

MT OLIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

December 2023 Volume 1 Issue 5

A RECENT SUCCESS

New Members this quarter:
Lupe Sanchez, Patricia
Gonzalez, Regina Louthaman.

Family and Friend's worship
Sunday was a tremendous
success with guests coming
from throughout Northern
California

November food ministry gave
food to over 100 families for
Thanksgiving. Thank you to
all volunteers.

Neighborhood visitation
ministry visited more than 80
homes and had prayer

Theme: Let God restore in 2024

From the Pastor's Desk

The Bible is filled with many books, chapters, and verses of God's word. We cannot remember all of them. We can pick one which speaks to us and comforts us. One that when you feel down will pick you up. One that will calm you when the storms of life are raging.

I have a personal scripture which helped me on one of the hardest days of my life. This was the day the Lord called my father to glory. I was married with my first child on the way. I was upset with God for taking my father. I prayed and read God's word for comfort. I remember a verse I had read before that was Romans 8:28. It states all things work together for good to them who love God; to them who are called according to his purpose. It lets me know whatever happens to me in life, God will work it out for my good. I lost my dad, but God states he is with me now and I will be with you. God worked out my sorrow in the loss of my dad. I had joy knowing my father was with Him, and He would take care of me.

Some years later, a family friend gave us a plaque with my personal verse on it. Whenever I'm feeling bad or things are not working out, I remember my personal verse, "All things work together for good". Find a personal verse to help you through the hard times of life.

Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year. Pastor Norman

Q: How were Joseph and Mary warned that someone wanted to kill the baby Jesus?

A: In a dream. (Matt. 2: 13)

Q: How many wisemen does the bible say came to see Jesus?

A: It doesn't list a number. (Matt. 2: 1-12)

Q: What Old Testament prophet was given a book to eat by God.

A: Ezekiel (Ezekiel 3:2)

Q: what two apostles were imprisoned in Jerusalem for preaching the gospel? A: Peter and John (Acts 3:1; 4:3)



Mount Olive
BAPTIST CHURCH

101 W. Clinton Ave. Fresno, CA 93705

For unto us a child is born. Unto us a son is given. And the government shall be upon his shoulders.

Mt. Olive Baptist Church

7 Days of Prayer & Fasting

January 1 – 7, 2024

Day #1 Devotional - To Increase in Spiritual Hunger and Holiness:

As the New Year begins, ask the Lord to awaken your heart to His love. Pray for increased hunger to spend more time in prayer, worship, and God's Word. Psalm 51:10-12 Scripture References: Philippians 4:8-9, Joshua 1:8, 2 Timothy 2:15.

Meditation: *How can I become more like Him?*

Day #2 Devotional - To Draw Closer to the Lord:

Ask the Lord to reveal to you anything that would hinder your ability to come into His presence in a deeper way than you ever have before. Pray for the ability to see your sin as He sees it. Be brokenhearted over your sin and ask for forgiveness. Psalm 24:3-5 Scripture Reference:

Romans 8:35-39, Hebrews 12:1-2.

Meditation: *God knows we have struggles, and He has an answer.*

Day #3 Devotional - Breaking Free of the Chains of Bondage:

Jesus has paid the price of redemption for all to be free. Embrace your newly found freedom, the chains are broken and the things that have held you in bondage are removed. Isaiah 58:6-9 (MSG) Scripture References: Psalm 27:13-14, Isaiah 10:27.

Meditation: *The truth shall make you free. What chains of bondage do you need to be free from?*

Day #4 Devotional - To Walk in Wisdom and Revelation:

Ask the Lord to open your eyes to see Him more clearly and your ears to hear anything He desires to speak. Pray for a Spirit of wisdom and revelation that you might know Jesus more deeply and have a profound understanding of the hope that is in His heart for you. 1 Corinthians 2:9-16, Ephesians 1:17-18 Scripture

References: 1 Kings 19:11-13, Psalms 119:97-104, Proverbs 19:8.

Meditation: *Ask the Lord to open your eyes to see Him more clearly and your ears to hear anything He desires to speak.*

Day #5 Devotional - To Find and Fulfill Your Destiny:

The greatest joy, fulfillment, and success comes when we seek Him about the direction for our lives and commit to follow His plan for us. Scripture: Psalm 37:23-29 (NKJV) Scripture References: Joshua 1:3-6, Psalms 119:105-106, Daniel 10:12.

