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Experiencing Grief

I used to say that the hardest day of my life came on a day shortly before Christmas. About ten years ago my daughter was involved in some activities with her friends, some not very nice activities. She knew better than to behave in that manner. So, I told her she was old enough to know who Santa Claus was and that I was taking her Christmas away. I made her open all her presents so she would see what I was going to return to the store and know what she was going to miss out on. In the years that followed my daughter became a committed follower of Christ up until the hardest day of my life, the day she was killed in a car wreck right before she was to enter the mission field. I thought I would share what I have learned from a year of walking with God in grief.



First and foremost, suffering allows you to experience Christ in a new way. It is right where suffering is that I have most experienced God. I still have difficulty with James 1:7, but I now have experiential knowledge of God. A God who suffered when His Son was put on that cross knows my suffering, and He remained right alongside me the entire way.

However, I consider my life worth nothing to me; my only aim is to finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me--the task of testifying to the good news of God's grace.

Act 20:24

Another lesson, people would tell me that I am being so strong. No, I wasn't, I was strong because He is strong. The delusion of strength will hurt you. I knew when I felt unable to get out of bed and go to work that I could lean into Him and He would support me. His strength is there for the asking.

Life is always out of control. I knew this going into the grief, I knew we lived in a fallen world and there will always be trouble (Psalm 34:10, many are the afflictions of the righteous). Yet, being a Christian doesn't exempt us from suffering. It is not a pain-free way of life and you are not always being punished for having troubles.

Christian fellowship is important but you don't always have to say something. My friend in Kenya summed it up best, "Words cannot express such sorrow and too often there are no words of comfort. But just coming alongside and walk with them a short while in their grief is more than any words can express." Jesus was about fellowship, His entire ministry centered around fellowship. We are beings created for fellowship. I often thought, what if nobody came and I was thankful and glad for the company.

I have so many more lessons, but let me leave you with this. You can't go around, under or over grief. You must go through it and to best endure it you must lean into it and into the word of God. I pray that your are blessed like I was.

*Jon-Roy Sloan
Director of Communications*

Arabic Student Advisor

We are in the midst of a new year and many sad incidents have already taken place throughout the world but this is nothing new to this region of the world – the Middle East.

However, not all news is bad news. We must be positive and hopeful for a better tomorrow and we are blessed to be part of the NU family where we always hear happy and encouraging news from our students.



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Current Enrollment

Current through 4/1/15

Total Students: 2,237

Male - 1,850
Female - 387
Undergraduate - 1,899
Graduate - 338

Total Countries: 131

Top Ten Countries

United States	880
South Africa	202
Iran	171
Ethiopia	128
Nigeria	119
Kenya	65
Ghana	46
Cameroon	40
Haiti	35
United Kingdom	33

The Voice of Nations



A Publication of

NATIONSUNIVERSITY®

650 Poydras St., Suite 1400, PMB 133

New Orleans, LA 70130

www.nationsu.org

Mac Lynn

Chancellor

mac@nationsu.org

Marty Lynn

Director, Student Services

martyl@nationsu.org

Jon-Roy Sloan

Director of Communications

jonroy@nationsu.org

Mary Virginia Mabery

Registrar

registrar@nationsu.org

John Casteel

Director of Prison Enrollment

jac@nationsu.org

Lauren Conder

Prison Services Records

prison.services@nationsu.org

Awny Jadon

IT Administrator

awny@nationsu.org

Jackie Cullum

Student Records Officer

student.services@nationsu.org

Allen Thyssen

Chaplain

chaplain@nationsu.org

Gail Heiderich

Director, Student Advisors

gailh@nationsu.org

I want to share with you my happy incident with a future NU student. He happens to be a relative of mine as he showed strong interest in enrolling at NU, getting the education that he needs and use it to become a faithful servant of God in order to expand His kingdom.

As you are aware, NU offers full degrees in the English language only and this student's only setback is English. However, this hasn't stopped his plan and desire to pursue his dream. He started attending our Church, led a prayer in worship, met with US groups to practice and enhance his English skills and started looking for online English resources as a base for his enrollment.

Although his story is yet to unfold, however, his passion and his first steps taken towards his goal were a must for me to share. I strongly believe this could be an inspirational story and an enormous push to many other passionate future students who consider a foreign language to be the only barrier between them and pursuing their dreams.

Always remember where there is a will there is a way and this is so true when this will is to serve our Lord and his kingdom. Keep your dreams alive and take actions because time is precious and the Lord will always bless your ways.

Awny M. Jad'on

IT Administrator and

Advisor to Arabic Speaking Students

Out of the Inbox



Dear Brother Sloan,

This is Herbert from Eldoret, a Nations University Student. How are you? You have been so silent since you went home from Kenya. Here I

have many challenges, but I still face them with the help of God who is the father of fatherless.

Through Jesus our saviour here I have five orphans in my house that have no parents and I and my wife Dorcas takes care of them feeding them and schooling. Please pray for me and my family. We need your prayers.

Pray for God to go touch the hearts of kind people with love for orphans, and to pray about the situation because when they have no food and especially when they are sick it's a great challenge to me as a servant who should practice do God's work in peace and love.

Also, when I can see more orphans on street of Eldoret who come for help in my house, and yet not enough food even a single meal for a day, it's really very sad.

God bless you, Herbert Opula,
bye from Eldoret

Prison Notes

I wanted to inform all of you about some changes we made that specifically impact prison students. We have added extended resources to each of our courses that you as a student will be required to obtain. I know this will become a hardship for some of you but it was a necessary change to bring the work up to a level that will match our Internet students. We want to insure that you are getting the most from NationsU.



