

NEWS AND VIEWS
MOUNT OLIVET BAPTIST CHURCH

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*“Southern Baptists with the Full
Gospel for the Whole World”*

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There's a price we pay for having trees... we paid some of that price last week when we discovered that sometimes the ice storm can use them to disrupt our power supply. Beautiful shade trees in summer can become ice-heavy burdens in the winter. Last week brought to my mind that we are locked into a battle in this world about how much power we really have access to and how much control we really possess. So Who can speak to the wind and sea and they obey?

Only the Lord knows the intensity of the winter storms coming our way. And only He can inform us as to how to live through them. Lately we have been talking at the church house about many things. One thing is not only how to survive the storms of life but how to thrive in the midst of them. When I say there is a price we pay for having trees I am talking about more than just the trees that can interrupt our power. There is a price to pay to live in the shadow of the cross. When Jesus talked to the disciples about the cross they were immediately repulsed at the thought of Him dying on one of them. After all, only cursed men died on a tree. And when He talked about taking up a cross daily and following Him, it was a deal breaker for many. It still is. Dying to self, living for Christ. There is a price to pay.

Lately as the church talks about the challenge of living daily and following Jesus the topic can turn to physical challenges and spiritual realities. When it comes to our aging bodies we all know that things are wearing out. In the way of the world this is called the process of entropy, where things are winding down, things are dying out, declining into a gradual disorder. Hopefully we know by now that flesh and blood do not inherit the kingdom of God. But we do live in a world contaminated by the destructive and degrading nature of sin. It is God's message that He has a plan for regeneration... a new birth and new life that He has paid the price for us to have and for us to share. It is the sharing of this message that gives the church purpose. And there is a price for us to pay for the provision and upkeep of this sharing place. To be blunt, in case you haven't noticed, or visited for awhile, our place needs help.

Please allow me to appeal to you as to how we can continue to partner with the Lord in His work at Mount Olivet. As you know our facilities are in a continuously aging state. As our congregation ages, so does our physical plant. I do not as a general habit speak of our giving habits in the church. I believe it is the responsibility of every disciple of Jesus to give so the church can continue to be a giving place... a giving place of the gospel that keeps on giving. Our financial challenges are great as a church body. But not so much that the Lord cannot work to accomplish His mission through us. To be this blessing and receive the Lord's blessing we must trust Him on a higher level than we ever have. I believe the Lord honors those who honor the price He has paid to make life as a church possible.

I am believing that the Lord is ready to use us at Mount Olivet in a way that far exceeds our thinking. I believe that doors of ministry are becoming available to us to move through. And there is a price to be paid. Not only in time... or talent... but also in our treasure. I am so very sensitive to the financial condition and challenges that we all face. But I appeal to you as I always try to encourage you to trust the Lord with all of our lives. Will you seriously pray as to whether or not you are giving to the Lord out of a sense of worship and hope for the future? And are you giving God your best or just the leftovers? We have no governing authority that sends funds to the church so we can keep the lights on and fund the ministry needs. Unless that authority is God. We believe that God blesses His people best when He works through them the most. The Lord invites us to trust Him... and test Him...

“Will a man rob God? Yet you are robbing Me! But you say, ‘How have we robbed You?’

In tithes and offerings. You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing Me, the whole nation of you! Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in My house, and test Me now in this,” says the Lord of hosts, “if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you a blessing until it overflows. Then I will rebuke the devourer for you, so that it will not destroy the fruits of the ground; nor will your vine in the field cast its grapes,” says the Lord of hosts.

“All the nations will call you blessed, for you shall be a delightful land,” says the Lord of hosts.
(Malachi 3:8-12)

Blessings to you,
Pastor Sam