

Greetings

Hello friends and family! Whether you've been with me for months or only a few days, you have already tremendously impacted my life by the support you have shown both financially and through prayers and words of encouragement. You are aiding in a cause that will, Lord willing, bring many souls to Christ. From the bottom of my heart, thank you. If you are individually supporting me, I hope this finds you and your family well. If you are a member of a congregation that is supporting me, I ask that you share this newsletter with the elders and possibly members of the Church.

Over the Summer

The past summer has been a healthy mix of relaxation and pure chaos. I suppose that is to be expected when choosing a life of ministry. Nevertheless, it has been a good and productive summer, full of encouragement and wonderful memories. Over the past few months, while staying with my brother in Brighton, CO (about 45 minutes from Bear Valley), I've spent most of my time getting everything ready for school. This includes 1. raising support, 2. purchasing clothes, household items, and other things for school, 3. apartment hunting, and 4. packing for the move. If I'm being honest, my faith in God and His provision has been put to the test over the summer. With everything going on, I have found myself unable to "see the way out" at times. After a little encouragement and much time in prayer, I'm proud to say that the testing of my faith has, in fact, resulted in a stronger faith in God. I've learned to bring my struggles before Him in a way I never have before and know that He will guide me if only I trust in Him. I expect this will be a precursor of what is to come during my two years at Bear Valley: Prayer. Faith.

The Church at Brighton

As mentioned before, I got to stay with my brother, Cory, over the summer. After graduating from Bear Valley himself, Cory accepted a full-time pulpit ministry position at the Brighton Church of Christ. Naturally, I was privileged to attend services and other events at Brighton over the summer. And I do mean privileged. In no time at all, the brothers and

sisters at Brighton took me in as one of their own. Isn't it wonderful, the family God created for us through the Church? Within weeks, I grew close to many of the brethren, often spending time in fellowship, conversation, and games with them. In addition to the encouragement each and every one of them has been, they have, in many ways, supported me in my journey to Bear Valley both as a congregation and as individual members. When it's all said and done, I believe one of my few disappointments will be saying goodbye to the amazing people at Brighton.

Move-In Day

With that said, Wednesday marked a new chapter in my life. For the past year and a half or so, Bear Valley has been a distant goal. However, last week I finally moved into my new home where, Lord willing, I will stay throughout my time at school. Finding an apartment has been one of my biggest sources of uncertainty, but as mentioned before, faith in God to provide has paid off. After being put in touch with my roommate (more on him later), we have worked together to hunt down an affordable, yet clean and safe apartment that is very close to the school. Wednesday, I signed the lease, got the keys, and with the help of siblings and friends, moved in. Once again, this was only made possible by the love of God and the generosity of His people, such as you.

New Roommate

One of the beautiful ways God works in our lives is by uniting all Christians as brothers and sisters, regardless of whether it is someone we know or don't. This was certainly the case between myself and Matthew Dubord. Before a few short weeks ago, I had never heard that name, yet the good folks at Bear Valley matched us as roommates and put us in contact. As mentioned before, Matthew and I have worked on figuring out our housing situation, and after I moved in Wednesday, he joined me the very next day. At 5:30 on Thursday morning, Matthew, along with some of his family, began the 10+ hour trek from Choctaw, Oklahoma, to here in Denver, Colorado. After no more than a "Hi, how are you?" and a brief introduction, we unloaded his things and went to pick up some free, used

furniture (courtesy of the school). I have really enjoyed getting to know Matthew and his family and look forward to the bond that will grow during our time as roommates. Please pray for Matthew's family as they travel back this Sunday.

School Orientation

With classes starting on Monday, orientation at Bear Valley was Friday. It was nothing short of exciting, encouraging, and assuring. The day started with coffee, juice, and pastries. Oh, and meeting my new classmates! I wish I could share my entire orientation experience, but I will say it was everything I hoped for and more. I know I am going to love my teachers, the staff, and all of my fellow attendees. One thing I remember thinking, as I was talking and laughing with the people who will become my closest friends over the next two years, is how glad I am that I made this decision. After getting to know many of the staff and students, we formally introduced ourselves, then went over some general rules and guidelines. In addition, several of the teachers offered words of comfort and encouragement. One lunch break later, we had a tour of the facility, followed by a men's and separate women's devotional period. Orientation came to a close when all freshmen were given a 150-question test (multiple choice) over every sort of biblical question you could possibly think of, and we are to take the same test at graduation. The idea is to gauge and record the growth of each student's accumulative knowledge of the Bible over the span of the two-year program. Let's just say my earnest goal is to be most improved. That didn't, however, mark the end of the day. One of the upperclassmen, Bryon Buzan, put together a well-attended bowling trip at about 8:30 pm. I'm so glad he did that, as it served as a way to get to know each other in a more relaxed environment. I look forward to more events such as this in the future.

Special Sunday Service

In case it hasn't been mentioned previously, the Bear Valley Bible Institute is in direct partnership with the Bear Valley Church of Christ; in fact, they share a building. (One of the requirements for students is that they be

members of the Church at Bear Valley whilst in school.) Following the regular morning Bible class and worship hours, all new students will be introduced to the congregation. Then, at 12:30 pm, there will be a congregational picnic at one of the local parks, followed by games, fellowship, and eventually a devo in place of evening service. I am very excited to get to know the brethren at Bear Valley better!

Current Support Goals

Every day, I get closer and closer to meeting my support goals. A few weeks back, I rearranged my budget and dropped everything that wasn't vitally important to my stay at school. This has made my support goals far more manageable. My new minimum budget is \$2200 monthly, of which I have raised \$2000. I have complete confidence that God will take care of me, as there continues to be more and more interest in my education of the Bible. That being said, I would greatly appreciate your continued prayers that I meet those goals. Also, if you are interested in supporting an additional student, my roommate Matthew is still seeking to raise support. If this is of interest to you, please reach out and let me know. I know he would be extremely appreciative of the support.

Closing

I know this has been a long read, but I want to keep you all updated. You have made a serious commitment to me, and I want to show that I am committed to this school and putting your investment to good use. This will be a very challenging time, but it is my promise that to the best of my ability, I will put my God-given talents to work. Thank you for all of your support, and I pray that it will bring many fruits in the labor of the kingdom.

Caleb Pierce