

MESSAGE OUTLINE

SUNDAY, January 1, 2023

Happy New Year!



Today's Message: **PREPARATION**
Luke 3:1-22
Pastor Gary Stump

Don't we all want to make preparations for a great year in 2023?

We can learn from Jesus about making preparations for a strong beginning?

Luke 3:1–22 (NLT) It was now the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius, the Roman emperor. Pontius Pilate was governor over Judea; Herod Antipas was ruler over Galilee; his brother Philip was ruler over Iturea and Traconitis; Lysanias was ruler over Abilene. ² Annas and Caiaphas were the high priests. At this time a message from God came to John son of Zechariah, who was living in the wilderness. ³ Then John went from place to place on both sides of the Jordan River, preaching that people should be baptized to show that they had repented of their sins and turned to God to be forgiven. ⁴ Isaiah had spoken of John when he said, "He is a voice shouting in the wilderness, 'Prepare the way for the Lord's coming! Clear the road for him! ⁵ The valleys will be filled, and the mountains and hills made level. The curves will be straightened, and the rough places made smooth. ⁶ And then all people will see the salvation sent from God.' "... ²¹ One day when the crowds were being baptized, Jesus himself was baptized. As he was praying, the heavens opened, ²² and the Holy Spirit, in bodily form, descended on him like a dove. And a voice from heaven said, "You are my dearly loved Son, and you bring me great joy."

Dedicate yourself anew to the Lord:

Lamentations 3:22–23 (NIV84) Because of the LORD's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. ²³ They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.

Isaiah 43:18–19 (NLT) "But forget all that— it is nothing compared to what I am going to do. ¹⁹ For I am about to do something new. See, I have already begun! Do you not see it? I will make a pathway through the wilderness. I will create rivers in the dry wasteland."

Philippians 3:13b–14 (NLT) ...I focus on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, ¹⁴ I press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us.

Decide to spend time with the Lord daily: Prayer & Scripture

Psalms 63:1 (NLT) O God, you are my God; I earnestly search for you. My soul thirsts for you; my whole body longs for you in this parched and weary land where there is no water.

Psalms 42:1–2 (NLT) As the deer longs for streams of water, so I long for you, O God. ² I thirst for God, the living God. When can I go and stand before him?

Psalms 27:8 (NLT) My heart has heard you say, "Come and talk with me." And my heart responds, "Lord, I am coming."

Determine to obey in an area of defeat

Deuteronomy 6:1–2 (NLT) "These are the commands, decrees, and regulations that the Lord your God commanded me to teach you. You must obey them in the land you are about to enter and occupy, ² and you and your children and grandchildren must fear the Lord your God as long as you live. If you obey all his decrees and commands, you will enjoy a long life."

Joshua 1:8 (NLT) Study this Book of Instruction continually. Meditate on it day and night so you will be sure to obey everything written in it. Only then will you prosper and succeed in all you do.

John 14:15 (NLT) "If you love me, obey my commandments."

Evaluate your priorities: God, Spouse, Children, Job, Ministry

1. God—*Colossians 3:1 (NLT) Since you have been raised to new life with Christ, set your sights on the realities of heaven, where Christ sits in the place of honor at God's right hand.*

2. Spouse—*Colossians 3:18–22 (NLT) Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting for those who belong to the Lord. ¹⁹ Husbands, love your wives and never treat them harshly.*

3. Children—Colossians 3:20-21 (NLT) *Children, always obey your parents, for this pleases the Lord.* ²¹ *Fathers, do not aggravate your children, or they will become discouraged.*

4. Job—Colossians 3:22 (NLT) *Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything you do. Try to please them all the time, not just when they are watching you. Serve them sincerely because of your reverent fear of the Lord.*

5. Ministry—Colossians 4:6 (NLT) *Let your conversation be gracious and attractive so that you will have the right response for everyone.*

SO WHAT? What are your Spiritual Goals for this year?