Meditation: *Ask the Lord to share with you the plan that He has for your life. Pray that He will give you the next step in His Divine plan for your life and commit that you will follow His plan, for you, forever.*

Day #6 Devotional - To Experience Fresh Encounters:

Invite the Lord to visit your family (spouse, children, mother, father, brothers, sisters, etc.) in a fresh new way in 2023. Pray that this year you, your family, and your close friends will encounter the holiness and sovereign power of God that will leave each one changed by His presence and more committed to His Kingdom.

Scriptures: Psalm 145:9-19 (NIV) Scripture References: Psalm 78:4-7, Deuteronomy 6:6-12.

Meditation: *Ask the Lord to help you seek out a fresh renewal with a new hunger for His righteousness and His ways. Pray: Teach me to think like you so that I may be all that you would have me to be.*

Day #7 Devotional - To Experience Revival:

Pray for revival to break out in your community, in schools, government, business, and congregations. Ask the Lord to raise up dedicated Christians who will become a voice to change our community and our nation. Scripture Reference: Psalm 85, Psalm 147:1-11, Revelation 21:5-6. ***Meditation:*** *Praise God. He will create in you the victory and elevate you to a new level for His glory.*



STAY IN THE RACE Ecclesiastes 9:11

BY REV. RHON SMART

Many have been discouraged by others who are in the race. All are running for the same prize, eternal life. Many are running at a fast pace, others are strong runners. We all get the prize if we endure to the end

We have a great example of a runner before us. There are some requirements to run the race. The writer of Hebrews 12 says Let us lay aside every weight and sin that besets us.

We know that we cannot run the race if sin is in our lives. Our Lord died for our sins. He will forgive us if we ask him. God abhors sin. Proverbs 6:16 says a proud look a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, an heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, a false witness that speaks lies, and he that sows discord among the brethren.

Everything is not a sin, but some things are weights. What are your weights? Some things we may not think are weights. Some of our friends may be a weight. Places we attend may be a weight. Members of our family may be a weight. Some of our entertainment may be a weight. Some of our positions we hold may be a weight.

The Lord says He will have no other god before Him. What are your weights?

Even though we have been in the race a long time, longevity does not win the prize, but the one that endures to the end.

Stay in the race. The road will get hard sometimes. There will be hills, valleys, and pitfalls along the way, but we have a God who loves us. He will help us on our

journey. We can trust Him to get us to the end. Be faithful .

Psalms 107:20 “He sent out his word and healed them. He rescued them from the grave.”

Matthew 10:1 “Jesus called his twelve disciples and gave them authority to cast out evil spirits and to heal every kind of disease and illness.”

Ezekiel 34:16 “I will seek out the lost, bring back the scattered, bandage the cripple, and strengthen the weak and the sick.”

Luke 17:19 “Jesus said to him, “Get up and go. Your faith has restored you to health.”

The First Noel was written to express the excitement and wonder of Christmas. Hundreds of years ago, during a time without internet or phones, the people of Cornwall sang it in the streets as a way to spread hope and joy. The world may look very different today, but we still gather to sing the song for the same reasons. The song is a testament to the fact that no matter what the earth looks like, no matter how much time passes, the encouraging story of Jesus will always connect with the hearts that are desperate for Him.



Christ's birth is more than a beautiful event on a quiet night. It's the only possible light of hope.

Last year I went blind in one eye. While preparing for transplant surgery I started listening to the Bible and taking notes and it has been so rewarding. I don't know why after 69 years and numerous degrees, God fixed it so I could see him better when I couldn't see. B. Norman



GOOD MORNING HEAVENLY FATHER

Thank you for another Brand New Day, A New Opportunity to Share your Love with all I meet today.

Thank you Lord For your Mercy, your New Grace, your New Strength your New Courage, your New Hope, your New Wisdom, your New Understanding, your New Confidence.

Thank you Lord for a New Life in Christ, and a Servant's Heart filled with Love to Share. Thank you Lord for being a chosen vessel you can work through, and fulfill your Purpose. I really Love you More Than Anything and I will say Yes to your Will and your Way Today! Amen.



RECOGNIZING FALSE TEACHERS

By Sylvia Norman

Dr. Gordon Linsay states, "It is ironic that Eve, the mother of the human race, desirous of learning the

difference between good and evil, was quite unable to discern the true identity of her tempter, a failure which resulted in her fall, and that of the whole human race. Thus, we see that the first chapters of the Bible emphasize the importance of being able to discern evil when it is present."

