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get our house until ten days ago! So, we had to move most of our belongings into storage. Only our two most recent outings allowed us to move stuff directly into our new place. We took five trailer hauls to storage, and two to the house, the final trip being a double load, with my parents' accompanying us and towing a separate trailer. In total, about 10,000 miles have been driven to bring my preaching library and office furniture, furnishings for a household of seven, and livestock equipment for swine and poultry across two State lines. We still need to transfer what remains in storage to our domicile.

Finally, all of our recent trips have involved vehicles **breaking down** in some way. On one outing, the trailer connector cord went slack and dragged on the highway somewhere between Las Vegas and Kingman, Arizona, severing all the wires providing tail lights, brake lights, and turn signals on our trailer. It was a major holiday, so no auto parts stores or even Wal-Mart were open, meaning we couldn't buy a tow light kit. We had to buy magnetic LED flashers to attach to the trailer in the truck stop. By our next fueling, one of those had jostled loose and was lost on the road, requiring the purchase of a replacement along with some strong adhesive.

On another trip, the thermostat on my 2014 Chevy failed, causing the truck to overheat, and necessitating an emergency stop in Winslow, Arizona, where the part was replaced and coolant added.

During the following visit, the truck's alternator failed and it had to be towed to the dealership for a replacement.

On the penultimate journey, the truck overheated again and spilled coolant everywhere, requiring another tow and service at the dealership again. Due to local circumstances, including the tow truck needing repair twice while towing my vehicle, it took at least eleven hours for the tow to be completed.

While the Chevy was still in the shop, we used our 2007 Toyota to haul the trailer for the last outing. When we were sixteen miles from home, this vehicle began billowing steam out from under the hood, where we found a heater hose connection had broken. No place was open at that hour to get parts, so we opted for another tow. Unfortunately, likely due to weight, we could not unhitch the trailer from the Sequoia, and AAA could not tow the vehicle and trailer without a drastic financial charge, so we left it on the shoulder of the Interstate overnight and had to return to it in the morning.

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Not counting all other nuisances, we had five vehicular breakdowns the past few weeks. Yet, we never broke down. A trailer did, kind of. An SUV did. A pickup did three times. The Dockens family did not. We had no reason to because Peter, by inspiration, wrote, *"Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you"* (1<sup>st</sup> Peter 5:6-7). We serve a Lord who lifts our burdens; we don't have to shoulder them alone. Instead of worrying, we were able to pray for peace and He sustained us, as Paul penned, *"Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus"* (Philippians 4:6-7).

One way God has taken care of us throughout our recent difficulties is the love and care of our brethren in Christ. Hud and Barb Griffith of the Rio Grande Valley church of Christ hosted me or my whole household under their roof more times than I can remember, including one last time when I forgot to tell them the dog was coming, too! They practice what the New Testament commands: *"Be hospitable to one another without grumbling"* (1<sup>st</sup> Peter 4:9). Not only did they feed and shelter us, but they loaned us a flatbed trailer for the final run.

Many other members – among them our sister Dolores, our sister Jenna, the Wolfs, and probably others I fail to recall – provided meals. They obey Paul's teaching: *"distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality"* (Romans 12:13).

This congregation as a whole supplied storage for our stuff during this transition and provided lodging when our usual hosts were unavailable. They know *"that those who preach the gospel should live from the gospel"* (1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 9:14).

Members of the Vegas Valley church of Christ back in Las Vegas, especially our brother Peyton Huntsman and the Paleceks, were instrumental in getting us packed and on our way. They remind me of John's words: *"Beloved, you do faithfully whatever you do for the brethren and for strangers, who have borne witness of your love before the church. If you send them forward on their journey in a manner worthy of God, you will do well, because they went forth for His name's sake"* (3<sup>rd</sup> John 5-7).

Family is a blessing from on high. As it is written, *"Unless Jehovah*

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## **"WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED?"**

**ACTS 16:30**

### **LEARN THE GOSPEL**

John 6:45; Romans 10:17

### **BELIEVE IN CHRIST**

Hebrews 11:6; John 3:16

### **CONFESS CHRIST**

Matthew 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10

### **REPENT OF SIN**

Acts 3:19; 17:30

### **BE BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST**

Mark 16:16; Romans 6:3-6

### **REMAIN STEADFAST**

1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10

## **"THE ASSEMBLING OF OURSELVES TOGETHER"**

**HEBREWS 10:24-25**

### **SUNDAY**

Worship @ 10:00 a.m.

Studies @ 11:45 a.m.

### **WEDNESDAY**

Studies & Worship @ 7:00 p.m.

### **THURSDAY**

Men's/Women's Studies  
@ 6:30 p.m.

75 Sherrod Boulevard  
Belen, New Mexico

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*builds the house, they labor in vain who build it*" (Psalm 127:1). Thankfully, our house is founded on God and centered on Jesus Christ. We were blessed with help from both my parents, Jerry and Beverly Dockens of Nevada, and Rachel's, Ronnie and Belia Smith of Indiana. They've helped to load in Nevada and to unload in New Mexico. They helped to clean up both the house we moved out of and the house we moved into. They helped with automotive repairs along the way, too.

Credit also goes to some pretty terrific kids who, despite separation from friends and uncertainty about the future, have worked hard, brutally hard, to lift and carry furniture and livestock equipment, pack their belongings, scrub the walls and floors, and share in the driving. They are often reminded, in action more than word, that *"It is good for a man to bear the yoke in his youth"* (Lamentations 3:27).

Schedules failed and cars broke down, but we did not since our confidence never was in those things (Proverbs 16:9). *"Commit your way to Jehovah, trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass"* (Psalm 37:5). We arrived and are ready to work for the Lord where a door has opened.

# **"WHOLE COUNSEL"**

**ACTS 20:27**

**VOLUME 1, ISSUE 4**

**JANUARY 29<sup>TH</sup>, 2023**

## **BREAKING DOWN**

Bryan Matthew Dockens

Relocating to New Mexico from Nevada has been an ordeal.

Initially, there was the decision that, due to medical impositions, I could no longer retain my secular employment. I am overwhelmingly joyful that, after fifteen years maintaining two vocations, I can finally return to preaching exclusively, but it means a major upheaval. My oldest child remained in Las Vegas to continue her college education and my youngest five had to come to terms with leaving their friends, clubs, jobs, and only community they had ever lived in.

Next, we had to select a new home. Offers on two different properties were accepted before we had to withdraw those offers – one for requiring a tremendous amount of repairs and the other because the lender we were working with kept changing the financial requirements on us. We went on half a dozen house-hunting trips and saw probably thirty homes! We are very satisfied with the house we ultimately chose, but it does come with the drawback of a distant commute. Also, our closing date on the house was delayed by four days just two days before the originally scheduled date, almost throwing off our carefully arranged schedule.

Then, it was necessary to begin moving our belongings. Having begun our real estate search in August, we anticipated having a house by October, allowing a couple months' overlap to transition, but we didn't – Continued on page 2 –

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