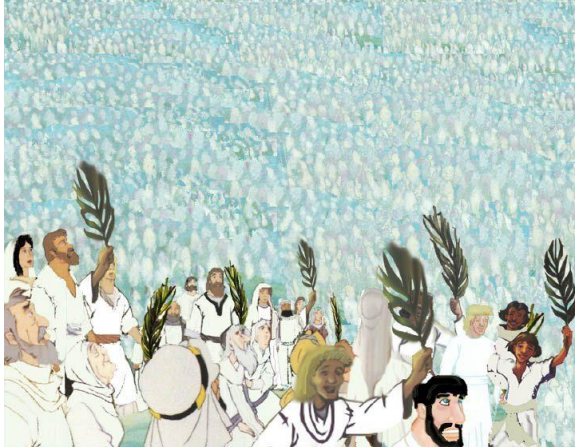


Sunrise Christian Church

January 2019 Family Newsletter

L3- Love/Learn/Lead- called to Love God, to Learn to be Like Jesus, and to Lead others to the saving cross of Christ.

The great and glorious gathering of the saints



After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice: "Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb." Revelation 7:9-10

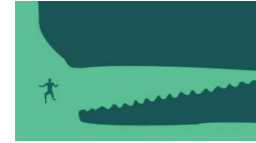
Are you one of God's saints?

You may be. The apostle Paul wrote: "*To the church of God ..., to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, saints by calling*"- 1 Corinthians 1:2. What we find is that saints are not self-made but God-made. See, it is God who does the work in you and in me. Yes, you and I are called to strive to live a holy life, yet even in that we need God's help. So, perhaps King David said it best when he wrote:
Search me, God, and know my heart;
test me and know my anxious thoughts.
See if there is any offensive way in me,
and lead me in the way everlasting- Ps 139:23-24, NIV.

How about you, will you allow God to search you, to know your anxious thoughts, to examine you to see if there is any offensive way in you? If you do, then He will lead you in the "way everlasting." For God is looking for those who seek Him. Therefore, to the Jews held captive in Babylon, God said: "*You will seek Me and find Me when you seek Me with all your heart*"- Jeremiah 29:13. And we find that throughout the Bible, God has always sought those willing to diligently search for Him. Therefore, the apostle Paul could tell the Greek philosophers in Athens that "From one man He made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and He marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands. God did this so that they would seek Him and perhaps reach out for Him and find Him, though He is not far from any one of us"- Acts 17:26-27.

As Christians we are "sanctified" in Christ Jesus, and we are "saints by calling".

Do you hear God's call on your life? I hope so. If not, let's talk sometime soon.



The story of Jonah

Many remember the story of Jonah, of how he ran from God and was swallowed by a whale- though it was a big fish, not a whale (1:17).

We wonder how Jonah could have survived three days and three nights in the belly of the fish before being spit up onto dry land. Yet, what is the moral of the story? Is it that God provides for us when we're in dire straits? No, that's not it. Instead, it is about the true nature of God; that though He is judge, His desire is that everyone to be saved. God sent Jonah to warn the city of Nineveh, for their "wickedness had come up before Him" (1:2). Yet the people of Nineveh accepted what Jonah had to say, and repented. "The people of Nineveh believed God; and they called a fast and put on sackcloth" (3:5). Then, when God saw what they had done, He relented the disaster He was going to bring on them (3:10). In response, Jonah said, "I knew that You were a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness, and one who relents concerning calamity" (4:2). In disgust, Jonah climbed a hill to sit and sulk, for he wanted the enemy's city to be overthrown.

But what was God's response? "Should I not have compassion on Nineveh, the great city in which there are more than 120,000 persons who do not know difference between their right and left hand?" (4:11). Later, the apostle Peter must have been thinking of this story when he wrote, "*The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance*"- 2 Peter 3:9.

Bible reading for spiritual growth

Matthew records that “Jesus spoke all these things to the crowd in parables; he did not say anything to them without using a parable. So was fulfilled what was spoken through the prophet:

‘I will open my mouth in parables,

I will utter things hidden since the creation of the world”- **Matthew 13:34-35.**

Staying in the Bible has great value, or as one person said, “Renewal of mind begins with reading and mediation on the Scriptures.”

With this in mind, for 2019 I want to offer you the opportunity **to read and mediate on the parables of Jesus.** Since each parable is a spiritual lesson in itself, it will be valuable for you to record your thoughts as you read these parables.

And, being that there are twenty-five parables, with some recorded in more than one gospel. Therefore, when they’re repeated in different gospels it would be best to read from one gospel one day, then from another gospel the next day. That way you’ll have more time to let Christ’s message soak in.

And don’t rush it. Read just read one parable per week. This way it will take you nearly twenty-five weeks or nearly half a year to read them all.

I’m looking forward to starting this the first of February. Therefore, if you are interested in doing this reading- and I hope you are, let me know as soon as possible so that I can get a reading plan and journal ready for you.

“Blessed are those who find wisdom, those who gain understanding”- Proverbs 3:13

Angry?



How angry are you? And as important, how do you handle your anger?

Anger is not necessarily a bad thing; though how we handle it may be. With that, there are two types of anger- first, one which is expressed outwardly by voice, facial expressions or other mannerisms. Then there’s another kind, more insidious than the vocal, eruptive kind- it’s subtle and it’s deceptive. Known as passive-aggressive behavior, this kind of anger that is expressed as “resistance to requests or demands, by procrastination, by sullenness, or stubbornness.”

What makes us angry? Generally, it’s not getting our way or what we want. Sometimes, it’s because we feel trapped in an unwanted situation, or feeling forced to do something we don’t want to do. The first kind of anger “blows up,” while the second kind tries to undermine or subvert the situation or personal relationship.

So, what are we to do about our problems so that we don’t get mad, blow up or undermine, thus making them worse? First, admit that there is a problem. Identify what the problem is and who you need to talk to about it. Why is it that we’re more willing to pour out our frustrations to our friends and neighbors then we are to speak to the person we’re having a problem with? God says, *“In your anger do not sin”*: *Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry*”- Eph. 4:26.

See, God wants us to deal with the things that bother us, and to do so in a godly manner- not ignoring them, or by blowing up; but, instead, to address the issues at hand.

Announcements:

*Faithful Men *men’s breakfast*- 7:30am, Saturday, January 5, at Rusty’s.

**Baskets of Love* food collection- Sunday, January 6.

*Crockpot Sunday- January 6

**SCC Movie Night*- That the World May Know- Wednesday, January 23 @7pm.

.....



Teacher: "If I gave you 2 cats and another 2 cats and another 2, how many would you have?"

Johnny: "Seven."

Teacher: "No, listen carefully... If I gave you two cats, and another two cats and another two, how many would you have?"

Johnny: "Seven."

Teacher: "Let me put it to you differently. If I gave you two apples, and another two apples and another two, how many would you have?"

Johnny: "Six."

Teacher: "Good. Now if I gave you two cats, and another two cats and another two, how many would you have?"

Johnny: "Seven!"

Teacher: "Johnny, how do you get seven?!"

Johnny: "Because I've already got a cat!"

.....

In a Christian school’s cafeteria, a lunchroom attendant placed a note in front of a pile of apples, saying, "Only take one. God is watching." Farther down the line is a pile of cookies. A little boy makes his own note, "Take all you want. God is watching the apples."

.....

“He will yet fill your mouth with laughter and your lips with shouts of joy”- Job 8:21.