

# The Lakeview Lamp

*"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path."* – **Psalm 119:105**

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## *Giving Thanks for Tragedies*

Troy Nicholson

Thursday's (Thanksgiving) *Tennessean* had a special section entitled "Some Give Thanks for Life's Challenges." It focused on several people who have undergone various tragedies and the perspective they gained.

One man was thankful for having cancer. When told that all of his tumors could not be removed, he began praying for healing. He failed to feel any response and then "realized that the only time I had gone to him in prayer over the past several years was when I wanted or needed something." He then pledged to live the rest of his life for God. "I am still battling cancer, but I can honestly say that it has been the best thing that has ever happened to me. It brought me back to my Lord and closer to my family."

Another man thanked God for his father being sent to jail. His father "always chose to drink and be a drunk first" over being a loving father. He "spent his childhood praying that his father would love him more than alcohol," and quit drinking. He was 14 when his father was sentenced to three years in prison. He did not understand how God could send his father to jail after he had prayed so many years for him to stop drinking. When his father got out of jail, he never drank again. "The time since my father has been out of jail has been the best 20 years of my life."

One woman suffered several tragedies in a year's time: her father died on her birthday, her husband emptied the house and filed for divorce, and her daughter nearly died from a ruptured appendix. She said that the experiences made her stronger and led her back to God and His strength.

These real-life accounts simply confirm the truth of God's word. James wrote, "*Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing*" (**James 1:2-4**). We may not always be thankful at the time for the trials and tragedies we face in life, but remember that we can be made better for going through them. As Paul wrote in **Romans 8:28**, "*And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.*"

As you give thanks to God, do not forget to thank Him for the tragedies that have led to greater things and drawn you closer to Him.

# *Attitudes Toward the Local Church*

Warren E. Berkley

People who suffer with a disagreeable and cynical attitude generally take that disposition with them wherever they go. Some bring it to the church building!

Have you noticed, some folks who visit an assembly of a local church for the first time seem to walk in the door whining? They didn't have good directions, and the building was hard to find. They want to know why the building is half empty and there are no kids the same age as their kids. The song leader isn't very good. The preacher is not as exciting as they prefer; and, of course, the people were not friendly.

All of this grumbling comes before they get to know the people. These troublesome judgments seem to come forth about the time they walk in the door, and before they have taken the time to become acquainted with the work their brothers and sisters are attempting to do.

This is more than just annoying. This kind of behavior is immature, offers no good will or encouragement to the local disciples, teaches children to be complainers, and breeds a spirit of self-absorption, complacency and self-righteousness.

## ***There is a better attitude!***

This better attitude begins with humility. Do not assume that you know so much about a group of people, after you've "known them" for a total of 30 minutes! There may be all sorts of facts, circumstances, history, and unseen conditions you know nothing about. Instead of thinking primarily of your comfort, your preferences, and your needs – "*Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others,*" (Phil. 2:4).

The better attitude is based on a conscious, individual decision to "*do all things without murmuring and disputing,*" (Phil. 2:14). In the first place, the spirit that constantly complains and grumbles is not pleasing to the Lord. In the second place, if there are real problems, they are not solved by this irksome behavior.

The better attitude rejoices in truth (1 Cor. 13:6). What is good and right should be commended. John expressed this attitude when he wrote, "*I rejoiced greatly that I found some of your children walking in truth, as we have received commandment from the Father,*" (2 John 4).

The better attitude is cautious to avoid partiality. Some of our quick judgments reflect personal prejudice or favoritism. What James deals with in James two (Jas. 2:1-13) concerns one who "comes into your assembly," and the prejudicial attitudes toward the poor man. The principle taught in the text

# News and Notes

\* There is a **singing at Katie Greene's house** tonight after worship.

## Members:

- \* Margie Frizzell had an MRI last week that revealed her pain is being caused by a pressed nerve.
- \* Thelbert Frizzell continues to recover from his knee surgery. His main **problem now is that he can't get his blood pressure stabilized.**
- \* Fran Pickens **was taken to Centennial Hospital Thursday with Bell's palsy.** She returned home last night.
- \* Cotton Read is doing better and is in room 326. He may have a pace maker and defibrillator implanted soon.

## Friends and Family:

- \* Andy Hayes, **friend of the Nicholson's, took a turn for the worse** Wednesday. He is on the highest level of the ventilator they can have him.
- \* Lois Waldman, friend of Claudia Guest, has a black spot on her lung. She is awaiting decisions by the doctors as to how to proceed with her treatment.

Absent: Jennifer Nicholson and children (AL, AM only).

New Reports: Arrigo Corazza (Pisa, Italy).

would also apply when one who comes in is guilty of the same attitude. *"Have you not shown partiality among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts?" (Jas. 2:4).* That question is probing for anyone showing partiality anywhere!

The better attitude says: "I'm here to participate, to help and to encourage everybody who is involved in the work of the Lord!" The better attitude is not blind to problems, but seeks to participate in a solution to problems in a godly way. The better attitude does not demand perfection, but will share in scriptural efforts to move in that direction.

(Preacher's point – This article is like a continuation of one in last week's bulletin, even though by a different author. With people traveling during the holidays, it gives us something good to remember when worshipping with other churches.)



*"Incline my heart to Your testimonies and not to dishonest gain."* – **Psalm 119:36**