

Mississippi River Trip

Sunday, January 10, 2010 at 7:53pm

Dear Friends and Family of Carpenters House

Ephesians 4:16 (NIV) reads, "From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work."

Teamwork: Great teamwork makes things happen more than anything else in organization--more than skills, qualifications, or money...Whether its family, church, ministry, business, or personal life.

The dictionary definition is the combined effective action of a group or team to achieve a common goal. Teamwork means we share a common idea, embrace a common goal. Regardless of our differences. We strive shoulder to shoulder. Confident in each others faith, trust, and commitment. In the end it means we believe in each other. It has been said Teamwork is the fuel that allows common people to produce uncommon results!! Teamwork is the long wrod for success! We can see examples of teamwork all through the Bible. In the beginning God said to Adam--"It is not good that man should be alone." Noah and his familyin building the ark. Nehemiah built a wall in 52 days with a team. Moses had a team and a team leader with Aaron. Jesus and the twelve disciples. The greatest team work ever or ever will be. Paul and Silas, Barnabas and Mark; The list could go on and on.

In Isaiah 65:8 (NIV) states, 'But I will not destroy them all,' says the Lord. 'For just as good grapes are found among a cluster of bad ones (and someone will say, Don't throw them all away- there are some good grapes there!), so I will not destroy all Israel.'

Mississippi River Canoe Trip Today at 4:58pm 1-19-2010

We landed a few days later in Montrose, IA. Judy decided to fish a while. I worked on the door of the motor home. A young lady with a lab dog came down on the river to play a game of fetch with her dog. Soon a couple in their late 50's came to watch her. They asked me what we were doing. As we shared about hunger in America and God's love the lady with the dog shared with us. God had blessed her when she was a single mom living on the streets. What a blessing to have met her. We prayed, then they shared the town's history with us. Montrose is where Joseph Smith crossed the Mississippi river with his followers over into Nauvoo, MO. Navajo is where they settled. That evening we went to Nauvoo to stay at the state park. As we pulled in they had a farmers market selling fresh produce. We got some corn and green beans. We shared and prayed with the merchants. The next morning as we headed for the river the brakes went out on the motor home. This took several hours to fix since it was raining. Judy wanted to go into town and do laundry. We had already learned that God uses the laundry areas. I got to pray with a few folks when I was returning back to the laundry mat. One of the merchants from the farmers market asked if I would come into their shop to talk. They said that the church was struggling in

the town. They wanted to know if I would pray for them. We prayed that God's presence would be spread into the streets. As in Matthew 28:19 states "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

The next day back on our journey brought us to McBride, MO. Tired, wet, and down to our last \$50.00. We called Jerry C. and ask him if he would look on his computer and find us the nearest Wal-Mart or campground. Jerry called back saying he could only find one campground and no Wal-Mart. Jerry gave us the phone number to call and get directions. We called, got directions and price. We stopped at a Save-A-Lot to get something for dinner. (Since we now knew how much it would cost to spend the night.) While at the grocery, the campground called to see if we got lost. We could not believe a campground would care. We thought it was a nice gesture. As we pulled into the campground which took us 4 miles on a small road. (You look at those things in a motor home when it is raining hard.) Outside the city we saw a farm house and three campers with three vacant sites. We wondered if we were in the right place. A man came out in the rain, said welcome and told us where to park. A nice peace came over us as I backed the motor home into the spot. Judy paid the \$25.00 for the night. The gentlemen introduced himself as Jack N. We started talking about what we were doing. We shared about God. He said welcome and can we talk later about the 30 years and what God wanted him to do. Jack said maybe you can help. I said sure and he went to have dinner with his wife. Judy & I fixed dinner and was thanking God for his love and guidance. Jack and his wife came down about 8:00pm. Jack said they wanted to bless the ministry and donated \$500.00. We spent the rest of the evening discussing the Bible and what God wanted from us. We also prayed about Judy's bone cancer. The next morning it had come a flood and a small craft advisory. Judy & I had discussed how God blesses you when you have faith. We discussed how Jack & his wife had not known our finances and how God provides. We also discussed that this was the first time strangers had donated and how it affected us. Jack & his wife will never know until maybe now what a blessing they are and were to us.

