

## The Old Mack Thermodyne

Now it wasn't bad, driving that old Mack Thermodyne, with 5 and 4 on the floor, a semi-truck with a 23 yard tip dump trailer. We lived in Perkins, Okla. it was 1967, and I was working for Bays Trucking, in Stillwater, Okla., hauling gravel from the Quapaw gravel site at Drumright, Okla. to Stillwater, four or five trips a day. Not long afterwards the company hired the trucks out to a job down at Atoka, Oklahoma. We were hauling out of the Bromide crusher at Atoka, to Hugo, Okla. where they were stockpiling for the new Turnpike being built from Henryetta to Dallas. It was 66 miles one way, so that made it a 132 miles round trip, two trips per day.

I started at 5 am in the morning, and got back to the Motel about 7 pm in the evening. They were long days, and lonesome too. My wife and the boys were still at home in Perkins while I was doing this. I was down there for a week, and I was missing her and the boys, so I called and ask her if she would come and get me on the following Friday evening so I could go home and go to church. So, on Friday, I was really anxious to see her and the kids, and having all that on my mind, low and behold, I forgot to fuel up after my first load, and the truck could not make two trips on one tank of fuel. You see, we could only fuel at one particular place there in Atoka, with a company credit card. The old truck held 50 gallons, and at 3 to 5 miles to the gallon, you could go somewhere around 200 miles on a tank of fuel. Well it was 66 miles one way, so if you fueled after each round trip, you were in good shape, but if you forgot, you could get back to the drop off place, but that was about it. Very soon you were out of fuel.

There were no places to buy diesel anywhere on the road between the two places, so here I was, dumped my load, and only about 10 miles on the way headed back and about 56 miles from Atoka, when all of a sudden the truck stops running. I also was the last truck out that morning, (we took turns being first, and there were 22 trucks) so I was also the last truck coming in. There wasn't anyone behind me that I could even catch a ride with, and even if there had been, the boss would have been very unhappy with me.

Slowly I rolled off to the side of the road, and fortunately there was a place to park off the pavement. I was saying, Lord, what am I going to do? My wife and the boys are going to be at the Motel waiting on me, and I am over 50 miles away?

That little voice that I was so familiar with, said to me, pray like you have never prayed before. Now I had prayed some very humble prayers in my time but I was never in a fix like this one before. So, I prayed the most humble prayer I had ever prayed in my life. I then hit the starter and the old truck started up. I put it in gear and started to roll out on down the road. I never went very far though, until it started shutting down again, and so I prayed all the harder. Suddenly it would start to run again. Soon after I would stop praying, it would begin to shut down again. On and on, mile after mile, I was crying, tears running down my face, and I was a mess to say the least. But as long as I prayed it ran. For over 50 miles I prayed and it ran. Finally I was in sight of the station at Atoka, and suddenly it quit running, and guess what, it coasted all the way to the station, and right up to the pump.

Oh my, I don't need to tell you I was a happy man. Happy to be back in town to see my family, and happy to know that the Lord was riding along right there with me all the way, checking me out, seeing if I really believed or not? He was seeing if I really was His friend, or just one of those that say they believe, but do not go all the way in that belief.

Well, even to this day, when I think back to that time, I still ask myself; do I still have that faith today? What would I do now, whip out the cell phone, call for road service or any one of the many options we have today? My how times have changed, but God never changes. He still

wants us to trust in Him, seek Him, and find out just how wonderful He really is. Can we do that?

**Bill Porter    June 10, 2010**