



THE FOUNTAIN

CHRISTIAN CHURCH



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Mon-Thurs 9:00 AM— 4:30 PM

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Psalm 65:6

“Who establishes the mountains by His strength, being girded with might;”

PAIN IS SOMETIMES NECESSARY

Sam Sears

We know that in this life, sometimes momentary pain is necessary for a greater good. The obvious illustration that we often give is in reference to medicine. Starting in childhood, we learn to deal with a bad taste, a huge pill or even an uncomfortable shot. I was reminded of this very basic truth recently.

I now take weekly shots due to some odd hormone issues that I have, likely caused by a pre-COVID virus that did some damage to my body. The cause isn't relevant to my point, but the medication is. It was one thing to go in once a month and passively receive a shot from a nurse. I could make myself relax and let someone else do it, but when we needed to move to weekly injections, I had to do it myself.

Recently, I was sitting in preparation for my shot, looking at the needle, and dwelling on how huge it seemed to me. I had purchased a needle snipper for disposal. It's a device commonly used by diabetics for their own needles, to cut off and trap the sharp inside what looks like a small stapler. I was dismayed to discover that my needles were far too thick for them, which only reinforced my perception. While I would later look up the gauge and learn that it's really middle of the road — 22 to draw and 18 to inject — it still felt and looked huge. This more recent concern was born out of childhood fear.

I grew up terrified of needles. I can remember, even into adulthood, that not all nurses or phlebotomists were equal in their ability to inject me or draw blood from me. Some were too quick, others too forceful, and a few simply had bad bedside manner. The hardest part was always willing myself to be still and to allow someone to cause me pain, even if it was minor and brief. Our whole body seems wired to avoid pain; it's a signal that something is wrong, and yet logically, we know it's sometimes needed.

My family knew that I was terrified of needles, from childhood into adulthood. I could be very sick, but I still wanted to avoid them. My family also knew that I was stubborn, and, in a stunning moment of youthful rebellion, I got a tattoo at about 21. I thought that this would be a moment that could help me face my fear of needles. Nope! Those needles were different: I could envision a cool end result, and the conversations I had with my high school friend who gave me the tattoo were far different than the more surface-level conversation associated with a doctor's office visit. I *still*

feared them. When I say "fear," I mean I get physically sick to my stomach, shake a little, feel compelled to look away, and maintain a death grip on a chair or other item to try to power through receiving a shot with even the smallest of needles.

Once my doctor determined that I would need treatment for my current condition, I tried everything to avoid shots. They made a gel... insurance denied it. They made a patch... insurance denied again. I tried to convince Heather that we should pay out of pocket... my wife denied it. Rightly so: it was expensive. I was allowed to be in a position where I had to face my fear regularly. Slowly, over many shots and regular blood draws, I got used to it. I no longer shook, I didn't get sick to my stomach, and while I still usually looked away, I was nowhere near as dramatic. All that still involved someone else actually giving me the shot.

May God bless the poor nurse who had to teach me how to give myself a shot. When the decision came down, I probably grew even more pale than normal. I'll never forget her instruction to "flick your wrist, just like throwing a dart." I managed to do so and jab myself with the needle... then froze. I was completely unable to move my hand to the plunger and inject the medicine. I had just stabbed myself, on purpose, and for me it took willpower just to not pull the needle right back out. I had to ask for help. I was afraid that if I moved, the needle would somehow move around inside me and do some damage. She graciously injected the medicine, and then I pulled the needle out. She had to walk me through how to move my hands and push the plunger for the next time. I honestly think I needed a practice dummy!

I've been giving myself injections at home for months now, and the most important lesson I have learned is that, because I need to penetrate my skin and hit muscle tissue, I must flick my wrist hard. Twice now, I have caused myself more pain, because I only lightly pushed. In other words, to be effective, it needs to be sharp. There is some small pain associated with the breakthrough.

The results have been great. Some of the side effects I was experiencing have faded and the self-injections looks to be a routine for a long time to come. I can't imagine I'll ever enjoy the shot, but I do hope it gets easier over time. Currently, each one is a reminder to me about something more important.

PAIN IS SOMETIMES NECESSARY

Sam Sears

Jesus' call to "take up his cross and follow Me." (Matthew 16:24) inevitably involves pain. Serving Him, serving others, and reaching out to a world in a state of rebellion, some knowingly and willfully in rebellion, inevitably involves pain. Yet Paul tells Timothy, "For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline." (1 Timothy 1:7) Even knowing there can be pain, we can't shy away from

what we are called to — that which is good for our very own soul — and that is obedience to God. In fact, that pain is part of the process that conforms us to His image.

