



Ministry Report: 20 September 2010

U.S. Military Academy, West Point, New York

Eric and Jody Bryan; Joel (8 yrs), Jane (6 yrs), Berea (4 yrs), and John (3 yrs)

For many colleges – September has meant the return of football. Though Army (2-1) is off to a pretty good start – our “work” in the Chapel has also started off much better than anticipated!

Summer military training has transitioned to an **academic pace** – yet I wouldn’t go as far to say the pace has slowed much. I’ve seen some very complex engineering diagrams, Arabic/Chinese vocabulary tests, and an endless array of projects/papers for classes such as Military Art, Economics, International Relations, and a



fascinating computer hacking class called “Exploitation” – a unique title for a class I think. I’m honored - a cadet asked me to assist with a psychology project – he told me that he appreciates the values I offer as a Christian. Yet all around the Academy, I have seen how God has set up **Christian leaders in all of the Academic Departments** – I cannot think of one Department (*yes, even the evil DPE people – Dept of Physical Education*) that does not have a mature Believer. All in all, I hope you are encouraged to know that many of these cadets are growing under the tutelage of some outstanding servant-leader

officers/civilians – and how fortunate we are that these men/woman will be leading/serving the soldiers and civilians of the United States Army in this coming generation.



Since Summer, we have moved from large-group meetings to **smaller Club meetings**. It is a privilege to equip a team of leaders who run some of the ministries: Navigators, Officer Christian Fellowship, Baptist Student Union, MCYM/Club Beyond Youth Ministries, AWANA, and Children’s Church (for 2 chapels). Many of these leaders and I huddle together on Wed. mornings to read the Scriptures, and sometimes we meet together for

racquetball or coffee. I enjoy helping to create an enjoyable work environment for these leaders – remembering how awesome it feels to have the support of the Chapel – to have unified, common vision - and how great it feels to be counted on a team.

I am genuinely thrilled that God has inspired over **230 parents/children/cadets** (not to forget many Catholics, also, who meet across the Hall) who awake early on Sunday mornings to attend a class on either: Harmony of the Gospels “Walking in the Footsteps of Christ”, Discipleship Training, a study of Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s “Life Together”, a class on the Attributes/Character of God-Loving our Neighbor, or a study about Ephesians or the Book of Revelation (led by an experienced teacher). These classes have really come together – not from anything special we did – but God motivated his people, stepping up at the right time – definitely an answer to prayer I think.

I do enjoy setting up others for success – but I’ve realized how much I miss teaching. With the support of my family, I’ve started a Tuesday night gathering of cadets. We talk about girlfriends, politics, roommates, ego, pornography, the role of the local church, and our dreams for the future – each week we apply these topics to God’s word.

Do you remember the family we mentioned the last 2 months – the **Debos Family**? To catch you up – the mother/wife, Jody, has been diagnosed with aggressive cancer. She describes chemotherapy treatments like “being hit by a truck”. I’ve seen God’s people at work though – 3 months+ of prepared meals, and several families taking their children out for play dates. You can pray that God would heal Jody’s body, and we would be able to help in practical ways.

Reasons for Prayer:

* One of the cadet Sunday School Teachers is up for the **Rhodes Scholarship**. I am in the process of writing a detailed letter of recommendation from my perspective. If Louis receives the award – he will be able to study at Oxford after graduating this year. Louis is a humble young man, with a rare intellectual gift. He is eager to memorize Scripture and enjoys inspiring 7-8th grade students to think wisely about their faith in Jesus. Louis hopes to assist with the development of underprivileged countries – and I hope by the time he leaves, he will fully understand God’s method of reconciliation of all things.

* **Finances:** To be transparent, the cost of living in NY has proved to be more challenging than we expected. Thankfully, we are not in debt – and thankful for a modest income – but might consider a move farther away from West Point, to a place where rent might not be so high. But then we would be less connected with the Army family, and probably not be able to be engaged in the military community. Some of you have expressed a desire to help financially – our mission agency (Harvest Foundation) has an electronic giving option now available at: <https://dlq4.donating.net/qv10/Donation.aspx?MerchantID=HarvestInc> . Or, you can go online to www.harvestfoundation.org, and click on “donate”. No agency expense is taken for administration – pretty incredible. Also, I think you’ll be amazed at all of the unique projects Harvest is doing in the majority-world countries.

* **Health:** I had a doctor appointment today to check up on my Lyme’s Disease, which I got from doing outside work this past Spring. I pray that the medication has taken care of the problem; fortunately, side effects have decreased. Thank you for keeping us prayer with this matter.



As you can hopefully see – the Bryan children (**Joel, Jane, Berea, and John**) are doing very well. They are very engaged in the work we do, waking early with us, and bring genuine joy to the cadets they meet.

We continue to think about chaplaincy and youth work, but move slowly with big decisions. We are still trying to figure out how to be content and zealously-adventuresome at the same time.

With you, we pray especially for those away from their loved ones – and equally (if not more) the spouses/children at home. With you, we trust Jesus, and look at the Bigger Picture.