

The Lakeview Lamp

“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.” - Psalm 119:105

September 25, 2005

Brethren Are the Best

Josh Creel

“Josh, what can we do for you?”

Allow me to give you the background for the preceding statement. David and Karen Parks are members of the congregation in Mandeville, LA. When I visited them this week they were deeply engrossed in a rather difficult task: cataloging all of their earthly belongings. Such a task was necessitated by the 4+ feet of water hurricane Katrina pushed through their home on the north shore of Lake Pontchartrain, completely gutting the house. During the past three weeks they had immersed themselves in pleasurable tasks such as ripping out drywall, collecting any possessions and mementos they could find, and scrubbing away mold. They are now living in another “house”, a small RV parked behind the building of the North Shore Church of Christ in Mandeville. The Parks and I discussed several items during our visit together: the process of rebuilding, the headaches of insurance companies, getting his business back up and running, and family matters. Towards the end of our conversation was when David said these astounding words, “Josh, what can we do for you?” You see, the brethren at South Bumbay had sent me to help those I could, but this brother wanted to help me in return, if he could. I left the Parks’ RV that night scratching my head; how could those who lost so much still be so concerned with others?

Where I’m from in rural Alabama you still hear the phrase “good people” being used to compliment decent, hard-working, moral individuals. For instance, if my neighbor were to cut my grass when I was sick I might say something like “you know Bill is good people.” However, “good people” isn’t adequate to describe my brethren. They are the best.

My brethren are the best. They open their homes to young preachers, even though they are without power and five trees had hit their house only a couple of weeks ago.

My brethren are the best. They may not be able to travel and help clear trees, etc. but they make sure that those who can are well supplied with trucks, chain saws, gas, and cash.

My brethren are the best. They give their generators and window air conditioners to their brethren in storm ravaged areas, even though they live in hurricane prone areas themselves.

My brethren are the best. They travel from across the country, and sometimes from other countries, to help brethren they have never met before, but since they are “brethren” that is all that matters.

My brethren are the best. They give vast amounts of money to help their brethren rebuild their lives, even when they are on fixed incomes and in low paying jobs themselves.

My brethren are the best. They live in far-away countries such as Russia (and Italy – TN) and are relatively poor, yet they offer their prayers and show their concern for their much wealthier American brethren.

My brethren are the best. They remind me of the saints in Macedonia because “*they first gave themselves to the Lord, and then to us by the will of God*” (2 Cor 8:5, NKJV).

My brethren are the best, and I give thanks to God for them, even as the apostle Paul gave thanks for his brethren. “*Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers*” (Eph. 1:15-16, NKJV).

Praise God for brethren!



Preacher’s points – Especially after the preparation for and completion of my trip last week to Mississippi to help brethren recover from Hurricane Katrina, I can say “amen” to the above article by another brother who has experienced how great brethren are.

Especially for those of you who donated money for the trip, I want to briefly mention some of the ways we helped the brethren financially, focusing on one family in particular who had around 18 inches of water in their house (They, like most others, did not have flooding insurance). In addition to redoing the insulation and drywall in their house, along with some plumbing issues, we took them to Lowe’s and let them pick out some new appliances and doors to replace theirs that had been ruined. We also took them to Big Lots to pick out new mattresses and box springs. We gave them and other families Wal-Mart gift certificates to purchase other items as needed. We left extra money to meet future needs of the brethren there.

“The LORD gives grace and glory; no good thing does He withhold from those who walk uprightly.” Psalm 84:11b

Family News

Virginia Bryant has a great amount of pain in her right leg and hip. She received a pain shot on Tuesday. It helped a great amount. However, she is now in pain again and cannot get another pain shot until 10/11. She should begin therapy tomorrow and hopefully it will help before long.

Quinton Coppage continues to not do well.

Nell Ferrell remains at NHC in room # 202. No real progress.

Estelle Hayes is still having hip problems.

Kathy Hollingsworth, Joyce Werner's niece, is recovering from a stroke.

Gary Hunt, a preacher we help support, will have shoulder surgery on 10/4.

Sandra Hunt will soon be seeing a neurosurgeon because the MRI showed some significant spine problems that may require surgery.

Alvin "John" Jenkins, Robert's father, continues treatment for lung cancer.

Natalie Johnson had tonsil problems last month. She got better, but has had recurring problems. She is now sick again.

Richard Jones, the Boyd's neighbor, has advanced cancer and is worse.

The **Lentz's** new address is: 7161 Deerfield Road Bartlett, TN 38135

Allen Malone will be returning home from Vietnam late this week. There is a new report from him in the back.

Remember **Dong** who has cancer. The radiation treatments have been stopped because he is too weak. They appeared to be helpful and hopefully can be started again soon.

Sarah Neighbors is back in the hospital. She went in Friday night for dehydration due to excessive vomiting. Her stay is uncertain in length.

There is a new report from **Fred Newman** in the back of the auditorium.

Fran Pickens is in room # 219 in Middle TN Christian. She still has pain from her fall and they are trying to find out if there are any other broken bones.

Bill Procter, whose wife Wanda visited with us, has lung cancer. The cancer appeared to be contained in his left lung and the whole left lung was to be removed last Monday. Do not yet have an update.

Nancy Read had a bad week but is doing better.

Joyce Werner had shoulder replacement surgery on Wednesday. It went well. She went home from the hospital yesterday afternoon. She should receive therapy at home this week. So far everything has been better than expected.

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"Rejoice always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks" (1 Thes 5:16-18).