

Weiler, 5 January 2010

Dear Praying Friends and Supporting Churches,

Nehemiah 9:10 says "And shewedst signs and wonders upon Pharaoh, and on all his servants, and on all the people of his land: for thou knewest that they dealt proudly against them. So didst thou get thee a name, as it is this day." This is a verse that the Lord has given me for the last month. The Lord has shown us great wonders and helped us through some hard times; financially, with homesickness, "the brethren" and other spiritual battles. But as we look back and see God's hand I have learned God has allowed all this **to show me HIMSELF**, "So didst thou get thee a name...". God has, through all his mercy, shown me time and time again here in Germany that it is all HIM. May all my readers take note that anything and everything that has, is, or will ever get done here through this poor servant, it is through and by the great power of God, and all FOR HIS GLORY, not mine! This month proved to be an addition to my last prayer letter theme "what a God." Naomi, our daughter, broke a tooth at church. We had to take her to the emergency room. Having no dental coverage on our insurance, the Lord saw fit to have the doctor let us **GO FREE OF CHARGE**. A brother in our church that went with us said afterward, "Brother Mark, you don't understand, in Switzerland it is usually around \$400-500 service on Sunday." As our last letter states it **"WHAT A GOD!"**

We were able to **hit many Christmas markets and preach** in Switzerland, Austria and Germany on the street publicly. We were able to go with our church as well alone as a family. God gave me a short three point outline on the virgin birth of Christ. As a family we went to Wangen, Memmingen, and Kempton, Germany. We sang a few songs and then preached. It was a real blessing to see many stop to hear at least one point. Some even stopped and listened the whole time. In one city a couple in their 70's stopped to listen with great joy. As I preached Kacie gave them a tract and a small witness. They were both Roman Catholic and said they had never heard about the virgin birth in that light. What a blessing to preach God's word freely.

Just before Christmas we were able to finish hitting our town with gospel tracts and personal witness by door to door and mail box stuffing. To give you **a spiritual insight to our town**, most people say, "I am Roman Catholic and I will stay that way." It was sad to meet an elderly woman in her 80's with this response. I told her that I wasn't there to talk about her religion but about her salvation. Sadly she replied, "I don't know about your salvation you are telling about but I know I am a Catholic and must die a Catholic." It is very evident after spending only a few months here that the vast majority of these people know absolutely nothing about the Lord Jesus Christ. Many have never heard of the fall of man. They have heard "something about Adam and Eve". It is like dealing with a second grader on Algebra, they know some numbers but that is about it. I believe that salvation is very simple (Rom. 10:13). But I do believe that you have to know who the Lord is in order to call upon him. I foresee much "planting and plowing" before the harvest comes!

On visitation I met a group of boys out side of a community building. They took me inside to which there were around 20 young people from ages 14-18 just "hanging out and drinking a few beers." I looked around and there were literally cases of beer everywhere. They were not getting drunk, but just "hanging out and drinking a few beers." I asked where the beer came from and they said with a smile, **"the church pays for it."** I was blown away and it burdened my soul for a lost and dying people. After I gave one very interested young man John 14:6 and let him read it, he had a hard time reading at the end, "but by me", then several gathered around and said "it's by the church." I then showed them that is not what the bible says. It was hard for them to believe, and one even said, "But I have been taught it is through the church." How sad that these young people were amazed that I had a bible, and could turn to different passages. They had never seen anyone know the bible before. A few came over to my home and talked for a while, took several tracts and anything I would give them. Please pray for their souls. Please pray for Johannes, Kevin, Thomas, and two boys named Stepfan. All are open for the gospel and they want to meet again!!!

As well please pray for brother **Josh Hoffman** as he starts **printing 500 John and Galatians** booklets for us which are desperately needed, Romans 10:17. We need the word of God desperately printed in the German language, as the old Luther 1545 is currently out of print with the exception of a small pocket book size bible. Brother Hoffman needs your prayers for the first printing and for funds for further printing, as five hundred will only scrape the surface for the **desperate need for the word of God here in Germany**.

I will end with another great blessing we had just last Sunday. I hold a small bible study at my home every Sunday evening in German. We were blessed to have **our first visitor**, Doris and her son, Julian. She told me her sad testimony, that after her salvation she looked for a church that would baptize her and the charismatic church (30 miles away) was the only one she could find. She knew baptism by immersion was right, and since they did it she thought they must have the truth. She has been there every since.

May the Lord bless each of you, and may you continue to pray for the Hecht family, Johannes, Stephan, Thomas, Kevin, Stepfan, Doris and Julian. Please pray for Naomi with her half tooth as well as it will need more work in the near future, Kacie and myself for homesickness and our language skills!

Your missionaries to Germany,
Mark, Kacie, Naomi, and Tobias Smith