

## Monthly Support Report

January 31, 2019

Dear elders,

I trust that you aren't thawing out like we are attempting to do. It has been frigid cold here for a few days after getting a couple of snowfalls that accumulated a combined total of about 9" of wet snow. I know that amount of accumulation and our frigid temperatures is very small in comparison to what's happening on the East Coast. Yet it's still cold enough to make you think long and hard about going outside. The tendency is to put getting out off unless it's something that's truly necessary. It's times like this when you're reminded of how blessed we are to have a warm house to live in. I saw the other day on the news where the homeless are really struggling to stay warm. And apparently finding enough space in shelters isn't that easy. We are very blessed. And it's times like this that remind me how easy it is to take for granted the homes, warmth, and food we have been blessed with to enjoy in this life. It's difficult to imagine having to live out on the street and go without some of these physical blessings that you and I enjoy on a daily basis. God has blessed us richly with life's necessities.

Allow me to begin this report with some very positive news. Since I don't have negative news, I'll also close with positive news.

One of our college students is dating a young man she attended school with. He is studying to be a High-School teacher and she is going to become a specialized nurse. She actually has her goal set on a very interesting nursing career in a field of nursing I had never heard of before. But that's not surprising because my knowledge of nurses is very limited. Anyway, some of their science/chemistry classes put them into the same class at the same time, and the result is, they are dating. This young man appears to be a very nice young man. First, because she wouldn't be dating him if he wasn't. Second, we've had him into our home while trying to get to know him better. And as you likely know, you kind of watch out for and take care of your College students who worship with you while they're away from home. We agree that this young man is very nice. Anyway, he has been attending services with her for the past month or so. And from my perspective he appears to have an interest in the Bible Classes and in sermon. He pays close attention to what's being said in both instances. While I've already had some opportunity to talk with him about religion, I think I can tell that as time goes on he's getting more interested all of the time. Also, this is the same young lady who has been studying with a good friend of hers that she went to High-School with. So, she and I have talked and I've shared with her how she should approach the subject. And little by little she will be attempting to teach this young man whom she is dating.

The timing of his coming into the picture and having an interest is in my estimation nearly perfect. Since I'm not a fan of the concept of coincidence and there actually being such a thing, I have to consider that the timing may have to do with God's Providence. Since we can never be certain when God is working or not working providentially in our lives, or the lives of others, I intend to do my best to take full advantage of this opportunity. I'll treat it as though this young man has a good and honest heart, and that he is looking to have God in his life. Additionally, I'll approach it as though God (knowing the heart of this young man) has sent him to us to be taught. Whether it is or isn't God's providence that's at work, I do know that either way, God expects this young man to be taught. Plus, God knows that we will make the most of this opportunity to teach him.

The timing is also excellent because of the short series of lesson I began on the first Sunday he attended. I had decided that it was a good opportunity to teach some very fundamental lessons for the young people in our congregation who are and or. approaching those teenage years. With that in mind I've talked about some things for young people to be aware of. Pride was one of those lessons. And so was the subject of always telling the Truth. The pros and cons for always telling the truth with the fundamental fact that God demands it. But also from the vantage point of how telling the truth will serve them well in life now, and in the future, in the workplace and so on. Soon I'll be talking about the Age of Accountability. After that my plan is to talk about God's Plan of Salvation. So, while my plans were to preach this series for the young people of our group, it's working out really great that this young man will be in the audience to hear those lessons as well. This will also help this young lady who is dating him to be able to have some open dialogue with him, and with the High-School friend that she continues to try and teach. By-the-way, the teaching of her friend has led her friend to the point of believing that baptism is necessary for the remission of sins, and that she should be baptized for that very reason. She was raised in the denominational world and you are fully aware of what she has taught is needed for salvation. She has been able to overcome that teaching and know the truth. However, with the feedback I'm getting she's going to need additional time and teaching before she sees the urgency in being baptized. I wish she was closer to us so she could also be a part of these lessons. But, that's unfortunately not the case. And it's also unfortunate that she still has some association with the denominational world. However, it was understood that this was going to be a slow process. The majority of their Bible study has taken place via telephone conversations. I would ask you to please remember this young lady in your prayers as well as our college student who is attempting to teach her. It's really encouraging to have a College student with such honest convictions that she would attempt to teach a friend.

Things are going well for us. Our Bible Classes, the learning that's taking place, and the discussions have been great! While I was considering what to study in the adult Bible Class, at first I thought a series about the Life of Christ would be too elementary for this group of Christians. And while they are good Bible students, with a good understanding of the word of God, this series has been good. Plus, it's been challenging because just when you think you're familiar with something to the point that you may not need to study it again, you're humbled with all of the new details you come up with that you may not have known before. Our lesson that we started last Sunday is about the apostles. I've studied ahead to the point we research what we can find about the apostles, and then we have to give a brief description about each one. What they did and did not do, along with what we can find about their personality. It's so interesting, that while I've already completed that lesson, I find myself rereading and doing some additional research. The things you come up with in the Scriptures that you thought you had already discovered is amazing. I hope you can tell that I'm really enjoying this study, and that I think it's a choice of material to study.

I never want to close a report without expressing my sincere gratitude for your fellowship with me in the gospel. I really appreciate your help and it's encouraging that you have confidence in me to do the Lord's work. I hope you will occasionally express my gratitude to the entire congregation. They are obviously the ones who sacrifice to give back to the Lord which makes this fellowship possible. So, thank you!

God bless.

Randy