2 Corinthians 4:17 "For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison..."

PRAYER CONCERNS

January 2023

Pray for the desire and opportunity to effectively share your faith! Our Nation and Leaders. Teachers & Students in Visalia. Our Brothers & Sisters at Elim.

Health: Ana Morales, Bonnie Henson, Donna Eastin, Heather Smith, Jason McKaughan, Jean Lamb, JoAnne Jordan, Kevin Guy, Kevin Ray (DHF pastor), Marilee Douglass, Pam Shattuck, Fred Wilder

Cancer: Bill Morland, David Thomas, David Welch, Janet Hagan, Joe Grant, Keith Moore, Mike Gunning, Olly Ajluni, Randy Gurule, Sandra Campbell, Shannan Ajluni

Other Needs: Nina Suttles (Vision)

Military: Brett Boland – Virginia, Michael Reid – San Diego, CA, Preston Correa – Marine, Tyler Richwine – Marine

Missionaries: some of our missionaries cannot be listed for their safety.

Nationally Based Global Mission Organizations:

Adolfo Ibarra, Crosslink Development International, Central Missionary Clearinghouse, Soaring for Christ, Radical Truth, Maven, Gideons International, Our Daily Bread Ministries, Jews for Jesus, Pioneers, Team Expansion

Local Ministries: Care Pregnancy Center, Good News Jail Ministry, Hands in the Community, Love In the Name of Christ, Stephen Ministries, Tulare Kings Right to Life, Turning Point, Visalia Rescue Mission, Visalia Senior Housing

Ukrainian Individuals in danger: Michael, Andrew, Alex, and Angela. (Last names withheld for safety.)

BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

January 2023

Kevin Guy1
Zion Sagastume8
Donna Eastin9
Donna Black10
JoAnne Jordan13
Katie Guy15
Andrea Lara15
Don Jones18
Kenley Gunning24

Caleb Guy 26
Chris Sagastume 28
Caleb Gunning 30

Happy Anniversary!

Mike & Susan Leary 10
Pat & Joyce Hogan 26
Chuck & Donna Romer 26

ATTENDANCE & GIVING

December 2022

Average In Person Attendance

65

Total Giving

\$ 16,558.00

NEW YEAR.... CLOSER THAN EVER

Romy Sagastume

Happy New Year!! The words we all hear over and over again. A nice farewell as we leave a store often followed by a smile. I sometimes wish it would be "Christmas or new year season" all year long. It seems people are nicer, kinder and in some cases friendlier. As we enter this new year, I can almost bet you have some sort of goal. It's unavoidable. I think we can all reflect on mistakes this past year, "to do" lists that never got checked off, connections we didn't make and so much more.

So how do we start a new year? I feel like some of us have been playing catch up for the past two years since some may say 2020 "didn't count". Whether you're still playing catch up or you want to avoid the never-ending lists, it is crucial to set our goals on the most important one Jesus. Let's ask ourselves, how was my relationship with Jesus this past year? Like we do in OIT meetings, from 1-10 how would I rate my spiritual temperature? How often did I pray? And did I only pray when I needed something or because I wanted to talk to God?

I know I might be making you uncomfortable with these questions, believe me I feel kinda funky too. I once heard a youth speaker open prayer for a youth conference say, "start feeling comfortable in the uncomfortable". This year I started reading a book with our youth group that some could call "uncomfortable". One hundred and eighty-seven pages that definitely triggered something inside of us. Chapters with titles like "Profile of the Lukewarm", "Serving Leftover to a Holy God" and "A lot Should Change in Five Years". I remember thinking, I hope no one shuts down. The overall message of the book is to call Christians to a

