

BEGINNING OUR THIRD YEAR

This Sunday begins our third year working with the church in Sunnyside, WA. In some respects it doesn't seem like it has been two years since we moved from Alabama to Washington. However, there are times when it seems like we have been here much longer. You have graciously accepted this Mississippi/Alabama transplant and treated us like family. We have grown to love and appreciate the Christians here in this area. However, we are disappointed and saddened that there are not more faithful churches in this area than there are. We need to redouble our efforts to teach others the Gospel of Christ so we can grow and more churches can be established. Even though we rejoiced in the increase in attendance as a result of some from the church in Prosser deciding to come work and worship with us, it was very sad to see the church in Prosser "disband" and there no longer be a church of the Lord in Prosser. Hopefully, at some time in the future when more are converted to the Lord, the Lord's work can begin again in that city and many other cities in this area. We need to dedicate ourselves to the task of spreading the Gospel so that the Lord's church can grow, not only here in this area, but all over the world.

One of the things we miss the most, besides being close to physical family members, is the opportunities we had in the South to attend gospel meetings at area churches and enjoy the fellowship with the Christians in those churches. It is a very uplifting experience to be able to go meet and worship God with Christians several nights a week many times during the year in area churches. We came to realize that because this is so "common place" in that part of the country, that a large percentage of the Christians in that area did not take advantage of such opportunities.

I am convinced that it would be good for the faithful churches in this area to plan some gospel meetings so we could invite not only the people in the community to attend and hear lessons from God's word, but that brethren from other churches could attend also and have fellowship with their brothers and sisters in Christ. Yes it would take work and dedication on the part of each member to do their best to arrange work schedules so they could attend each service of the planned series of lessons. However, I believe it would be profitable for all, not only because we would receive teaching (be fed) from God's word, but also because we would be having fellowship with other Christians and thus be strengthening each other. It is my firm conviction that we as Christians need to be together more, not less. In 1Thess 5:11 Paul encouraged the Christians to "comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do." How can we edify one another if we are not together? There are many passages in Scripture that talks about the disciples being "gathered together" or having "come together" such as: Acts 15:30; 20:7; 1Cor 5:4; 14:23,26; Heb 10:25. So, during this year let's give some thought to planning a Gospel meeting. I know that the church here has had Gospel meetings in the past and I know of no reason why it could not do so again.

I could and maybe should say more but I guess I have rambled long enough. The past two years have been very pleasant as we have had some small part in the work of the Lord here at Sunnyside. Certainly, we anticipate nothing less as we begin this third year "together". (JLH)