



Put your hope in God . . .

May 15, 2006

“This time, I’ll make something special for us – please invite the ladies for lunch!” Rachel Barber said last week. We gathered yesterday in her home, feasting on a delicious chicken casserole, salad, bread – with a superb lemon cake made by Maudie Ash. The biggest feast came after lunch, with Ms. Barber opening the word and teaching us from Psalm 42, the passage the Lord had given her for our Grandparent’s Raising Grandchildren group. I always look forward to her teaching – it touches my heart in ways that I yearn for, with the Spirit speaking to all of us in our various situations.

Each senior comes to the meetings with a tremendous load, having made a crucial decision to raise one or more of her grandchildren. Their daughter or son is unable to care for the child or children – and grandma has stepped up, feeling responsible to save them from “the system”. Many of their own children are trapped in the snares of drug addiction, with the grandchildren oftentimes struggling with the physical effects of their mothers’ drug habit. This increases the issues granny must deal with.

The health of these seniors is impacted in a huge way because of granny taking on the challenge of bringing up children. One senior raising four grandchildren had a heart attack several years ago and had open heart surgery. Another had a stroke, leaving her left side fairly useless, her speech slower, her face with little affect. Another is slowing down, painfully moving, and feeling lost and bereft after her son took the grandchild after eight years of being with granny. Another is suffering from an unscrupulous builder who didn’t complete the renovations he promised and left with her money from her reverse mortgage. And yet another senior literally dropped dead at age 67 three months ago, after spending the past 18 years raising five grandchildren.

I honestly struggle with the decisions these seniors have made to raise their grandchildren. These should be the best times of their lives – finished with the taxing work they have done, finished with raising their own children, still active and ready for some fun and enjoyment at their age. Their health is now deteriorating; they live with immense pressures taking their toll. I want some peace for them – not more anxiety.

But Psalm 42 says: My tears have been my food day and night, while men say to me all day long, “Where is your God?” . . . Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God.

There is hope – even in these situations. Our God is able – and God will come through for these faithful warriors. The sweet spirit that enveloped us during our prayer time lifted me to a place of peace.

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