

Widow's Harvest



In All Things Give Thanks to Our Heavenly Father In Christ Jesus Name | Fall 2012

Dear Friends & Supporters:

It should come as no surprise to you that we have had another wonderful year in the Lord. This time last year we were in serious financial straits, but God was still good and remains good all the time even in difficult trials such as those. Thankfully, due to significant cuts in our budget and the increased giving by so many of our donors, we have not found ourselves in the financial predicament of last year. Either way, as I have already said, God remains good and he alone is worthy of our offerings of thanksgiving in all things.

In addition to the many construction projects that we have been able to start and complete, with the help of hundreds of volunteers who have come out to serve throughout the year, we have also had an exciting year of growth and maturity in the widow's prayer ministry. Not only have our numbers increased to almost 60 participating each week, but their desire to love God with their hearts, minds and souls has been exemplified in ways that I have never witnessed before in their love for their neighbors as themselves.

This year in the weekly Bible study, that takes place before their prayer time that begins promptly at 12 noon, the focus has been on worship with the emphasis being on the 2 greatest commandments as God's standard for us in what it actually means to worship God on a 24/7 basis.

As I personally reflect on what it means to worship/love God with all my heart, mind and soul, and to worship/love God by loving my neighbor as myself, in all of it Jesus becomes my/our example. It has caused me to really contemplate the things that Jesus said and did and where he said them and did them, rather than spending so much time focusing on the

things he didn't say or do or where he wasn't. What I mean by this is simple, it is so easy for me to get caught up in so many things that I think are wrong with the world around me that Jesus didn't even address, or if he did it was not recorded in the Gospel. Why is that? Why do we spend so much of our time and resources and trying to combat those areas that we have come to believe that will bring God's judgment upon us and they are not even areas that Jesus devotes one word or action to.

What if we were all just concerned with the words and deeds that Jesus was concerned with most, which all were based on God's standards for us for what it means to love him with all our being and to love our neighbors as ourselves? Based on the parable of the Good Samaritan it would mean that those who do reflect these standards will be known for their mercy and compassion. Mercy begets mercy, so to speak. It is

because of God's mercy that he has called us, in the same way, to be merciful to others. When we are this to others that is what it means to truly be "living and holy sacrifices," which, according to this same passage in Romans 12:1, God considers to be worship, through the service both of him and others. Our lives are daily to be offered up to the Lord, which means that as offerings, living and holy sacrifices as it were, to the Lord our words and deeds must fulfill God's standard for us as mandated in his 2 greatest commandments.

Hebrews 13:15-16, *"Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise--the fruit of lips that confess his name."*

And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased."

In these 2 passages of scripture in Hebrews God reveals to us what I have



Widow's praising God during our weekly Bible study and prayer time

Since we learned in our study of the book of Ephesians that as Christ's betrothed we are presently seated with him in the heavenly realm, and that our citizenship, therefore, lies there as well, to fully embrace this can truly free us up from so many of the day to day anxieties the world around us frequently causes.

come to think of as the “Jesus Model.” Everything that Jesus modeled for us as being what is most important to God as worship can be summed up in these 2 categories of sacrificial offerings. The first sacrifice is the sacrifice of praise, or thank offering, the giving of thanks in all things to our heavenly father in Christ Jesus name, thus fulfilling what it means to “love God with all of our hearts minds and souls. The second sacrifice is the deed sacrifice, or good deed offering, which fulfills the second of the 2 greatest commands, “to love our neighbors as ourselves.”

Continually offering up both kinds of sacrifices, according to the second part of verse 16, “for with such sacrifices God is pleased.” The Greek word for “pleased” in this passage is only used 3 times in the New Testament and they are all in the book of Hebrews. The first is in 11:5 talking about Enoch and that he had a testimony that pleased God before he was translated (never saw or experienced death). The second is in Hebrews 11:6 where it tells us that without faith it is impossible to please God. And the third time is found in Hebrews 13:16 where it is telling us, that for those who have faith in God and who are, therefore, able to please him, the offering of these kinds of sacrifices, gives us the kind of testimony that he is pleased with. This pleases him, I have come to believe, because they are both evidence of an inward change that expresses itself outwardly as the fulfillment of the 2 greatest commandments.

Very rarely, do I think that either myself or other Christians really understand the outworking of our faith on such a simplified basis. Is this not what the Book of James is really about. Instructing us not to be just hearers of the word, but doers of the word. That faith without works is death and works without faith is death. That true religion, or worship, that is pure and undefiled is visiting/ministering to the widows and the fatherless, which would seemingly include, both, literal widows and orphans as well as spiritual widows and orphans, which is ultimately what our fallen condition is apart from Christ. In the same way that we are justified

before God through our faith in Jesus, it is the outworking of that faith through works that justifies that faith according to James 2:24.

