BUILDING BACK

 As we visited The Great Smoky Mountains for our first time after the fire in Two Thousand Sixteen, about two years later, I noticed areas where the fire had burned while areas beside the burned part seemed untouched. Houses were destroyed while the house next door was unscathed. Surprisingly, some houses that were burned were being rebuilt and some that were not touched beside them were for sale.

 It made me think about how we deal with major trials or fires in our lives. One way of dealing with this fire is to ask myself is there any reasonable way I could have prevented the fire or hardship? If so, determine to be more prepared should it happen again. Could I have stopped the fire? I didn’t start it and could not have prevented it but could I have attacked it before it reached my home and stopped it? I can’t change the outcome on what has been but I have a plan for next time.

 Some choose to dwell on what has happened and become paralyzed with self-pity. They could go on but refuse to by thinking that if they dwell on it long enough it will change. Until the fire is accepted it is hard to get beyond it. Yes, it is a bad situation but how do I make it better? Still others decide to sell out and go somewhere else, where there are no fires. Great thought but where will that be? Very few places on earth are fire proof. Our problems must be faced and dealt with for no matter where we go we will have problems.

 I asked some ladies who were cleaning the cabin next to ours if some cabins close by were burned and one said that there were. She quickly added, with a big smile, that they were building back. “Building back” always has an encouraging sound. One of our sister churches lost their building to a fire. For a while they met in a borrowed facility and during that time they were not drowning in their sorrows but making plans to go forward. Several months ago we heard the good news, “we are building back.” Now we have heard even better news, “we have moved in.”

 So with the knowledge that fires will come, problems will come, let us do what we can to prevent them but if they overcome us; if they tear us down, do not stay down. There is nothing to be gained by wallowing in defeat. The best thing to do is to take what you have and build back.

Yours in Christ,

Brother Randy Burtram