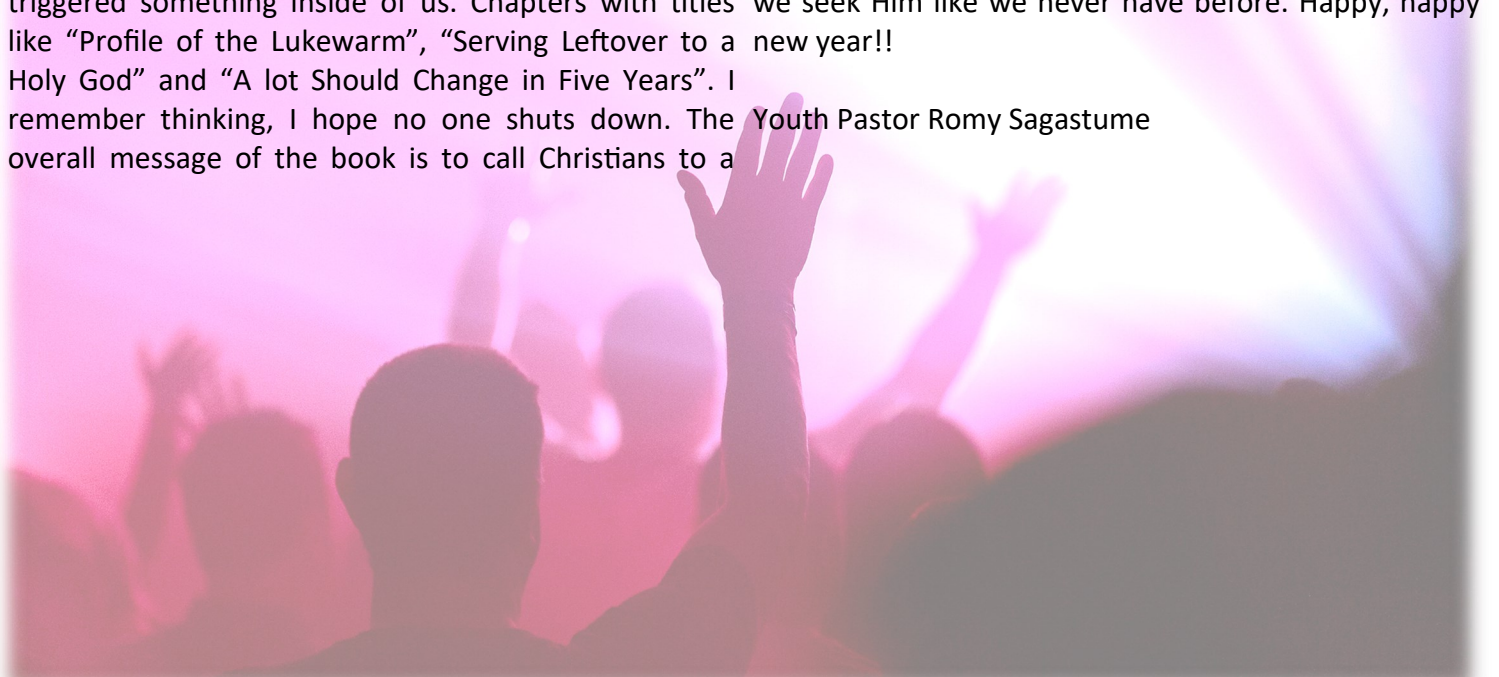
deeper, more intimate relationship with God. It often made some bold statements like "Lukewarm people do not live by faith; their lives are structured so they never have to".

So, one may ask, what is faith? Scripture says in Hebrews 11:1 ESV "Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen." I love the word conviction. According to the Oxford dictionary, the word conviction can mean-a firmly held belief or opinion. Now that we are clear on faith and convictions, one last question.....is our faith unshakable?

Hebrews 12:2 NASB1995 says "fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God." As we enjoy this fresh new start to our year, let's fix our eyes on Jesus. As we write out our goals or put together vision boards let's put Jesus at the center of it all. Let our spiritual temperature rise and let's open our hearts for deeper, intimate encounters with Him.

I wish I could guarantee only happy moments this new year. I wish I could say you won't ever be sad, mad, frustrated, disappointed or perhaps all those feelings at once. But all I can say is, we must allow ourselves to focus on what really matters in this new year, JESUS. His blood on that cross. His perfect love. His new blessings every morning. It's going to be a great year, as we seek Him like we never have before. Happy, happy new year!!

Youth Pastor Romy Sagastume



January 2023

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

1 10:30 Worship	2 10:40 Prayer Warriors	3 10:00 Staff	4	5 10:00 Berean Watchmen	6 6:30 Men's Group	7
8 10:30 Worship	9 10:40 Prayer Warriors 12:00 Women's Bible Study	10 10:00 Staff	11 6:00 *Family Night	12 10:00 Berean Watchmen	13 6:30 Men's Group	14
15 10:30 Worship	16 10:40 Prayer Warriors 12:00 Women's Bible Study	17 10:00 Staff	18 6:00 *Family Night	19 10:00 Berean Watchmen	20 6:30 Men's Group	21
22 10:30 Worship 11:45 Annual Meeting	23 10:40 Prayer Warriors 12:00 Women's Bible Study	24 10:00 Staff	25 6:00 *Family Night	26 10:00 Berean Watchmen	27 6:30 Men's Group	28
29 10:30 Worship	30 10:40 Prayer Warriors 12:00 Women's Bible Study	31 10:00 Staff	<div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #e6f2ff; padding: 10px; display: inline-block;"> <p>*Family Night</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children's classes Youth Group Men's Bible Study Women's Bible Study </div>			



The Fountain
1023 N Chinowth St
Visalia, CA 93291



**Annual
Congregational
Meeting
January 15th
11:45am**



Stop by our website for more information on Bible Studies
and coming events at www.thefountaincc.org