benevolence noun 1. disposition to do good; 2. an act of kindness; 3. a generous gift

In 2006, David Armstrong came into my office to visit as he did often when he was in Three Rivers. As we discussed the Chaplaincy after completing our first year as a full-time ministry, Mr. Armstrong asked, "What do you need for the Chaplaincy?"

This question raised my faith level even more. The fact that the CEO of this family owned, international company would take the time to consider and pose this question still astounds me to this day. As a matter of fact, the Armstrong family still consider and pose this same question today.

Why? When corporations worldwide never even consider this basic need for employees or their retirees, it is refreshing to see a family whose lives are built on faith and benevolence.

To answer the question from David Armstrong that day in 2006, I requested the establishment of a benevolence fund for our employees and retirees. David asked for an explanation of what a benevolence fund would be used for and I explained the unexpected needs that arise with all of us at times. David agreed without hesitation, with one addition to my request. He added, "If you find out of any retired pastors who are in need of help, please feel free to help them as well."

Amazing!

In the New Testament book of James it says this: "Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world." James goes on to say, If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you says to them, "Depart in peace, be warmed and filled," but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit?"
To visit orphans and widows in their trouble? The mere fact that they are orphans and widows can bring on them troubles of their own and the Armstrong family is there to meet this need, with benevolence.

There is an honor that only God can give. It is an honor bestowed on those who give out of a pure heart, expecting nothing in return. To extend a hand of the heavenly Fathers love and compassion to those who are hurting and in need is what make a believers faith and religion pure and undefiled.

With thanksgiving to God who gives every good and perfect gift from above, may God also bless those who give from the heart, undefiled, and pure, to those whose hearts are broken and in need.

With a special thank you to all of the Armstrong and Bloss families, may God be honored in all things.