How is it that we have grown so far away from the simplicity that God intended to be the means for demonstrating the “pure devotion” we have in Christ? In the same way that Jesus came to serve and not to be served, we, likewise, are to be imitators of his example through the serving of others. Everything apart from this, apart from what it really means to love God with all of our hearts, minds and souls, and to love our neighbors as ourselves, that God finds no pleasure in. If this is true, then why is it that the greater part of what we consider to be worship, and therefore the greater part of the outworking of our faith, seems to have little or nothing to do with these 2 commandments as the standards by which we base all of our actions?

Widow’s Prayer Mission

About 3 weeks ago after the Bible study during the widow’s weekly prayer time,



one of the widows stood up and said that the Lord spoke to her. She said that the widows were to begin to pray for our city’s youth, especially those who are fatherless. Then she added that they were to do this each day beginning at noon. Immediately, without a moment’s hesitation, all of the widows unanimously were in agreement. Many of those who have cell phones have set their alarms to go off at noon. Already, in just 3 short weeks God has opened up opportunities with some of our cities youth through Pat Ralston and Urban Young Life and Aubrey Fritz and Jonathon Sharp with Student Venture, which is now called CRU. Not only will both of these leaders be bringing out their students to serve widows, Aubrey has also invited the widows out for opportunities for the widows to serve

the youth. Only God, through prayer, could have brought all of this together so quickly.



Aubrey Fritz, CRU (formerly Student Venture), assigned to Howard High School Shares with the widows his heart for youth and ways that the widows can pray for both him and them.

Many of you on this mailing list who live in Chattanooga know that we have a serious murder problem in our city that are almost all gang related. It has put many in our city in fear, even though it is really only a very small group of people in some fairly confined areas that this violence is taking place. Our Mayor and other city leaders have now put together a gang task force to try and come up with strategies that will end this violence. In my mind, we really don’t have a gang problem in Chattanooga. What we have is a fatherless and widow problem, and since James 1:27 states that caring for the widows and the fatherless in their distress is considered by him to be “pure and undefiled worship (that is what the word “religion that is used in this passage really means), we can take this one step further and say that what we really have, from a Christian/church perspective is a worship problem. In other words, the more we neglect the care of the widow and the fatherless (the more we do not understand caring for these 2 groups in the context of worship and act upon it) the greater this epidemic will be. Not just in Chattanooga, but all over this country.

May God lead you to join with our widows in praying for our youth here as well as your youth wherever you live, at least, each day at 12 noon, and perhaps even more.

Special Thanks To All Of Our Volunteers



RUF students from Covenant College completely replace a widows roof over their fall break. Dick Mason, our Construction Projects Coordinator, is pretty excited about it.

Volunteer Groups

Alive in You
The Bethlehem Center-Lurone Jennings
Bridges Christian Church
Calvary Chapel
Camp Lookout
Camp New Dawn
Chattanooga Association of Realtors
Chattanooga Christian School Community Service Class
Covenant College, Widows Ministry
Covenant College, Baseball team
Covenant College, Tim Morris/Wilberforce Scholarship Students
Covenant Pres.
Church of the First Born- Alfred Johnson
CRU
Urban Young Life-Pat Ralston
Dallas Bay Baptist

East Ridge Pres.
Fellowship Bible Church
First Pres. Columbus
Hixson High School
Hixson United Methodist
Home Instead
Hope for The Inner City
Lookout Mtn. Pres. Senior High Youth-Aaron Tolson
Lookout Mtn. Pres. Women’s Bible Study Ministry
McCallie School
McCallie TEPS
Middle Valley Baptist
New City Fellowship (East Lake)
North Shore Fellowship Senior High Youth- Ben Loderhose
Peninsula Baptist Church

Project 52, Chris Robinson
Rock Creek Church
RUF Covenant College-Ron Brown
Signal Mountain Pres-Mike Cowart
Silverdale Baptist Seniors Group
Silverdale Baptist Small Groups
St. Elmo Ave. Baptist Church-Roger Kittle
St. Elmo Pres.
St. Timothy’s Episcopal
Son Servants
Southland
Wesleyan School, Rosswell, Ga.
Westview Baptist Church
Woople Group
Classical School Grades K-4
Collier Construction
Panera

