

Monthly Support Report

October 31, 2020

Dear elders,

I pray that this report finds everyone doing well. We're doing fine. We haven't had any issues with the COVID19 virus yet. Except our son Aaron who is in Kentucky, attending Western Kentucky University just recently contacted the virus and tested positive. He's over it now, finished with his isolation and back to school. While we're not certain about where he got the virus or from whom, our best guess is he got it from one of the college kids at church. The church Aaron attends has a very active 35-40-college students and at least 3-of-them had reported a positive test just prior to Aaron getting it. A large group of college students do things together on a weekly basis, so we kind of think he may have gotten it from one of them. I'd like to say that they practice social distancing and that they wear their masks when they get together, but I seriously doubt it. Aaron actually only had symptoms for about 1 ½ days. He had a low-grade fever of about 99.8 degrees, and some congestion. And that's about it. The virus really didn't linger long with him other than that one day of fever. He took two COVID19 tests and they came back positive, so other than the fever that's the only way he knew something was going on. Now, he's back to normal and back at services at church.

My wife's mother recently tested positive for COVID19. She has Alzheimer's and lives in assisted living in Georgia, and apparently another resident of that home went out for therapy and came back positive with the virus. This home has been so safe until this one time they allowed someone to come back without testing them immediately, and that person gave it to a couple of others (including my mother-in-law). The amazing thing with her is, although she will be 90-years-old very soon, much like Aaron she didn't experience the normal symptoms we read about with others who have had covid19. We're very thankful for that. My wife was very concerned when she first learned about the positive test for COVID19. However, things are fine and she has since tested negative. It's strange that I've heard of quite a few people who have contacted this virus without having to endure very much if any difficulties from it. But, that's a positive thing.

As a congregation we haven't experienced anyone who has been infected. We do have some families who don't attend, who have chosen to participate in the services via ZOOM due to their age and or medical condition. A couple of individuals have weakened immune systems. And they have wisely decided to do everything they can to avoid personal contact with anyone other than family members. One family in particular doesn't attend in person very often because in his job for the railroad, he is being exposed almost daily to someone who "possibly" has the virus. So, out of safety for the congregation, he and his wife and teenage daughter stay home. However, as much as he has been exposed (or his work think he has been exposed), he hasn't gotten the virus. I think he's been tested about 20-times already by his work. He's the only person I know, other than the President who's been tested so often. We're just thankful that he and his family have remained virus free. And, as a congregation we continue to practice the safety guidelines mandated by our governor. She restated them just recently and they are in place until November 15. I'm thinking they will go well past November 15. It's my prayer that the spread of the virus as has been reported just this past week will not force the

hand of the governor to close worship assemblies, and go back to where we were when so many states were having closures.

The church here continues to do well. Attendance fluctuates due to the virus, and of course we don't have many visitors coming in for the same reason. I would think that you have experienced the same things. However, attitudes among the members remain very positive, and there's a strong desire to do the Lord's work. That positive attitude, I'm happy to report hasn't fluctuated. I actually think that since COVID19 came about, and we saw what we were going to have to do to continue with our worship services that everyone is has tried extra hard. That's to their credit. We have good Christians here who try really hard to please the Lord. Plus, we're just thankful that we can assemble to worship.

Our studies together have been very profitable and encouraging. I continue to see people who are applying themselves more and more to their Bible Class studies. Which as you know makes for a more interesting Bible Class discussion.

I'm still studying with one of our members who suffers due to emotional abuse as a child. She had a mother who used God as a negative weapon as one of her means to parent. The outcome for both her and her older brother was that "God is mean" and he doesn't love us the way the Bible teaches. And, that every bad thing that happens to us is because God is punishing us for something. Her brother lost his job recently, and as he had been trained to think as a child, he was certain that God was punishing him for something. It's not very often that I can remember someone whose thinking about God has been due to how a parent taught them as a child. I understand that many in the days of both Testaments had a similar view. Job's friends and those who questioned the man born blind (John 9) apparently felt this way. But, I haven't encountered it very much in my experiences with people. Anyway, we've made some positive progress in our studies together, and I'm convinced things are going to turn out well. She's beginning to accept a God of love as is taught in the scriptures.

My lesson this Sunday will be titled "Okay is not okay." I don't know if you remember the AT&T commercials or not which I believe began to air right around last year's Clemson – Alabama title game or not. But, I'll open my lesson with two of those commercials where the basic premise is "Okay is not okay." Obviously, my lesson my lesson will be centered on our not accepting sub-par performance personally as an individual Christian. Or, our not accepting "Just okay" in our worship to God either. While the AT&T "Just okay is not okay" slogan isn't used in the Scriptures, as you well know. The premise is spoken about throughout the New Testament.

I want to take this opportunity to thank you for having fellowship with me in preaching the Gospel of Christ here in this place. November will be our last month here and then we head off to Georgia. I would like to think that much good has been accomplished for the glory of the Lord during the time we've been here. While I guess it's true that you always wish you could have done more in the Lord's service. I'm personally satisfied with the effort that we've made, and for the growth we've seen throughout the years. I have no regrets and I'm so very grateful for your help. Without your help it would have been much more difficult financially. And thank you for your many prayers and your words of encouragement throughout the time we've had this fellowship together. I know that anytime a congregation helps support men other than the one who works with you, that it's a great sacrifice. Thank you for your sacrifice and fellowship in the gospel here in this place. I've thanked God for you on many occasions. And I won't stop remembering you in my prayers because of the good work that you are continuing to do there. This is a difficult time for our Nation, and a difficult time for every family due partly to this

virus. Every family I'm personally aware of is sacrificing in some way due to this COVID19 virus. It has placed a burden on all of us individually and as a congregation of the Lord's people. So, your help has been greatly appreciated and received with thanksgiving. Thank you!

God bless.

Randy