In our desire to embrace those things which are appealing to the ear, we often leave ourselves open to deception. We often look for the easy escape from life's perplexities and problems rather than face the fact that some things God places in our lives for a purpose that I may come out as pure gold. Pure gold is tried by fire. That thing that makes it pure is that it has been tempered in fire.

We are a part of the "name it and claim it" generations. We look for answers in blessed handkerchiefs, blessed oil and laying on of hands. There is nothing wrong with these things in and of themselves but they are symbols only. The power belongs to God not Elder "Quick Fix". That is where we fall into trouble. We have itching ears that want to have a "yes" Holy Spirit. God is looking for a "yes" from us. Yes, I'll do your will. Yes, I'll tell the story. Yes, I'll witness to a dying world. God is looking for a "yes" from His people.

Just as God made a promise to Abraham and Sarah that they would be the father of many nations, we are a part of the promise today. Sarah got impatient and thought God must have meant something else. Because she was looking for a "quick fix", Ishmael was conceived by Sara's hand maiden.

The Holy Spirit seeks to teach through human channels. Effective Christian teaching will take place to the extent that teachers allow the Holy Spirit to speak and teach through them and use them because a true teacher speaks for and by the Holy Spirit.

True spiritual teachers are not free to teach what they please because in the final analysis, it is not they who teach, but the Holy Spirit.

This does not mean that you as a teacher should not make preparation to rightly divide the word of truth. The scripture states in 2nd Timothy 2:15 that we must study to show ourselves approved unto God, a workman that need not be ashamed. That goes for the the pew and the pulpit. We can not discern false teaching if we lack knowledge.

How Great is Our God

The Awesomeness Of God!!

In Chemistry, He Turned Water Into Wine.

In Biology, He Was Born Without The Normal Conception.

In Physics, He Disapproved The Law Of Gravity When He Ascended Into Heaven.

In Economics, He Disapproved The Law Of Diminishing Return By Feeding 5000 men, Not Including Women And Children, With Two Fishes And five Loaves Of Bread;

In Medicine, He Cured The Sick And The Blind Without Administering A Single Dose Of Drugs.

In History, He Is The Beginning And The End;

In Government, He Said That He Shall Be Called Wonderful, Counselor, Prince Of Peace;

In Religion, He Said No One Comes To The Father But Through Him.

So Who Is He? He Is Jesus!



JOHN 1:14-18

NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION

¹⁴The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. ¹⁵(John testified concerning him. He cried out, saying, "This is the one I spoke about when I said, 'He who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.'") ¹⁶Out of his fullness we have all received grace in place of grace already given. ¹⁷For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known.



Pastor Richard and Sylvia Norman

Here are some fun facts and trivia about Christmas:

- The word "Christmas" comes from the Old English phrase "Cristes maesse", which means "Christ's mass"
- The first recorded date of Christmas being celebrated on December 25th was in 336 AD, during the time of the Roman Emperor Constantine

- The tradition of hanging stockings comes from the story of St. Nicholas. He wanted to help a poor family, so he threw bags of gold through the chimneys.



How is Christmas exactly like your job? You do all the work and some fat guy in a suit gets all the credit.

What's the difference between the Christmas alphabet and the ordinary alphabet? The Christmas alphabet has No-el.es

What do reindeer say before they tell you a joke? This one's gonna sleigh you!

Why is it getting harder to buy Advent calendars? Their days are numbered!

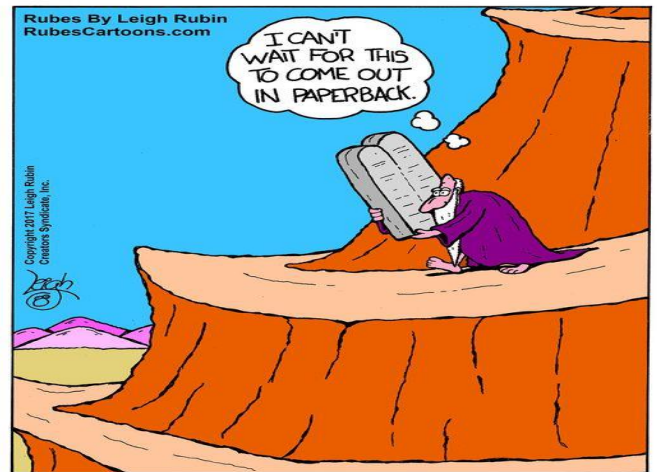
How do you know when Santa's around? You can always sense his presents.

How did Scrooge win the football game? The ghost of Christmas passed!