Individual Volunteers

Ann & David Jahn
Ted Fuguet
Frankie Ellis
Darryl Jones
Bill Kent
Travis Jones
David Strange
Herm Bel
Rem Cooper
Brian Stoddard
Stewart Bickley
Hamilton Brock

Monty Humphreys
Ted Griffin
John Risley Family
Mary Barnett
Judy Pepper
Susie Courtney
Donna Wharton
Susan Bosworth
Jack Bosworth
Tim and Sharon Evearitt
Helen Adams
Sue Richards

Frances Martin
Louise Ervin
Doris Griffin
Mary Hunnicutt
Claudette Bates
Delma Brooks
Paulette Ervin
Joyce Fears
Sarah Perry
Tom & Melodie Horn
Taylor Black



(Hopefully, no one, or group, was left out of this list. We tried very hard to not leave anyone out, but if we did please forgive us. It was an unintentional oversight.)

There are many ways that either a group, or an individual can volunteer with Widows Harvest. Whether it is for one day, once a week, once a month, or in the case of short term group mission opportunities, which can be for one day up to a full week, we would love to partner with you.

For more details on all of our volunteer opportunities visit our web site, www.widows.org, or call us at 423-266-0260.



Senior high youth from Lookout Mountain Pres. arriving for annual summer short term mission opportunity with Widows Harvest.

Year-To-Date Statistics	
Total Number of Projects Started & Completed On Widow’s Homes	235
Total Number of Volunteers	880
Total Number of Volunteer Days	175
Total Number of Widows Served	366
Total Number of Widows Attending Weekly Widow’s Prayer Ministry	50-60

Ways To Keep Up With Widows Harvest

New Web Site:
We have a really wonderful, new, web site designed by Chris Johnston. This was designed from scratch and not from a already laid out template. It now gives us the ability to post up coming events, news stories, have an online calendar, make comments and a whole host of other things I am still trying to figure out. It also links us to our facebook page, that I am trying to keep up-to-date. So much is happening so quickly that I am having a hard time doing that, though.

E-Mail Updates:
I will continue to send out regular email updates, but now that we have the ability to do all that we can on our web site as well as having a facebook page, now, hopefully, these updates will be able to be much shorter. If you aren’t on our email update list you can sign up on our web site now.

Twitter:
I don’t know how to do this yet, nor am I sure that I will be doing this, but it is an option for us now on our web site.

Ways To Support Widows Harvest

Direct Support (sending donations)
Although, we have reduced the cost of our budget, we still need to not only maintain the level of support we are presently receiving, but we also need to increase that amount in the coming year. Which means either an increase in giving by those already supporting Widows Harvest and/or expanding our donor base. It seems that we are busier than ever this year, and I expect, with the Baby Boomer generation retiring, the numbers of widows (which means the numbers of widows needs) to only increase.

Widows Ministry Model

Widows Harvest, having been founded in 1987, is the longest serving faith based ministry in America with the specific mission to care for widows. It has only been in the last 10 years that there have been numerous other widows ministries being formed in other cities and churches. The largest percentage of these newer works is located within 120 miles of Chattanooga (see links on our web site for specific ministry locations). In my opinion, Widows Harvest continues to be one of the best models for either a local church or a citywide ministry to use as a blue print. What, perhaps, continues to separate us from most ministries with a similar mission is the equal emphasis on both word and deed ministry. Equal resources are devoted to both meeting the needs of widows, especially in the areas of home repair, and to promoting the spiritual growth (discipleship) and ministries (prayer and discipleship) of widows. The majority of other ministries I have encountered with missions to widows, will generally emphasize one of these areas or the other, but almost never, both. In fact, some of these ministries barely have any spiritual/ministry emphasis at all.

There is also one other significant factor that distinguishes Widows Harvest from other widows ministries, and that is the fact that we are an urban/inner city based and focused ministry which also means, in our case, we are almost completely cross-cultural in nature. In our case, the majority culture that this ministry is most involved in ministering with, is African American. There is no doubt in my mind that being in the African American community led to the founding of Widows Harvest Africa by Kenyan Pastor, Joshua Atieno.

Baby Boomers
A word about Baby Boomers

In only a few short years the largest percentage of retired Baby Boomers will be widows. There, perhaps, will not have been as large of a population of widows in this Country since the Civil War if the trend of 9 out of 12 women outliving their husbands continues. What this means is a large percentage of our Baby Boomer generation church leadership will be dying off and leaving their widowed wives behind. This will also be true for all of our corporate and industry leaders and political leaders as well. Since we as both the church and a nation are not really able to care for our present widowed population, how can we possibly be prepared for what lies ahead. Especially, since we have not modeled for the generations coming up behind us the necessity for caring for widows. The greatest indictment, of course, will be for the church, since God makes it so clear through his word the necessity for caring for widows.

