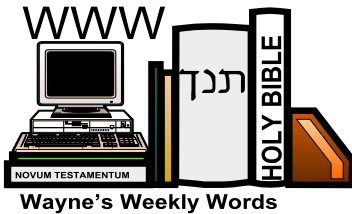


SNAPSHOT #1

What happened to the “Weekly Words?” For the rest of the summer, my weekly words will be about our past. I will begin this week in a natural place . . . in the beginning!

Luke 14:28-30 *For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has enough to finish it-- lest, after he has laid the foundation, and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, saying, 'This man began to build and was not able to finish.'*

This Scripture is in a passage that deals with the cost of discipleship. Read the verses which precede it and you will see. It does not refer to building a local church. With respect to building the church, Jesus said, *And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.* Matthew 16:18

On June 19th 1983, Fathers' Day, at Judkins Middle School in Pismo Beach, we held our first worship service. From that day forward, this church was the result of a series of miracles, all wrought by the Lord.

Would you believe that, on that day, there were more people in the Morning Worship Service (over 200) than we had dollars in our General Fund (we had no Reserve Fund, Missions Fund, or any other fund then)? If the passage from Luke (above) applied to building a church, we would most surely have been considered foolish.

As far as assets went, we had only a few dollars and a whole lot of faith. As far as liabilities went, we were obligated to pay Pastor Jim's salary and benefits, the rent on Judkins each Sunday, office expense (bulletin, phone, etc.) and other expenses. We had less than \$200! Where was the money going to come from? “Well,” you say, “it would come from the tithes and offerings,” We knew that but we had no idea at all how much that would amount to.

On top of all this, in the first six months several things happened we didn't plan on. We found that song sheets were not adequate - we needed regular hymnals (some of which are still in the pews today!) Then, when summer was over and school was to begin, we found out that there would be no chairs in the multipurpose room at Judkins. We would need to buy 150 folding chairs (many of these are now in the Fellowship Hall).

Then, Mildred Wylie announced that the Lord had called her to short term missionary service with Wycliffe in Guatemala. We had planned to have a strong missions program, but not for a couple of years when we were established. We then voted to contribute a significant part of her support.

It wasn't long after this that Peter and Joy Palmer came to our church with their two babies in tow and won the hearts of our people. We “had” to help with their support. We didn't plan to have a missions program so soon - but God did!

Two years after we had the first service, we were supporting about six missionary couples and we even had a Building Fund of over \$11,000. In all this time, there was not a single week where we did not have sufficient funds to meet all of our obligations. The Lord supplied it all. We had everything we needed except a church (i.e. a church building).

Do you know what you could buy in terms of property and a building in 1985 with \$11,000? About the same as you can now. We looked everywhere, even at a used car salesroom in what is now the Pismo Outlet Center. Finally, we decided that all we could hope to do is buy some land and, someday, build a church on it. But that was still too costly.

If there was to continue to be a church, it would take another miracle (the fact that the church even came into existence was the first). I envisioned a rich man coming one Sunday and giving us a million dollars to build our church. For a time, a doctor attended the church (doctors, of course, are rich). Then he left. So, what happened? That's next week's snapshot!

Wayne

