

The Lakeview Lamp

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

December 11, 2005

Necessities and Contentment

Troy Nicholson

Our clothes washer died last weekend. When talking to people about getting my wife a new one for Christmas, someone commented that you're not supposed to give necessities for Christmas presents. The more I thought about that comment, the more I thought about how a washer is not a necessity – an expedient tool, but not a necessity. Some of you know firsthand that you can live without a washer because you did so while growing up – and somehow even lived to tell about it.

Coincidentally, this past week I received some statistics for the year 1905 – one hundred years ago. Here is a sample:

- Only 14 percent of the homes in the U.S. had a bathtub.
- Only 8 percent of the homes had a telephone.
- There were only 8,000 cars and only 144 miles of paved roads in the U.S.

Can you imagine not having a bathtub in the house – in addition to hot water at the turn of a knob to fill it? Would you feel deprived if you did not have a cell phone to take everywhere you go (with 101 ring tones and a camera, of course), not alone only a home phone? How many teens consider getting a car just an automatic part of turning 16? Televisions were not mentioned in the statistics because they had not even been invented in 1905, yet how many people could not imagine having to live without not only a television, but also satellite or cable?

Another interesting statistic was that there were only about 230 reported murders in the entire U.S. That number is closer to the yearly total in some cities today than to the national total. Maybe the murder rate was lower because they had less stuff. So many of the murders today are over stuff that they did not even have back then.

Many people will be measuring gain this holiday season by the quantity of gifts under the tree with their name on them. While there is nothing inherently wrong with giving or receiving gifts, we need to remember that *“godliness with contentment is great gain”* (1 Timothy 6:6). Are you seeking gain through gifts or godliness?

“For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it” (:7). Many people don't seem to understand this fact – at least not based on their focus on the accumulation of stuff. Is your focus on treasure that is earthly and temporary or on treasure that is heavenly and eternal (Matthew 6:19-20)?

“But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that” (:8). Will we? Are we? Are we teaching our children to be content with the necessities of life, or are we training them to expect and even demand more and more nonessential stuff? Especially during this materialistic season, the society around us is telling us and our family that we “need” and “deserve” so much more that what God has said should make us content. Which one is winning our attention? Remember that Jesus said *“you cannot serve God and wealth”* (Matthew 6:24).

Monday's *Tennessean* contained an article about how more stuff is not the key to real gain ("Fortune didn't turn two troubled lives into jackpot"). In 2000 a blue-collar man and "his estranged second wife" shared a lottery jackpot of \$34 million. They began living a life of leisure and luxury – far beyond having a washer and bathtub. They divorced in 2001. Each had their share of problems with friends and family. In 2003 he died from complications related to alcoholism at the age of 45. On the day before Thanksgiving her partly decomposed body was found in her bed, with the possibility of a drug overdose leading to her death at the age of 51.

Accounts like the one above testify to the fact that "*people who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction.* [qyb://0/anchor/10](#)*For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many grief*" (1 Timothy 6:9-10).

What will things be like in another 100 years? What will be considered a necessity then that we do not even have today? Only God knows. What will be our descendents' attitude toward stuff then? So much depends on our attitude and what we teach our children today (Ephesians 6:4).

Enjoy the giving and receiving of the season, but don't confuse your needs with your wants or fail to be content with whatever you have (Phil 4:11). Bless your children with goodies, but more importantly bless them with godliness. Enjoy your washers, bathtubs, telephones, cars, and all the other luxuries that so richly surround us; but don't forget to thank God for them all and give Him the glory He deserves.

"Be gracious to me, O Lord, for to You I cry all day long." – Psalm
86:3

Family News

Neil Barker, Sandy Heyboer's father, went home from the hospital as scheduled on Friday. He is now scheduled for therapy three days a week for four weeks. He is glad to be home and continues to improve.

Bonnie Sue Brown is sick this morning.

Virginia Bryant is better and her pain level is less.

Quinton Coppage is doing some better.

Metty Fain is not doing well and is getting worse and worse.

Elmo Ferrell got a good doctor's report but is having back problems.

The **Fultz** family used to attend here. Two of their children are sick. **Sandlyn** is in a great amount of pain from a tumor that is against the lower part of her spinal cord. So far her pain medicine is not very effective. She has an appointment this Tuesday to see a neurosurgeon. **Nathan** has a chest CT scan and an MRI scheduled for tomorrow. These are to check on the spots in his chest wall and lung and the tumor on his brainstem.

Sandra Hunt is considering new treatments for her pain. There is some risk involved (they are getting information from her heart doctor on Tuesday).

John Jenkins, Robert's father, has lung cancer. The scans he had showed it has not spread to his bones. On December 19th he will start a new type of chemotherapy. They are trying to build up his strength before then.

Richard Jones, the Boyd's neighbor, has advanced cancer. He is in Sumner Regional MC. He is in pain, very weak and very sick.

Debbie Kelley's address is: 2608 McKinley Avenue, Claymont DE 19703

Fran Pickens has had more severe arthritis pain lately.

Allen Malone remains in Vietnam. There is a new report from him in the back of the auditorium. He is scheduled to return home this Friday.

Barbara Matish, a friend of Bonnie Sue Brown's, has congestive heart failure. This Tuesday she is to have surgery to replace two heart valves.

Wendy Walker, Walter's coworker (James Hunt also knows her), was on life support after a heart attack. She is now breathing on her own but is still unconscious. She is only in her 30s and has three children.

Ame White is scheduled to have surgery tomorrow. She is to enter the Vanderbilt Clinic about mid-morning. She should stay overnight.

Robert Wray is doing better.

Lakeview church of Christ

132 New Shackle Island Road

P.O. Box 514

Hendersonville TN 37077

Building: 615-824-1376

www.BibleSaints.com

Bible Call: 615-824-1310

Troy Nicholson

trojenn@intergate.com

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