SLAP OUT

May 24th, 2020

My gauge hit E and in a few moments I was totally out of gas.  I’m not speaking of a car or a gas powered machine, I’m talking about myself.  The past two Sundays I had run pretty low on physical energy but today there was nothing left.  I knew that I had found the bottom of the tank.  It hurt.  I was so disappointed in myself.  This was our first Sunday to start congregating after two months of live-streaming our services.  I needed to be with the flock instead I think I just made a scene.  My heart broke for in this critical time the flock needed an under-shepherd.

     Well. To be honest I was afraid I could not make it this morning but I felt I had to know for sure that I wasn’t able to complete the task.  I needed to know for myself.  I could not bear the thought of having left anything on the table.  The knowledge that I wasn’t strong enough to do what I was supposed to do was demoralizing.  I just wanted to cry and I did.  It broke me that I couldn’t complete the task that had been given me.  The messages from the past two Sundays were about the Preacher and his task of getting the bride for the Son.  I felt like I had preached to myself and failed to come through for the Lord and the Church.

       In the mid-seventies I owned a Studebaker car.  The gas gauge did not work.  Numerous times I ran out of gas.  It seemed for me that it was inevitable that I was going to run out of gas the only questions were when and where.  From experience, I can tell you the best place to run out is near or at a gas station.  My old body hit E a few minutes later it began to skip and sputter but praise the Lord when I ran out I found myself at the Well of Grace!  Someone had placed a chair within one step of where I stood.  I was able to sit and draw long deep breaths.  Someone was fanning me.  Someone helped me to the car.  My wife helped me focus on what God expected of me and didn’t expect of me.  These may seem like small things to you but it was grace for me from the Lord’s well.  God put special people before me that would listen to me and not judge me.  That is grace for I didn’t deserve it.

       That wonderful well of grace, it is one thing to preach on it and something else to drink from it when you’re absolutely empty.  Nothing has a better taste than the water from His well.  Never a water has ever quenched a dying thirst like His.    I have found it to have a medicinal quality as I have sipped from the dipper.  Without it I think I would have died.  With it I am ready to go forward.  I am ready to face the challenges of tomorrow, the next day and the next.

      Yes Lord, I ran out of gas but I’m glad I wasn’t on the side of the road.  I wasn’t able to walk.  I had no strength to call.  Instead I ran out at the filling station.  Bless Your Holy Name!!!

Yours in Christ,

Brother Randy Burtram