

October 31, 2016

## Monthly Support Report

Dear elders,

It's my sincere prayer that all things are well with all of you and with all of you families. I pray that God has been generous with His blessings toward you and the good congregation of Christians there. What a wonderful month the month of October has been in so many ways. I can't remember the last time that we've had such beautiful warm weather all the way up through the last day of the month. God has certainly blessed us with wonderful – beautiful weather. I can only hope and pray that you have been well and able to take advantage of this beautiful weather and be out and about and enjoy it, and see the fall colors.

The work in the Lord's kingdom continues to make positive progress here in this place. I'm very pleased with the way things are progressing. Of course, I would always love for things to progress faster and see the harvest be more bountiful. I love to see precious souls coming to the Lord to be saved. But, I'll be patient and take what we have been blessed with and do the best we can to help them along in their relationship with the Lord. It is so exciting to be able to use the Lord's precious soul saving word and guide someone, and then watch them grow and blossom.

God has been so gracious to open a door of opportunity for us and He has blessed us with one of those opportunities this month. We have a family, a husband and wife that has been visiting with us this entire month and it appears as though the interest is there for them to continue coming back. At least that's our prayer and we're working in that direction. It has been a pleasure getting to know them during this short time, as we are getting to know more about them and they're getting to know more about us as well. Both have been very interested in the sermons and in the Bible classes. As time goes on it is my prayer that we will be able to build a closer relationship with them and be able to have a Bible study/discussion with them. I understand that a confidence level will have to be cultivated, and that's what I'm attempting to do. It's so very nice to find folks who show such an interest in Bible truths and things that are both good and right. As I have continued to mention in many previous reports we have developed this continual habit as a congregation of praying for Open Doors. And God has been good to answer our prayers by giving us these opportunities. Plus, as I have stated repeatedly, this congregation has been good to be very friendly and welcoming to those who visit. And it goes without saying how important this is. I'm confident that all who visit feel very welcome when they visit with us and that our services are sincere and that they come from our worship comes from our heart. I continually remind the congregation how important all of this is because our visitors are the strangers who know no one when they walk through those doors and if we don't make an honest and sincere effort they'll feel like strangers when they leave. And if that's the case, that will likely be the first and the last time that we see them. What's that old saying? You only get one chance to make a first impression? I think it goes something like that. It's true! And it makes sense.

In our study of Jesus' Parables we've gone from the Parable of the Sower to the Parable of the Tares. While each study as they stand individually, what I'm also attempting to do whenever the occasion

presents itself is to teach an additional lesson that while it may not be a part of the lesson Jesus was attempting to teach with the Parable per se. It's a lesson that's easily associated with one of the subjects Jesus speaks of in the Parable. For example, as we were bringing the Parable of the Tares to a close, I taught a lesson having to do with the Kingdom of Prophecy – Future – Kingdom at hand (in the NT) – the Kingdom (Present Tense). And then Jesus delivering the Kingdom back to the Father when the "end comes." (Cf. 1 Corinthians 15:24). In today's religious world there will be many occasions to make use of this lesson since so many are still looking for the kingdom to be established, and they are looking for an earthly kingdom. Since this lesson was just completed this past Sunday morning, we will review it this coming Sunday morning along with handouts and then move forward to our third Parable.

Sadly, death has taken the brother of one of our members. It's the same man who lost his wife about 6-months ago. And now death has taken his brother. And once again it was that dreaded cancer. He was a faithful Christian who lived in Lubbock, Texas. He is survived by a wife and two children, one brother and one sister. His family is close so he will be sorely missed. This family has suffered through quite a bit during the past three years. It's good that their family is large and close so that they can lean upon each other during this time of loss.

Listen to this verse. Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity! (Psalm 133:1). Isn't that a beautiful verse? It's beautiful to read, but it's even better to live in a local congregation of the Lord's faithful. That's what we're striving to do. And that's what every Christian should be striving to do. It's an ugly mess when brethren don't do this and its sin! Nothing good can come from strife. And the God of heaven will not tolerate strife and those who sow discord. I say that to say this. God has and continues to bless this congregation with peace – good attitudes and unity. And we're prayerfully working hard to maintain this so that we can continue to accomplish the kind of good work the Lord will be pleased with. May God help us and bless us with attitudes of love and peace. As long as He does and as long as we listen we will continue to glorify Him and bring honor to His great name.

Thank you for your fellowship in the gospel brethren. It's greatly appreciated. I count you as a friend and a great blessing. You are in my prayers. May God richly bless you with health and success in the work you are attempting to do in His Kingdom.

God bless.

Randy