Indirect Support

Ebay
Widows Harvest Ministries is a registered non-profit with Ebay. What this means is that you can donate a percentage of your auction sale to Widows Harvest. They will, in turn, deduct that percentage from you final fees cost.

Good Search
I have tried to promote giving to Widows Harvest through GoodSearch.com for a number of years, but with limited success.

There are 38 registered individuals that have chosen our ministry as the ministry they want to support through this opportunity. Out of that 38 only 12 have either used the good search engine to help raise money for us, or through Good Shop or Good Dining. We just received our donation from Good Search and it was for \$132.00, which averages out to be \$10.25. If all 38 had used Good Search, Good Shop and/or Good Dining, based on that average amount the end of the year donation would have been \$389.50. Of course, the more people who register and use these opportunities the more support will be generated. The great thing about this is that you are going to do searches on the internet, so why not do it through goodsearch (it is through yahoo search). Every time you do a search 1 cent is donated to Widows Harvest.

This is the problem, I think, for most people. The reason I know this is because it was initially a problem for me. When this opportunity was first offered you had to go to the GoodSearch web site to do a search on the internet. That was a lot of trouble. They have eliminated that problem by making a toolbar available that you can download and it sits right under your regular browser toolbar. When you have this it gives you a place to enter your searches and automatically donate 1 cent to Widows Harvest every time you search. There is still a problem in that this toolbar won’t work with every internet browser. I am not certain which ones it will, or won’t except for firefox. That is the browser I use and this toolbar will work with it.

Anyway, the first step is to register with goodsearch. The second step is to download the toolbar for your browser. After you have done this you can then use goodshop also, and register with gooddining. You can’t use either of those, though, if you haven’t registered with goodsearch first. One of the advantages to having the toolbar is that when you go to one of the shopping sites that donate a percentage of a purchase back to your charity on goodsearch, it will automatically identify itself as a goodsearch site with a pop-up window. In the window it will tell you how much of a percentage will be donated from your purchase on that site as well as any discount coupons that might be available. For those of you that do purchase things online, as long as you are going to be buying something why not have a percentage of your purchase go to Widows Harvest. By the way, Amazon is one of their online partners.

If, for whatever reason, you don’t, or can’t download the tool bar, if you are registered with goodsearch, even if you are not using their search engine, you can go to their web site and make purchases through it at partner online shops and we will be able to get a percentage of the purchases that way. Just click on goodshop and it will give you all of their partner online shops that donate a percentage of purchases to the charity you are register with (through goodsearch, of course, and not directly).

Finally, the other opportunity of giving through goodsearch is with gooddining.



Widows HARVEST MINISTRIES

P.O. Box 2307
Chattanooga, TN 37409

In every city there are partner restaurants that give a percentage of the cost of your meal to your charity through goodsearch. In order for this to happen, though, you have to pay for your meal with a credit card and that credit card number has to be registered with gooddining (which you do on their site).

In order to find out which restaurants in your city are partnered with gooddining just go to the gooddining site, put in your city, or zip code, and it will give you a complete list. There are at least 2 restaurants that participate in this that are in my own neighborhood, Mt. Vernon Restaurant and Blacksmiths. If just half the people I know that eat at Mt. Vernon, alone, were to do this, it the yearly donation from it would be significant.

In Conclusion

I am as excited as I have ever been, today, in this Ministry and my own personal walk with the Lord. Hopefully, from this update you can tell this. About 15 years ago one of the widows that was part of our prayer ministry, Emma Davenport, came to the weekly prayer time after being absent for quite a while. Emma had congestive heart failure and that was the reason she had not been able to be with us. On this particular day that she was able to join with the widows, and it would be the last time she was able to do this as well, she

just beamed with the joy of the Lord. It was as if she knew that God was going to take her home soon (and he did several days later). On that day, after the prayer time, she went around the room to each of the widows and told them how much she loved them and then said that if she were to die today it would be ok and if she were to live until tomorrow it would be ok. In other words, in her heart and mind, living or dying wasn't the measure of what made everything ok, or not, it was Jesus and Jesus alone. As long as we have Jesus, Jesus is enough. In him, we will be ok, in everything, good or bad, life or death, joy or despair. Of this, I am truly convinced, we will be ok.

Merry Christmas
&
May God Bless You With An Abundance
of His Peace

Andy Mendonsa
Director

