

NEWS AND VIEWS
MOUNT OLIVET BAPTIST CHURCH

3500 Edwards Mill Road, Raleigh, North Carolina 27612-5362

Phone... (919) 787-1910
E-mail: office@mobic.org
Web Page: www.mobic.org

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

SAM GORE, Senior Pastor

NANCY MCBRAYER, Office Manager

EDITH JACKSON, Prayer Coordinator

MIKE KING, Maintenance Supervisor

VOLUME 40

December 2018

NUMBER 12

“Shout for joy, O barren one, you who have borne no child; Break forth into joyful shouting and cry aloud, you who have not travailed; For the sons of the desolate one will be more numerous than the sons of the married woman,” says the Lord.

“Enlarge the place of your tent; Stretch out the curtains of your dwellings, spare not; Lengthen your cords and strengthen your pegs. For you will spread abroad to the right and to the left. And your descendants will possess nations and will resettle the desolate cities.” (Isaiah 54:1-3)

This passage of Scripture has a lot to commend it toward being a great Christmas message. The prophet was speaking God’s word to God’s people in those days about the promise of something we all need more of in these days...hope. Hope in place of desolation...joyfulness in the place of barrenness. Twice in this passage the exhortation is to shout for joy. When is the last time you did that?

More than a score of years ago Sharon and I became introduced to some of the ways the Lord God gives hope to wounded hearts. About 3 years after the traumatic death of our son we were really struggling to find the joy of the Lord in our daily lives. I don’t remember all of what motivated us to go to Orlando, Florida, and attend the Billy Graham School of Evangelism. I still believe we both knew we needed to go. And the scholarship they offered for small church pastors and wives may have played a part in it! At the time, I remember thinking to myself that this weeklong conference would offer something to overcome the desolation overcoming me. Desolation is a powerfully descriptive word...emptiness magnified. In my mind I knew that God is faithful to His people. But in my heart I was close to hopelessness.

Thursday was the last night of the conference. I had been encouraged by some of the small group teaching and the worship sessions. The invitation on Thursday night was given by Cliff Barrows, a longtime ministry partner and music leader of Billy Graham. It was one of those irresistible calls of the Holy Spirit that from time to time pierces our hearts. At the altar that night Sharon and I cried out to the Lord. We asked if He would grant us mercy we would surrender our hearts to His service once again. I don’t know if you have ever been so wounded that you begin to withhold your heart from God. We were afraid of being wounded again...thus the barrenness...desolation...emptiness...numbness...hopelessness.

After Friday’s breakfast, we started preparing to visit SeaWorld! On our final trip from the parking lot and the hotel room we met the Lord’s messenger as we entered the lobby. After confirming that I was a pastor who had been attending the conference he invited himself to visit with us in the hotel room. I agreed but did not look directly at my wife. A peripheral glance told me she wasn’t so sure about having a strange man accompany us to our room. Later she told me she was worried that he might be a potential threat to the wellbeing of our SeaWorld money! In the room he related that he was a pastor from the Philippines and he and his people had been praying about someone to come and preach crusades to the churches in their land. It took me a minute to understand he was extending to us an invitation to come...and we are so glad we did.

A few months later in 1998, we went on a mission trip and stayed with Pastor Jose Capiz, his wife Oliva, and their four children. It was a life changing experience that the Lord opened up for us in different worship settings and venues. On the first night of worship in one of the churches I heard what the Lord had been trying to say to me in my desolate time. Everyone began to sing *The Joy of the Lord is My Strength*. And He truly is. The Lord worked it out to move that family here to Raleigh in 2000 to begin a Filipino language work. As our story has continued to this day we are excited and await what the Lord has in store for us as we minister together on the campus of Mount Olivet. The passage of Scripture above opens up to me in a fresh way this Christmas Season. Beginning on December 1, 2018, the New Life International Christian Church will become ministry partners with us as we share the space, loving our Lord, making disciples together. We will occasionally have joint worship and will even be sharing fellowship meals together...as long as there is plenty manok (chicken)! Preachers are still getting even with the one who told on Peter...all over the world...
Enlarge the place of your tent; Stretch out the curtains of your dwellings, spare not; Lengthen your cords and strengthen your pegs. For you will spread abroad to the right and to the left...

Don’t know what the Lord wants to do here with this but I anticipate something magnificent!!!

Blessings to you,
Pastor Sam