

Monthly Support Report

February 29, 2020

Dear elders,

Greetings on this “leap year” February 29th. I won’t get to say that very often so I thought I would take advantage of this opportunity. It’s my hope and my prayer that this report finds each of you doing well. It’s turning out to be a very beautiful day for us. We may even hit that fantastic number of 60 degrees. I know for you that may not seem like it’s a very warm temperature. But, after a winter season that’s not over with yet that’s brought us 19” of snow thus far, 60-degrees is a pleasant change. We may even reach 70 tomorrow before having a few normal days of much cooler temperatures. Around here, this time of year I’ll take all of the sunshine and warmer temperatures I can get as we get ready to go into March.

We’re fine. Thus far this winter we’ve been blessed to have avoided any serious sickness. We’re hoping and praying that our winter continues like this. It seems like with the coronavirus in the news practically everyday on every news channel, and the latest report suggests more than 85,000 reported cases worldwide we’ve focused quite a bit on being sick this winter. Possibly more than I can remember in recent years. It’s my prayer that this flu virus can be stopped sooner than later before it has a greater impact in the US than it already has. And of course, for the sake of those in the more than 40-countries it has already reached, especially China and some neighboring countries.

I hope all of you have stayed away from the flu. The common cold is bad enough. I’m becoming a fanatic about washing my hands whenever I get the opportunity, attempting to keep as many germs away from me as I possibly can.

Let me share with you some things taking place here that have to do with the Lord’s work. I wrote to you about a Marriage Class that I’ve been doing. That is going extremely well. We’ve focused a lot of necessary attention on “communicating” and the importance of it in the marriage relationship in the first couple of lessons. We’ve not only had some excellent class discussions, but I’ve given assignments that this couple completed that they liked so much that they have decided to incorporate them into their weekly routine. Which I think is an excellent idea. I’m sincerely convinced that husbands and wives can’t communicate too much, and that most couples don’t communicate enough. Poor communication creates issues and problems everywhere and in every venue. The better the communication is in the home between husbands and wives and parents and children, the happier those homes will be as the result of it.

Since this is a young couple, and the husband is a fairly new Christian that I baptized about one-year ago, we also include in our study time together one lesson having to do with being a Christian. The first lesson was rather fundamental and elementary. But each lesson will get progressively more difficult as we go. Both are taking a full load in College, plus working to pay for their own college and living expenses, so I realize they are pressed for time. Yet, they always have the time and take the time for their Bible lessons. They are very well organized. That’s how they accomplish so much. I greatly appreciate how they apply themselves to their Marriage studies and how prepared they are. And, they both do the same with their New Convert material that we include. It’s a joy to have them as members

of the congregation here, and to have this opportunity to get to know them much better. Plus, as an added bonus, they both love board games, and we do as well. So, after we finish our studies, we spend some time playing some of our favorite games.

I was saddened to get the news that a good friend of mine (childhood) died suddenly. He and his wife were traveling from Ohio to Alabama to see a son and his family, when he apparently had a severe headache as they arrived in Nashville. Things got worse quickly, his wife called 911. They ended up at Vanderbilt Memorial where he had a severe stroke. And they told his wife almost immediately that it was doubtful that he would recover. He died the next day. He was a good man. A faithful gospel preacher and an elder of the Lord's church. And he left behind a very good family that was greatly influenced by his good life. His sudden passing was a sad reminder of just how quickly things can change in this life, and how quickly we can be ushered into eternity.

Seems to me like headaches, migraines and such are becoming very commonplace anymore. We have a lady at church who is having some migraine issues. Including some complications that may go beyond her migraines. She is having a MRI with contrast really soon. Please remember her in your prayers. It's my prayer that if they find something that it won't be too complicated. She and her family just moved here about 8-months ago and they have been a good addition to the Lord's church here.

All of our recent additions have been very good for the church here. We're thankful for the open doors that we've had. For the families who have moved here recently, and for the baptisms we've had in the past 12-18-months.

We're getting to the point, just simply due to the age and interest of our young people that I would expect some baptisms to begin. I recently gave one family a book to study with their two daughters who have been inquiring about being baptized. The older daughter especially has been asking a lot of questions in recent weeks, inquiring about being baptized. Her parents have a concern that she might be too young in chronological years. So, we've talked about that at length. I'm confident that many parents have had that same issue with at least one of their children. So, I did my best to advise them. And now they will have a study with her so they can see where she is in her understanding of what she needs to do to become a Christian. I kind of know where it's probably going to end up, but I believe this is a good way to go about it. For the daughter and for the parents. Yes, chronological age means something, but, every child is different in maturity and understanding.

As Spring approaches we're talking about what possibilities we have in the area as far as reaching out to the neighborhood. That's always a challenge. However, we're always looking for opportunities and attempting to be prepared individually to talk to our friends and neighbors about the Lord and to invite them to services. That personal contact invitation always seems to be our best way of reaching the lost.

In our Bible Class, Adult, we're at the point of Jesus' trials. And I must say that once again a discussion and study about Jesus is very interesting. Being that we have so many College Students (6), I'm very happy that we went in this direction with our class. I think this has been very rich for them. They've expressed to me how much they're getting out of the classes and they are always prepared for class. I know the study has been good for me, and from the comments coming from the rest of the class, it's been a very positive study for everyone. At first I thought this study might be too easy for most in the class, but I considered the college students and hoped that they wisdom from the rest of the class would be of benefit to them. While the latter is clearly true, there have also been some "meaty" discussions

and questions that have come up. Which just goes to show that there's always something to be learned, even in studies and passages that you thought you had a pretty good grip on already. That's been the case in this study. And as I know I've told you many times before, we have a group that likes to discuss things in Bible Class. I enjoy that. The only issue it causes for me as a teacher is making sure we cover enough ground in class to promote study for the next week.

I've also been working with another one of our College couples who are married. He will be graduating this year and is just about ready to start applying for jobs. One of the things we've been discussing is giving enough consideration to the Lord's church in the area that he might be looking at for a job. He's in a specialized field, so he shouldn't have a problem in finding a job. And, to a degree he might be able to be somewhat selective in choosing a location to live in (city, town, state). This would be a couple that it would be in their best interests to find a group of Christians that can still help them grow. They are a great young couple, but they need a congregation that's going to take them under their wing kind of like what we have done, and help them grow spiritually. In my opinion that's what we need to be doing with all young couples like this, especially our college students. As a parent of a college student away from home, I'm depending upon the congregation away from home to show a special interest in my kid, so I'm going to show a special interest in theirs. It's my opinion that far too many people are slipping through the cracks (so to speak) when they go away from home to school. Yes, those young people have some personal responsibility. But, they're still young and their faith in many instances is still both young and weak.

I'll close with that soapbox. Thank you for reading if you've made it this far. And thank you for your fellowship in the gospel. That means so very much to me. You continue to help so very much. Thank you!

God bless.

Randy