



January, 2019

Friends,

**Over the past month we have logged some cross-country miles and enjoyed special hours with family.**

However, before we launched out on the holiday travel and gatherings, we wrapped up the first semester at Desert Christian Schools.

Without question, **the highlight for me so far this year at DCS, was teaching a Biblical Apologetics class** for juniors during Semester 1. In fact, the course was redesigned from how I had taught it in the past in order to double up the credits for the students, as both a Bible course and a Public Speaking course. We began the semester with a “crash course” in evidential apologetics for a couple of weeks. Through this time, students were introduced to 6 key questions of apologetics:

1. What is the manuscript evidence for the historicity and reliability of the New Testament?
2. What is the archeological evidence for the historicity and reliability of the New Testament?
3. What is the external evidence for the historicity and reliability of the New Testament?
4. What philosophical evidence can be identified for the existence of God?
5. What are the inhibitors to faith in Jesus Christ, and what is a Christian response to those inhibitors?
6. What internal biblical evidence is there to support Jesus' claim to deity?



Students spent the next five weeks completing independent “research” (i.e., literature review) to answer these questions. They were challenged to be able to answer all six questions, but to also become an “expert” in one. The course then transitioned into a Public Speaking course. Utilizing curriculum from Toastmasters (a public speaking organization for professionals), the students developed single-point speeches, which they presented weekly to their classmates for review and critique. Then, for their final presentation, we invited parents, faculty, staff, and classmates to hear and critique their speeches, as they presented three-point speeches answering one of the questions above. **Their presentations were incredible!**

I regret that we did not record their speeches, as literally every student demonstrated not only a depth of knowledge on the subject, but also a skill-set of articulating what they had learned. Most encouraging to me, were the frequent comments by the students of how **the course had taken their faith in Jesus Christ to a much deeper level.**

Thank you for your support, which permits me the ability to invest time into these young men and women!



With semester finals over, our holiday break began with a short road trip to Phoenix, to spend time with our dear friends (and Toby's cousins), Danny & Becky Bender (pictured left). Danny & Becky are in educational ministry as well, providing history and music classes to homeschooled students in the Phoenix area. They also lead a music ministry in their church, Beacon Bible Church, which we visit at every possible opportunity, now that we live only 2 hours apart.

The Benders, and all the folks at Beacon Bible Church are a great blessing and encouragement to us and our ministry. They adopted us as missionaries years ago, when we were in Ecuador, and now we feel as though we are an even closer extension of their church and ministry.

Your prayers are appreciated for the Benders, as Danny was recently hospitalized with some very serious health challenges. But praise God! As I write this letter, after four surgeries, **he is on his way home from the hospital to recuperate.** Danny and I grew up together as kids, and I have known Becky since we were all teenagers, competing in music competitions sponsored by Youth For Christ. Today, they are among our closest friends, and **Emma simply LOVES AUNTIE BECKY & UNCLE DANNY!** So, again, please keep them in your prayers—and especially for Dan's full recovery.

Tannia, Emma, and I enjoyed celebrating Christmas in Tucson, and then we traveled east to Pennsylvania and New York, to enjoy time with my Mom, Step-Dad, brothers, and family. The picture on the right includes three of my brothers. **No family resemblance is there?!** Of greatest joy for me, was spending time with my daughter Katie, and her husband, Mitchel. **A very special time!**



Now, we are back in Tucson, and the Second Semester is off and running at DCS. Tannia has returned to the classroom, and the **bi-lingual pre-school program is experiencing great success**—much I believe due to her work and investment into the lives of the young ones she works with every day.

We are also in the midst of a major capital campaign at DCS, in an effort to expand the school's ministry. In addition, I am making preparations for **upcoming international trips to Haiti and Honduras.** In the coming

months, I'll be providing leadership training and mentoring to Christian school leaders in those countries. Your prayers for safety and effectiveness are very much appreciated.

Until next month, thank you again for your prayers, financial support, and friendship. We could not help so many others without your help!

Yours for Christ,

- Toby (on behalf of Tannia, and Emma too!)





Enclosed is my gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ designated for  
the ministry of *Toby & Tannia Travis #20245*.

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