The next morning in the rain Jack knocked on our door. Jack gave us two coupons to eat at Huddle House for breakfast. Leviticus 27:30 states "A tithe of everything from the land, whether grain from the soul or fruit from the trees, belongs to the Lord: It is Holy to the Lord." As we pulled into Huddle House, the motor home back fired loudly. We went in looking a mess.. We had not had a shower in 3 days. (sometimes there were no bath houses.) We were soaking wet from the rain. Judy's glasses were broke and tied together with a bread tie and a little slanted. lol Judy spoke to a couple who would hardly look our way. We started talking about how we were getting to experience how the homeless felt and the way people treat them. While we were waiting on our waitress Judy & I decided we had been blessed so we would bless some of the folks. The young waitress came to take our order. I asked if she believed in Jesus and had him as her Savior? She said, yes. She took our drink order. I asked her had she blessed anybody today. I asked her if she would like to? So, we started blessing. I told her to bring me the bill of the

couple who did not want to speak to us. The waitress was only to say the following and we were to stay anonymous

. She was to say God loves you. Thank God for your blessing and Jesus has paid the price and to pay it forward. When the couple got up to pay she said this to the man. He announced to everybody. I don't know who paid my bill. You have taught me a lesson. The waitress went to the back crying. She came back and we told her to bless a man counting his change to pay for his breakfast. He was so shocked. You could tell in his face. (we had a mirror in front of us, God was letting us see the reactions which was a blessing to us.) The waitress crying went to the back and came back. I said I want you to bless the cook. She took the funds and placed it as if it was an order. The cook announced out loud. God Bless you whoever did this and Bless God. The atmosphere was changing and changing fast in this place. Waitress leaves crying again. She comes over and says what you don't know is I talked to my pastor last night and off again she went crying.

Mississippi River canoe trip continued

Today at 5:41pm 1-19-2010

Then we blessed a young family. The parents had been arguing. When the waitress blessed and told them. Their approximately 4 yr. old girl said Mom and Dad I don't think God wants you to be fussing. What a joy seeing that action speaks louder than words. The waitress went out crying each time a blessing was given. She came back and I told her to sit down. The waitress started telling us what she had said to her pastor the night before through her tears. She shared with us the night before her Pastor had told her as she struggled with life that there were some good people in the world. She shared with us that a year before her husband, a truck driver, had a bad wreck and was not expected to live. Through prayer and a miracle of God he had started back to work that very day. They were so behind in their bills and she had been carrying the load for a year. She stated she was blessed she had her husband. He knew her and the children. She stated she knew God would see them through. What a testimony!!!! We prayed with her and left her a nice blessing. As we left quietly we wondered what an impact we were able to show the ones we blessed but especially the waitress through our actions. The Bible says, You will reap what you sow. This scripture comes to mind in II Corinthians 6:2 "For he says, 'In the time of my favor I heard you, and in the day of salvation I helped you.'"

A few days and towns later we came to Cario, IL. This is a town that we will talk about later on but, please pray for this town. We did a prayer walk through its abandoned streets. More to come on this.

A few days later we arrived in Tiptonville, TN. Judy's parents came to meet us here. We stayed at Reel Foot Lake State Park. As Judy and her parents visited I took a walk around the park. As I arrived back to the camper, two men were out at their camper cooking. I could see eyes under their camper. I went to investigate, it was a raccoon. They asked where I was from and about the canoe on top of the motor home. I shared with them about what we were doing and I asked them if they had a relationship with Christ. They shared with me they believed and went to church. But one of them struggled with alcohol. I was able to share my testimony. How God had

removed that temptation from my life and we prayed. The next day was cold and stormy. We made some chili and shared with the young men. That evening Judy's parents and us went to the river bank and prayed. The next morning Judy's parents left to go home. As we were getting ready to leave to go down river the man in the camper gave us a mess of fish. We headed down river. John 3:16 comes to mind "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son. that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."

We pulled into Helena, AR. We stopped to stretch our legs. A lady was going through business dumpsters. We ask if we could help her. She said no they throw away good stuff. Three boys were playing in their yard. They started yelling Santa Clause is here. They went to get their mother out of the house to see Santa. Yes it has been a while since I had a haircut and a beard trimmed. It didn't help I was wearing a red shirt. lol I guess I knew then what I would be doing!!! Helena is a beautiful town. Full of history but had needs. They had a big drug problem. That night we were able to share the gospel with a couple camping in the parking lot where we were staying.