

Los Altos Church of Christ

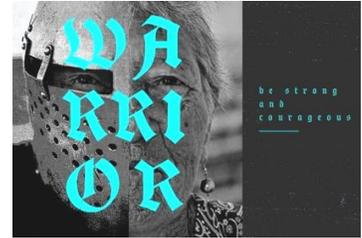
"...being of the same mind, maintaining the same love,
united in spirit, intent on one purpose." *Philippians 2:2*

Volume XLI, Issue 39

November 11, 2020

This Sunday...Warrior...Be Prepared

A Warrior is trained so he/she will be prepared when called. We too need to be ready for those times where God calls our name. This week Dave Stone takes us through Joshua chapter 2 as we study the importance of being prepared.



Funeral service for Betty Beckwith will be at Riverside National Cemetery, 22495 Van Buren Blvd., Riverside this Friday, November 13 at 11:15 AM

A Celebration of Life will be held on this Saturday, November 14 from 1 to 4 PM. Address is 11258 Wesley Avenue, Pomona, California

PRAYERS *Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:6-7*

- John Harper has been really ill these past 3 weeks. He's started a second round of antibiotics on Monday. It was finally diagnosed as pneumonia.
- Jennifer Harper just entered quarantine because a nurse where she teaches just tested positive.
- And a praise from the Harper household...Jennifer graduated last week summa cum laude from Grand Canyon University with masters in health care administration and public health!
- Charlie, the son of Marla's cousin, passed away. Please pray for the family

Continue to pray for a virus cure and that the Lord watch over our members during this time... Roger Townsend...Tim's heart condition...Berry...Don...Jeff's mother...Blake... Jene's hand Christine's mother...Bill Spivey ... Allen Sawyers...The Britton Family ... Barbara... Sadie Smith... Gwen and her son Caleb... Emmy Creswick... Jene's friend, Jim Thorpe... Lu...City of Children... Healing Hands International... Japhet's work in Zimbabwe...and New Hope Uganda.

Thought for the week...

From the Psalms

The Lord is a refuge for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble. 10 Those who know your name trust in you, for you, Lord, have never forsaken those who seek you. - Psalm 9:9-10

Surviving October

By Max Lucado

This wasn't the October we wanted. We wanted to go to college football games. We wanted to see kids trick or treating. We wanted to go to church on Easter Sunday. We wanted a weekend trip to see the leaves change color. But this October? This wasn't the October we wanted.

But this was the October we were given: more reports of disease and death. An economy that was still struggling. Another 31 days of distance and isolation. And, most of all, a month of fear. We fear for our family. We fear for the health of our health workers. We fear this microscopic, COVID-19 culprit that stalks our streets like a thief.

So we need to brace ourselves. Adjust our expectations. October as we wanted did not happen. God willing, October will reappear in 2021. For now it's time for a deep breath, a steady resolve and a few decisions. I'm thinking of three essential, emotional tools to help us along the way.

Gratitude. Collect your blessings. Catalog God's kindnesses. Assemble your reasons for gratitude and recite them. "Always be joyful," the Apostle Paul wrote in his letter to the Thessalonians. "Pray continually, and give thanks whatever happens. That is what God wants for you in Christ Jesus."

Look at the totality of those terms. Always be joyful. Pray continually. Give thanks whatever happens. Gratitude is always an option. Matthew Henry made it his. When the 18th-century British minister was accosted by thieves and robbed of his purse, he wrote in his diary, "Let me be thankful, first because I was never robbed before; second, because, although they took my purse they did not take my life, third, because although they took my all, it was not much; and, fourth, because it was I who was robbed, not I who robbed." Quarry some gratitude.

And, be kind to **others**. Be the family member who offers to wash the dishes. Be the colleague who reaches out to check on the team. Be the neighbor who mows the grass of the elderly couple. You'll be better because of it. Research bears this out. Studies have shown that giving to help others triggers dopamine. Seeking joy? Do good for someone else. It really is better to give than receive. It's time for gratitude. It's time to serve others.

It's time for **determination**. Good, old-fashioned grit, a resolve that says, "I'm not giving in to fear. I'm not caving in to despair. With God as my helper, I'm going to weather this storm." Some years ago, I had the honor of meeting an American hero, Gen. Robbie Risner. For seven and a half years, North Vietnamese soldiers held him and dozens of other soldiers in the Zoo, a POW camp in Hanoi. Misery came standard issue. Solitary confinement, starvation, tortures and beatings were routine. Screams echoed throughout the camp, chilling the blood of other prisoners. Listen to Risner's description: "Everything was sad and dismal. It was almost the essence of despair. If you could have squeezed the feeling out of the word despair it would have come out gray, dull and lead-colored, dingy and dirty ..." How do you survive seven and a half years in such a hole? What do you do?

Here is what Risner did. He stared at a blade of grass. Several days into his incarceration, he wrestled the grate off a floor vent, stretched out on his belly, lowered his head into the opening, and peered through a pencil-sized hole in the brick and mortar at a singular blade of grass. Aside from this stem, his world had no color. So, he began his days, head in vent, heart in prayer, staring at the green blade of grass. He called it a "blood transfusion for the soul." You don't have to go Hanoi to face a "gray, dull and lead-colored, dingy and dirty" existence. A pandemic will do just fine. Do what Risner did. Go on a search. Crowbar the grate from your place of isolation, and stick your head out. Fix your eyes on hope.

Gratitude...Others...Determination...G-O-D. He is still in charge. He is still Emmanuel, God with us. Heaven still awaits. The tomb of Christ is still vacant. Children still laugh and grass still turns green. Find a blade and set your gaze on it. It's not the month we wanted, but it is the month we were given. And we will get through it.