

BREAKFAST WITH CHAMPIONS

THE STORY

A couple of years ago in meetings at the Twin Oaks Church of Christ in Huntingdon, TN and with the Expressway Church of Christ near Jackson, TN I met two widows. I had seen them at gospel meetings in the area in the past but had the privilege of getting to know them during those weeks. Peggy Jo Lewis is a recent widow. She is in her 80's. Her friend and sister-in-law is Virginia Mallard. Virginia also is in her 80's. Neither drives any more.

What impressed me most about them

- Wednesday morning the three of us ate breakfast at Peggy's house. Chocolate gravy, homemade biscuits, white gravy, bacon, eggs, sausage, homemade pear preserves....Hospitality was incredible. Homemade gifts for Carol and I and many others for family and friends. "Honor widows who are really widows" (1 Timothy 5:3). "And above all things have fervent love for one another, for love will cover a multitude of sins. Be hospitable to one another without grumbling. As each one has received a gift, minister to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God" (1 Peter 4:8-10).

WHAT I LEARNED FROM THESE WIDOWS

- Faithfulness to God (Hebrews 10:24-25; Rev. 2:10; 1 Cor. 4:1-2). At that late stage of life they still are doing what they can while they can. They attended both meetings night after night and sang with skill and enthusiasm encouraging everyone. Note: Thanks to those who brought them.
- They are workers. They couldn't either one fix a big meal but together they could. It provided an opportunity to talk about some real serious matters. We are to be fellow-workers. (Romans 16:1-5). Following the examples of Phoebe, Priscilla, Dorcas, Mary Magdalene, Lydia, and a host of others. Blessing to be in homes when possible.

- Peggy's conversion story was impressive. Her desire to remain faithful was even more impressive. In difficult times she would go home and look to see what God said about the matter. Spiritual decisions were made on what she understood from God's word along with her deceased husband, Joe Lewis. But she looked to find the answers in **her Bible**. (1 Peter 4:11; 2 Timothy 2:15).

- Virginia has faced the death of two husbands, many other family members, and with many other challenges within and without. (2 Timothy 1:15, 18).
- Eight gospel preachers came during the week to the gospel meetings to encourage the church, and to encourage the young preacher, Jason Bennett, but I believe also to encourage these sisters who had encouraged them. In tough times brethren need to encourage and edify one another.

LESSONS FOR US

- We each need to work while we can the night is coming when no one can work (John 9:4).
- Godly women have enormous wisdom and faith but unless we communicate with them we miss it (Titus 2:1-8).
- We are required by God to show respect, given honor, and to meet the needs of widows within the church (1 Timothy 5:1-16; Acts 6:1-7).