

Hope from Devastation

“For My thoughts are not your thoughts,
Nor are your ways My ways,” says the Lord.
9 “For as the heavens are higher than the earth,
So are My ways higher than your ways,
And My thoughts than your thoughts.”
Isaiah 55:8-9 (NKJV)

I stood on the Nolichucky riverbank in Eastern Tennessee on the morning of September 27th. Looking back, it was surreal. Some called it a 500-year flood: Loss of homes, farmland, cars, and the most precious thing, human life. I remember the water rising and feeling so helpless. I remember saying "How can I help?" I was told that Jackson Bridge was the only "usable" one around. Either totally wiped out or not structurally strong, the access would be closed.

The morning after the flood I watched local farmers clear a path to Jackson Bridge. This would allow for the county workers to come in and do what they needed to do on the actual bridge. The path cleared that morning also gave way for the power company to begin the restoration process. The south side workers clearing debris did not even realize workers from the north side were coming their way. They met in the middle. Individuals working together with a common goal.

When a path was made, a woman with two children emerged from the debris piles. When they got to where I was it was obvious that she had been crying. She was so thankful for safety, so thankful to be alive. I remember asking her "How can we help you?". All she wanted was to be reunited with her husband whom she had not been with since before the storm. I asked if we could pray together and graciously, she replied, yes. From that moment on, God led me in the recovery effort. I entered the call with humility and a longing to be obedient.

My wife and I built a house just up from Jackson Bridge about 4 years ago. Who would have ever thought our yard would become one of the distribution sites for Hurricane Helene Relief? Who could have ever imagined people gathering for a community worship service in our front yard? Who would have imagined that seven people would be baptized in an old horse trough? As believers, we know the answers to these questionsan Almighty, an all-loving God. Nothing has caught Him off guard or by surprise. I pray that all of us will be obedient to the call from the Lord. I pray that we will all be obedient to the work of Jesus.

Many of us have been praying for revival. A lot of us can quote 2 Chronicles 7:14 up one side and down the other. However, have we truly been looking to Him for revival? I thought, "What if revival comes through devastation?" A heartbreaking flood in the mountains, can God move through this? Then I was reminded of what happened on Good Friday. Our Savior shed His blood and gave His life, many were devastated, but praise God Sunday morning arrived. From the cross to the empty tomb, Jesus is alive. Revival comes from the work that only God can do. Be encouraged this day and look to the One who loves you more than you can ever imagine.

Jeremy Dykes CBC Ex-Board

Weekly Prayer Points

Pray for all the churches that are struggling with the leadership of their districts to leave the COB. John 10:2-4; "The man who enters by the gate is the shepherd of his sheep. The watchman opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice."

Please pray for these congregations and pastors:

- Mount Carmel Congregation in Scottville NC and Pastor Dale Baugus
- Mount Joy Congregation in Mount Pleasant, PA and Pastor Lee Smith

CBC Prayer Committee