

October 1, 2004

Dear Pastor & Friends:

Hurricane Charley and Frances made life to have its complexities and even its tragedies. We here in Florida know that we have been through some stressful times this past month. Sometimes we don't understand. In fact, there are times when it is very difficult to be thankful and yet I Thessalonians 5:18 commands us, "In everything give thanks for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." You may say that there is a difference between giving thanks in everything and giving thanks for everything. I agree but the Lord wants us to do both. Ephesians 5:20 says, "Giving thanks always for all things", so no matter what circumstances may come to our lives, we know God wants us to be thankful. I can say I am thankful Sarah and I are safe and so were our three children and their families. Our homes suffered very little damage.

Calvary Baptist Church, our home church had one of the educational buildings badly damaged. The roof came off and water ruined all the walls, floors and four offices that contained computers, books and etc.

Calvary Baptist, our home church is without a pastor so I preached for them on the 5th, then in Ormond Beach for Pastor Ron Todd on the 12th, then Calvary on the 19th and on the 26th for Pastor Ragsdale in West Marion. Pray that God will lead the pulpit committee to select the right man for this great Church.

Thank you for your prayers and support. May the Lord continue to bless you as you serve Him. The Lord is good, all the time!

Sincerely in Christ,
Glenn Stockton
The Pastor's Friend

ENCOURAGEMENT

October 2004

Good Morning Friend,

You and I tend to think of time in terms of minutes, hours, days, weeks, months and years. We wear wrist watches. We have clocks and calendars in our homes and offices. We live with the limitations of time and space. We are busy . . . rushing here and there. How different it is with God. I can't imagine Him looking at the clock. He is never late . . . and He is never early. He is always on time. His timing is always perfect.

I recall the story of Mary and Martha (John 11) who were frantically trying to find Jesus so He could come and heal their sick brother, Lazarus. Jesus finally arrived but He was late; in fact, **too late** according to their calendar. Lazarus was dead and had been in the tomb for four days. Twice they said to Jesus . . . *If only you would have been here.* Jesus then called Lazarus to come out of the tomb. He did so. That day the sisters learned something new about Jesus, *The Resurrection and the Life* (John 11:25). Is God ever late? Is He ever too late? NO . . . though it may sometimes seem that He is too late. We wring our hands, wishing that He would do something. But God is **always** doing something. He is fully engaged.

There was a preacher that had a near-death automobile accident, God did a number of awesome things to reveal Himself to many. Soon after hitting the tree with his car, and hitting the steering wheel with his face, A large cluster of curious people gathered around the accident site. One of them was Kristin, a Christian nurse. She took care of him until the paramedics arrived. Twice his breathing stopped and she pounded his chest to get him breathing again. She later wrote an article about her experience that night. She entitled it PROVIDENCE. She explained that everything went wrong for her in the hours before the accident. Her schedule was repeatedly interrupted with delays and then . . . she came upon the accident. God used her in his life. Her article was a powerful explanation of God's over-riding involvement in our lives. She stated that there is no room for Christians to ever use these phrases . . . *it just happened . . . It was a lucky break . . . etc.* She was convinced that a sovereign God had arranged her schedule that night. He had put her in the right place at the right time.

God's perfect timing is also stated and illustrated in Galatians 4:4 when it says, *In the fullness of time, God sent forth His Son.* Stated a bit differently we can say "When the time was right" or "When God had all things in readiness, He sent forth His Son." The birth of Jesus was perfectly timed. So are the events in your life and mine. Sometimes we are amazed to see what God does and when He does it.

He is the great Programmer. He is the Architect of the universe and of our lives . . . yours and mine. Right now, what is the thing that is troubling you? Trust Him because He is at work on your behalf.

Be Encouraged,
Glenn Stockton