We encourage you to identify books you need and try to secure these books through prison inter-library loan or a local NU library source (as available). You are alerted to this need at this point, for it may take some time to secure the books. The most appropriate place for fulfilling the assignment will come toward the end of other course assignments.

Looking for Extended Resources

Please remember that it is your responsibility to find the books that you need to complete the course. I recommend these five places that you can start looking and find help in your search.

1. Contact your Chapel Library and talk with the Chaplain. It is possible to substitute books that are similar, but you will need to have your proctor contact us with the name of the book to be approved.
2. Look in the prison library, the book may be there.
3. Order from interlibrary loan.
4. Talk with your proctor it is possible that they may have the book or find it for you.
5. Purchase the books needed. If you are unable to find the books at the prison or use the interlibrary loan system you may have to purchase the books.

While you are working to obtain the extended resources, you should continue working through the course. There is no need to jump in and do the reading assignment first. In fact after you have studied the subject and worked through the modules the reading assignment will help you to dig deeper into the subject.

Stories & Testimonies

An important part of Christianity is sharing your faith and encouraging those in the faith. In light of this we are looking for stories from incarcerated students that can be published in the student newsletter. These stories can be published anonymously if you do not want to use your name.

Do you have a story to tell? Is NU making a difference in your life?

Please let us know, send your story to:

Jon-Roy Sloan
Director of Communications
NationsUniversity®
650 Poydras St. Ste. 1400
PMB 133
New Orleans, LA 70130

Please keep the story brief, we recommend that it be 500 words or less. It can be handwritten or typed. Let your light shine and inspire others.

John Casteel
Director, Prison Enrollment

Graduates Since the Last Newsletter Certificate In Religious Studies

Rodney Aristene, Haiti
Diana Rachel Smith, India
George Inyang, Nigeria
Olusola Olorunjuwon, Nigeria
Matthew McCombs, United States
Jacob Case, United States
Taylor Todd, United States
Nathaniel D. Jennings, United States
Aaron Alexander, United States
Edmore Gundani, Zimbabwe

Bachelor of Religious Studies

Diana Rachel Smith, India
Osemwenkhae Osemwengie, Nigeria
Ruskin Clay, United States
Robert E Power, Jr, United States

Master of Theological Studies

Haftay Adhana Gebreyohannes
*B.A., Development Managment,
Ethiopian Civil Service College, Ethiopia*

John O. Madu
*B.Th., Tripp Bible Institute,
Ireland*

Troy John Gibbins
*Bachelor of Business Administration,
Harding University, United States*

Michael Woods Linton
*B.Sc. Sociology, Sam Houston State
University, United States*

Arthur Torrence McIlwaine
*B.R.S., NationsUniversity
United States*



Expanding Our Reach

Here at NationsU we are always looking for new ways to encounter and engage new students, active students and awaken students who have become inactive. In light of this effort we have started a blog.

We want this blog to become your tool in sharing your faith and inviting others to join that academic venture. We are not stopping here but are pushing forward all across the Internet. Also, we want you to start thinking about how you can participate in the upcoming NationsU Annual Student Video contest. You can go to our Youtube channel at TheNationsUniversity to see what past contestants have done.

This is not limited to just Internet students, we want our alumni and our prison students to participate. Especially those former prison students who are now on the outside!

Social Media

This is a big call to all of our students who are active on social media. We need your help. We have a Facebook page and we need you to follow our posts on that page. If you have not done so, please go there and hit the like button. We are also on LinkedIn and we need you to do likewise there.

We also have a Twitter account and a Youtube account. Please find us and follow us on Twitter and subscribe to our Youtube channel.

We really need your help in this matter!

We have made many improvements to our website and we will continue to do so. To make all of this succeed we need you the student, to like and share what we post. You can post it on your wall or you can share it with a friend.

One of our financial partners that helps make NU happen says that we are the best kept secret on the Internet. That is not



good! We need to get the word out and send us back to the top of the search engines!

You can help other spiritually hungry people find the nourishment they need by getting the word out there. With little effort you can make a big change in the lives of others that are searching for what their spirit hungers for most.

Please! Join us in sharing NU through social media!



Just a Cup of Water

I have been thinking this week about how the smallest act of kindness can have a dramatically positive impact on another's life. This was echoed by a friend in an email he sent earlier in the week:

"I can see how one small act of sharing our own journey can be immensely helpful... seemingly tiny little things are sometimes catalytic to our eternal salvation."

That was certainly the case with me. While in high school it was seeing a Christian family who actually seemed to like one another that first attracted me. Later, I noticed a humble missionary choosing to scrub the kitchen floor for his wife's birthday when they didn't have enough money for a more "proper" gift. More recently I noticed a well known speaker and author give up his rightful "suite" at a weekend retreat house so another couple could better enjoy the event. In a hospital setting it is the visitor's act of simply being there that usually makes the most impact. These little relationship things are noticed and are so important. I doubt that without them the more cerebral aspects of Christian knowledge will have much impact or meaning.

Do you feel Jesus is calling you to do some "great thing" during your time on this earth, or does he simply call you to do the little things in very kind ways? It may be both, but I am quite certain that one "great thing" will never happen without the "little things" coming first.

As Jesus was sending out his twelve Apostles he gave them some specific instructions. This is recorded in Matthew, chapter 10. The passage ends in verse 42 with a reminder that "...if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is my disciple, I tell you the truth, he will certainly not lose his reward."

So, might we focus this week on doing the little things in ever-kinder ways? Perhaps we should be carrying a cup in addition to a cross!

"Do you need prayer? Are you experiencing spiritual distress? Life's problems? Email Chaplain Allen, chaplain@nationsu.org, and let him help."

www.chaplainscorner.org



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