionable wife, a needed period of rest, and Christmas reminders of the price God paid for my salvation. These things make it easy to perceive grace. As with the 'Peanuts' character, Charlie Brown, the peace of the Christmas season has often eluded me in the past. Perhaps I have now grown just enough in Christ to trust that His outward blessings, so evident during the holidays, are actually tokens of grace and love meant to be enjoyed as such. Now I am back to work writing this article from another country. Can I experience God's grace in more difficult days? It is certainly just as real. Greater trust is something for which to strive in this new year. ∞



Our Praises & Prayer Requests



- Praise God for a productive ministry in Nepal in November.
- Praise God! Our students led 739 souls to Christ last year and trained 621 other leaders using our materials.
- Praise God for an opportunity to be home for the holidays.
- Praise God for strong year-end giving!
- Please pray for our travel schedule in 2025 (involving 5 countries).
- Please pray for our ongoing ministry in the Philippines.
- Please pray for our finances in this inflationary time.

Ministry Partnership

Your financial partnership is essential as we carry out our God given ministry. Please follow the instructions below or on the enclosed response card (US mail version).

"Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that abounds to your account... And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:17, 19)

You may give online at:
gtn.org/edmondson



Under "Ministry Designation" select "Bob and Eileen Edmondson (435)," or "Books for Kurdistan (43503)."

Support also accepted at:
Global Training Network
PO Box 6507
Peoria, AZ 85385

Please include a note indicating that your gift is preferred for the Edmondsons #435 or "Books for Kurdistan #43503".

Please call GTN at 623-217-3867 if you need any assistance.

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