

I have always heard about the opportunities to travel to various regions of the world, to provide ministry to the needy. I know many people who have done that, and have blessed individuals by their ministry in those locations. They have shared wonderful testimonies of their experiences. For many, it took much sacrifice to go and provide the ministry they did.

There is much need all around our world. There is much need in our cities and towns. There is much need in our communities and our neighborhoods. There is much need amongst our family and friends.

*But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in Him? Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth. ---1 John 3:17-18*

I see God's love in people, as they help those in need. I see the sacrifices that people make, to assure that others are provided for. Some are able to help by providing financial assistance. That helps those in need to purchase the items that they are lacking; such as food, clothing and necessities. Others help by giving of their time for things such as tutoring, listening or providing child care. Still others provide food and/or shelter for some who need a meal and/or need a place to live. Those are just a few of the offerings that I see around me.

One way that our Mission Center helps those in need is by providing opportunities for our children and youth to participate in the experience of attending our youth camps. Many of those who attend would not be able to if it wasn't for the generosity of the Mission Center – providing cost-free camps. For many of the children and youth, attending camp may be the only time they are able to participate in a ministry where they experience God, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. Having the registration fees covered, allows many of the youth who would not be able to attend have the opportunity to attend. Individuals offer transportation to campers to be able to 'get to and from' camp. During those rides, meals are often provided to the campers. We may also be asked to provide bedding. This year, we have been asked to provide bedding for the campers who are flying to arrive at camp. Yet, there are times that we provide bedding for some campers who don't have the resources at home to bring with them.

I often stress about trying to manage everything involved with having a family. It includes paying the bills, providing meals, coordinating schedules, carving out time to spend time with each other (which now includes time to FaceTime or call on the phone) and everything else. Yet, when I look around me and recognize the hand that others are dealt I recognize what they need to manage. I then feel ashamed for how I feel about myself and my life. I forgot the blessings that our family has. The phrase in the Scripture above stating: '*sees his brother in need*' implies that we need to look outward – to SEE. We are not to look inward, being self-absorbed with our own lives and our own concerns.

Looking..... Seeing..... Responding.....LOVING!

*let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.*

Barb Bear