- Will you commit to daily time with the Lord?
- Will you keep a spiritual journal?
- Will you memorize Scripture?
- Will you read through the Bible?
- Will you be baptized?
- Will you be trained to be a disciple-maker?
- Will you disciple someone in the Lord?
- Will you commit to serving the Lord by serving your church?
- Will you join a small group?
- Will you grow in your giving?
- Will you plan a fast (for spiritual purposes)?
- Will you go to Israel?
- Will you get victory over something that has been causing defeat?
- Will you forgive someone who has hurt you?

Lord's Supper: Dedicate yourself as you receive the Bread and Cup

Romans 10:9 (NIV84) *That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.*

1 Corinthians 11:23b–26 (NLT) *On the night when he was betrayed, the Lord Jesus took some bread ²⁴ and gave thanks to God for it. Then he broke it in pieces and said, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."²⁵ In the same way, he took the cup of wine after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant between God and his people—an agreement confirmed with my blood. Do this in remembrance of me as often as you drink it."²⁶ For every time you eat this bread and drink this cup, you are announcing the Lord's death until he comes again.*

Dear Heavenly Father, "When I think of the wisdom and scope of Your plan, I fall to my knees and pray to the You, Father, the Creator of everything in heaven and on earth. I pray that from Your glorious, unlimited resources You will give us mighty inner strength through Your Holy Spirit. And I pray that Jesus will be more and more at home in our hearts as we trust in Him. May our roots go down deep into the soil of Your marvelous love. And may we have the power to understand...how wide, how long, how high, and how deep Your love really is. May we experience the love of Christ, though it is so great we will never fully understand it. Then we will be filled with the fullness of life and power that comes from You, Lord. Now glory be to You, Father! By Your mighty power at work within us, You are able to accomplish infinitely more than we would ever dare to ask or hope. May You be given glory through our lives forever and ever through endless ages. It is in Christ's Name we pray. Amen." (Eph. 3:16-21, NLT)

Father, We pray that our love will overflow more and more, and that we will keep on growing in knowledge and understanding. For we want to understand what really matters, so that we may live pure and blameless lives until the day of Christ's return. May we always be filled with the fruit of our salvation—the righteous character produced in our lives by Jesus Christ—for this will bring much glory and praise to you, Father! (Phil. 1:9-11) We ask you to give us complete knowledge of Your will and to give us spiritual wisdom and understanding [so that] the way we live will always honor and please you, Lord, and our lives will produce every kind of good fruit. All the while, we desire to grow as we learn to know you better and better. (Col. 1:9b-10) In the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.



ONWARD CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR SUNDAY, January 1, 2023

1. WEDNESDAY NIGHT BIBLE CLASSES—SMALL GROUPS STARTING THIS WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 4TH 7:00-8:15PM on the **1st & 3rd Wednesdays** of each month, Adult Small Groups and Children Small Groups will be meeting at church.

2. MARRIAGE RETREAT FEBRUARY 4-5—Brown County Inn. Reservations must be made by calling Brown County Inn 1-800-772-5249. King rooms - \$116 per night; Queen rooms - \$107 per night. Please give Onward Church promo code 0642 when reserving. Rooms are limited and will only be held until January 5, 2023.

3. 2023 ONWARD TO JERUSALEM BIBLE STUDY TOUR OCTOBER 20-31, 2023—Walk where Jesus walked and see the Bible comes alive as Pastor Gary and our good friend Dr. Moshe Loewenthal lead us on this incredible tour. Estimated cost: \$3,950 per person (double occupancy).

4. NO YOUTH SUNDAY NIGHT 6-8PM Resumes January 8th.

5. PAL (“PARENTS OF ADDICTED LOVED ONES”) MEETING—This is for families of adult children dealing with substance addiction. Every Tuesday night, 6:30 - 8:00 p.m. Free weekly meetings. Dr. Nancy Smith, facilitator. For more information, contact nancy1108smith@gmail.com or 317-508-8149.

6. ONWARD PRAYER RESPONSE CARD ONLINE—To make it easier for some, you can scan this QR code in order to complete your Prayer Response Card.