God never said that the journey would be easy, but He did say that the arrival would be worthwhile. Happy New Year

*Do not be afraid to face life.
This New Year has a lot of promises for us.
Trust God and everything will be fine.
Happy New Year!*



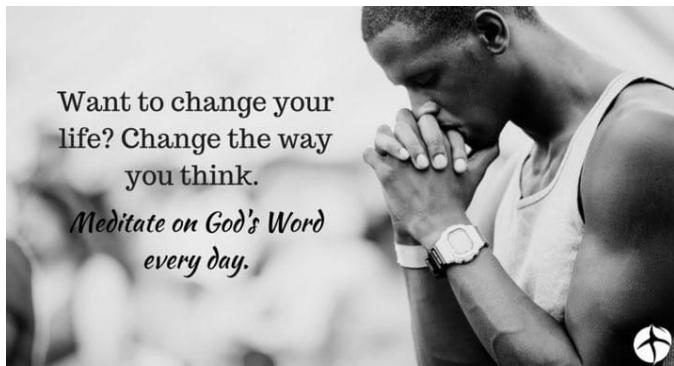
Experiencing God in 2024 (Ten Principles)

1. Principle 1: Emptying and Filling Prayer: "Lord, I empty myself of (pride, anger, worldly ambition, sin . . .); fill me." Scriptures: Psalm 139:23-24; James 4:6-10; Ephesians 5:18
2. Principle 2: Tasting Prayer: "Lord, I am hungry for you." Scriptures: Psalm 34:8; Matthew 5:6
3. Principle 3: Waiting Prayer: "Lord, I am waiting with expectation for you." Scriptures: Psalm 37:7; Psalm 62:1; Isaiah 40:31; Lamentations 3:25
4. Principle 4: Coming Prayer: "Lord, here I come. I am answering your call. I come to you because I love you and I want the best that you have for me." Scriptures: Matthew 11:28-29; Luke 10:39
5. Principle 5: Drinking Prayer: "Lord, I am thirsty for you." Scriptures: Matthew 5:6; John 4:13-14; John 6:35b; John 7:37-38
6. Principle 6: Disciplining Prayer: "Lord, I commit myself to doing what needs to be done in my life." Scriptures: Luke 9:23; 1

Corinthians 9:26-27; Galatians 2:20;
Galatians 6:14

7. Principle 7: Growing Prayer: "Lord, I want to grow to spiritual maturity." Scriptures: Mark 4:3-8; Galatians 5:22-23; 2 Peter 3:18a
8. Principle 8: Looking Prayer: "Lord, I want to see you." Scriptures: Isaiah 45:22a; Matthew 13:16; Hebrews 11:6b
9. Principle 9: Resting Prayer: "Lord, teach me to rest in you." Scripture: Matthew 11:28-29
10. Principle 10: Knowing Prayer: "Lord, I want to know you." Scriptures: Daniel 11: 32b, Jeremiah 9:23-24a

Prepared by Dr. Wilfred Graves, Jr. Three Bible Teachers



While leading the Israelites out of Egypt, Moses took along the bones of what man? [Exodus 13:19 Joseph](#)

What man was responsible for building the first alter mentioned in the Bible? [Gen. 8:20 Noah](#)

Who became the first person to convert to Christianity in Europe? [Acts 16: 14-15 Lydia](#)

Name one of the three books of the New Testament that does not include the word amen. [Acts, James and 3 John](#)

Who was the only one that the Bible states was placed in a coffin?

[Gen. 50: 26 Joseph](#)

The wives of what three men were found at a well?

[Gen. 24:11-67 Isaac, Gen. 29:1-29 Jacob, Exodus 2:15-21 Moses](#)

Who was the first woman the Bible mentions as singing?

[Exodus 15:21 Miriam](#)

Who was the first Christian martyr? [Acts 6:7-8 Stephen.](#)

Who was Paul's teacher? [Acts 2:3 Gamaliel](#)

What was the name of Jacob's daughter? [Gen. 34:1 Dinah](#)

Who was the first judge of Israel? [Judges 3:9-10 Othniel](#)

Before becoming a disciple of Jesus, Andrew was a disciple of what other man? [John 1:35-37, 40 John the Baptist](#)



What to do when you feel worried

Casting all your care upon Him for He cares for you. 1 Peter 5:7

Let not your heart be troubled. You believe in God, believe also in me. John 14:1

And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful. Colossians 3:15

And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:19



Joy to the World

YOU CAN'T BEAT GOD GIVING

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