

Manchester, TN & Norway Report

June / July 2008

My Family In Christ,

I must tell you that we are still \$1245 short of what we have estimated we will need each month. We are still going. We fly out September 4th. Renee is going to try to find work to supplement our income. Norway will not allow me to work outside of the church. We are unsure of how long this arrangement will last. Renee and I want this to be a long-term effort. We hope you will help us to make it such. If you know of a family or congregation that might be interested in supporting the work, please forward this to them. Also, if it is a possibility that they might be able to add us into their 2009 budget, we can most likely sustain ourselves until then. Please send this to them. Of course, your prayers are continually appreciated.

June and July has been very busy but good months. We are just five weeks away from our move. We are excited and we hope you are too! You will receive an email when we arrive in Norway but we will probably not send another report until the beginning of October. Let's talk about these past couple of months.

MANCHESTER

The church is growing in all sorts of ways. I am extremely happy to tell you all that we have a new sister in Christ, Alicia Bunting. Just a month previous to her baptism, Noah Kuykendall was baptized. We are thankful and praise God for their willingness to serve God as young people. The congregation has also picked up another \$350 of Terrell's support. This shows great interest and faith in future growth as well.

I have told you about some who are struggling and have possibly lost their faith. Josh Bingham, who had neglected assembling with the Saints and was engaging in sinful activities, was restored to our number two weeks ago! I think it is important for you to know that this is a result of the Manchester congregation not shrinking back from doing what we must with erring brethren (Matt. 18; I Cor. 5; II Thess. 6 etc...). A letter of concern and love was sent to Josh as well as Adam and Tracy Nunley. The Nunleys have neglected the assemblies, lost contact with the members here, and are now going through an unscriptural divorce (as far as we know). The letter outlined the things we saw that were wrong in their lives as well as what we must do soon if they fail to return to us. It was within a couple of days of receiving the letter that Josh returned unto us. Although the other two have failed to respond as of yet, this does prove that God's wisdom is far beyond our own and we must adhere to His Word with faith and without delay. Please continue to pray for Adam and Tracy as well as Josh who still has much to overcome.

Terrell continues to recover well from his surgery and is now back in full swing with his work. However, I still am able to preach and teach often. In June, I began a series on the book of Revelation. I am trying to overview the book in seven lessons. Two remain. It has been a good study and I have received positive feedback but I know I must revise and try to be a little more concise in the future. I am also teaching the Sunday AM Young Adult Bible class. Our study is of my own material to which I entitled "Have You Not Read?" It is a study of several fundamental issues for people trying to seek and serve God effectively. Some topics are The Nature of God, The Nature of Man, The Scriptures, Salvation, Organization, Worship, and Last Things. While we are mainly focused on what the Scriptures teach regarding these issues, some other religious groups are discussed in consideration of how they have erred in some of

these areas. I hope this aids some of our college students who will be challenged on many of their basic beliefs.

Renee and I have been studying with a Jehovah's Witness for about six weeks now. He has brought a couple of others with him as well as his wife. I am thankful for their willingness to continue to study with us despite our differences. I believe we have made some progress with he and his wife. While they may not be ready to give up on the Jehovah's Witnesses, they are questioning some of their fundamental beliefs and practices. After our last study, I believe they felt challenged greatly as we pointed out from their own translation (New World Translation) that Jesus was not created by God and therefore must be God to make sense of other passages. I also gave them an article I wrote entitled "Is the NWT a Reliable Translation?" Brother Colly Caldwell has been of great assistance to us in answering questions and helping us to effectively defend God's Word. I recommend brother Maurice Barnett's material about the Witnesses (Florida College Bookstore) to anyone that may have opportunity to study with them. This may possibly be the end of our studies but I hope you will pray that our effort will grow into fruit as they consider their faith.

NORWAY

As I said earlier, we are just five weeks away from our move (Sep. 4th)! Borgar is ready for some help with the worship services. They had six visitors a few weeks ago. We are looking forward to getting started.

The Helena Church of Christ (near Birmingham) will begin supporting us in September. This brings our total monthly support to \$2970. However, we are still \$1245 short of our estimated needs. I have included the information concerning our support and expenses at the bottom again. This will hopefully answer any questions you might have in that area.

Let me take a few moments to share with you some thoughts from my heart. As the time gets closer, I think more and more about the work in Scandinavia. While the success rate is criticized compared to other places, I still want to go to Scandinavia. I am not unaware of the flourishing works in other places. After spending 3 weeks in Colombia in 2006, I am still amazed of their love for God and desire to do what's right. I have spoken one on one with men who have worked in Africa, Mexico, China, Canada, England, Romania, Hungary, and other places. I know that more people have been converted in just about every other place. However, I am not convinced at all that these things minimize "the power of God unto Salvation to everyone who believes" (Rom. 1:16). I am not convinced that we should leave the faithful Christians in Norway alone. Their willingness to obey Christ in an atheistic, humanistic society demands that we do everything within our power to help "bear their burden" (Gal. 6:2).

I do not know what will happen when Renee and I move. I do not know whether we are necessarily right for the job. Renee's history gives us an advantage and we want to be there for a long time, but that doesn't mean we are perfect for it. However, I am convinced that if we let evil's apparent victory in any given place dictate our faith and service to Christ, more boundaries are just around the corner. In the vision of Revelation 11:3-13, the two witnesses of God were murdered by the wicked beast. The world began to rejoice over their corpses. They were free from the preaching that condemned their wicked ways. However, three and a half days later, God gave life again to the witnesses. They arose and "great fear fell on all those who saw them" (vs. 11). In Vs. 13, there was an earthquake and the wicked were punished. Apparent victory of evil is only that, apparent. Now and always, until Christ returns to take us home, let us rise up and shake the comfort zone of the wicked and remind all of their responsibility to

the Creator (Rom. 1:21; 12:1, 2). Backed by the power of God, we can do it in the United States, China, Iraq, Israel, Scandinavia, and throughout the world. We must believe.

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