



ZION'S CALL

City of Zion Church — *“Making Disciples, Serving Jesus Christ, Living Abundantly”*

And the Lord answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it.” Habakkuk 2:2-3 (KJV).

PASTORS CORNER: HELP WANTED! HYPOCRITES NEED NOT APPLY!!

Matthew 7:1-6 is probably one of the most well known and most quoted passages in the entire Bible. It is quoted by both Saints and Sinners alike - “Judge not, that ye be not judged.” I’m amused by the number of times, in over 20 years of ministry, that I’ve heard



properly study this passage in the context of Jesus’ amazing discourse (i.e., the “Sermon on the Mount”), we will come away with a greater understanding of this classic Text.

Contrary to popular thinking, this Text is not a blanket prohibition against all forms of criticism and judgment, nor is it a hiding place for Saints and Sinners to retreat when caught with their hands in the proverbial cookie jar. Instead, with further investigation, we’ve discovered that what King Jesus prohibits in this Text is HYPOCRITICAL FAULT-FINDING! You do know what HYPOCRISY is, don’t you? HYPOCRISY is saying, teaching and/or promoting one thing, while doing the exact OPPOSITE. In other words, you are engaged in HYPOCRISY when you do not PRACTICE what you PREACH (Matthew 23:3 NIV)!

non-church-going Sinners quote this verse – and they tend to quote it with more ecclesiastical authority than the most faithful, well trained, well-versed, saved, sanctified, fire-baptized, Holy Ghost-filled, foot-washing, tongue-talking Child of God! However, as we

The Greek word King Jesus uses in this passage for “Judge” means “to separate, determine, or to assume the office of a judge.” It also means “to condemn or to give sentence.” In light of those definitions, no Christian can “Judge” anyone, because no Christian has the POWER to condemn, sentence or send anyone to heaven or hell. Jesus, the Son of God, is the only one who is able to do this type of judging (John 5:21-23). Consequently, Saints are called to “judge” for the sole purpose of IDENTIFICATION & PROTECTION, so as to avoid being misled or deceived by others (Matthew 7:15-20). This is why King Jesus said “...a tree is KNOWN by its Fruit” (Matthew 12:33).

When you read the four Gospels, you will discover that King Jesus was intentional about condemning hypocrites. The Gospels record Him addressing hypocrites (i.e., the Pharisees and Sadducees, who were the religious leaders of the day), over 20 times. Hypocrisy is especially grievous and displeasing to God because the hypocrite PRETENDS to be righteous for the purpose of making him or herself look good. King Jesus called this behavior SIN (Matthew 23:27-28) because it involves PRIDE & LYING.

Hypocrisy is also especially displeasing to God because the hypocrite winds up leading others astray by his or her example! This is why King Jesus admonishes the hypocrite to “...first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye” (Matthew 7:5).

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PASTOR'S CORNER (CONT'D): HELP WANTED! HYPOCRITES NEED NOT APPLY!!

The Christian's lifestyle has always been a stronger witnessing tool than mere words. This message is often overlooked in this spectacular Text. King Jesus wants us to use the power of our EXAMPLE to heal, correct, restore and help our fallen, lost and hurting Brothers and Sisters. This is why King Jesus commands us in the Text to "... REMOVE the speck from our brother's eye." Don't just stand there CRITICIZING a Sinner or someone who needs help. If King Jesus helped you get your sight back, now He requires that you do the same for someone else!

When you study this Text you will discover at least 3 wonderful truths. First – King Jesus shows us that our Brothers and Sisters NEED

our help. Second – King Jesus COMMANDS us to help our Brothers and Sisters. And Third – He QUALIFIES & EMPOWERS us to help our Brothers and Sisters. As you read this article, just know that King Jesus has raised you up for "such a time as this" (Esther 4:14). He has already saved, sanctified and brought many of you into His Kingdom (Matthew 5:3-10). You are a SURVIVOR and you already have a TESTIMONY! King Jesus now wants to use you to HELP somebody else. In the words of the old Hymn, "Lift Him up by living, as a Christian ought, let the World in you the Savior see; Then men will gladly follow Him who once taught, I'll draw all men unto me. Lift Him up..."

*Be Encouraged,
Pastor Gregory Strong*

HEALTH CORNER: SEPTEMBER IS PROSTATE CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

Prostate Cancer is a story of both great heartbreak and great hope. The heartbreak is that each year more than 29,000 men will die of this disease and that prostate cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death of U.S. men. However, if diagnosed early, the five-year survival rate is almost 100 percent. At ten years post diagnosis, 98 percent of men diagnosed early, remain alive.

Prostate cancer is an extremely complex disease—multiple subtypes of this cancer exist, some aggressive and lethal, others non-aggressive and non-life-threatening. The vast majority of prostate cancer occurs as an indolent, slow-growing form of the disease that poses little threat to men's lifespans. Because one in seven men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer in their lifetime, it is important for men to learn about both non-aggressive, slow-growing forms of prostate cancer and aggressive forms of this disease through conversations with their doctors.

Prostate cancer is the second most prevalent form of cancer, after melanoma, in men—a nonsmoking man is more likely to develop prostate cancer than he is to develop colon, bladder, lymphoma and kidney cancer combined. While projected prostate cancer deaths have been reduced by more than 50% in the last two decades, reality is still worse for African-American men. Research shows that African-American men are 1.6 times more likely to be diagnosed with prostate cancer and 2.4 times more likely to die from it than Caucasian men. Although scientists do not yet understand why prostate cancer incidence and death rates are higher among African American men, it is widely believed that a combination of genetic differences, lifestyle and nutrition habits, and medical care may all play a role in the statistics. But for any man of any race, there are things you can do to better your chances for living a life free of prostate cancer:

Maintain a Healthy Diet. A low-fat diet with more than five servings of fruits and vegetables is considered healthy. Current thinking is that a heart-healthy diet with caloric control might also help prevent many cancers. Studies have shown that antioxidants, like sulphorophane found in broccoli, act like a sponge, mopping up molecules that can cause prostate cancer. Pomegranate juice also contains antioxidants that may help prevent the incidence of this disease.

Avoid Charred Meats. Cancer-causing molecules similar to those found in cigarette smoke are contained in charred meats. They accumulate in the prostate just like cigarette smoke carcinogens collect in the lungs. There they can interfere with normal DNA processes, creating mutations that can contribute to the formation of prostate cancer. Altering how you cook meats can greatly reduce these hazards. Consider wrapping meat in foil before grilling and flipping meat multiple times to minimize charring. Marinating meats can also help prevent charring.

Man Up. Get Your Annual Screening. Detected early, prostate cancer is 100% treatable. But often, it has no symptoms. That's why it's particularly important for African-American men, given their higher probability of developing prostate cancer, to have a proactive plan.

Howard University Hospital Cancer Center offers free prostate cancer screenings the 3rd Wednesday of every month from 1 pm to 3 pm. To make an appointment, call 202-806-7697. Walk-ins are also allowed. For more information about prostate cancer, or other health related topics, please contact Sis Alfreda Woods.

Source: http://www.pcf.org/site/c.1eJRIROrEpH/b.8781439/k.6DADProstate_Cancer_Awareness_Month_is_about_Being_Aware_and_Informed.htm.

SAVE THE DATE — CITY OF ZION'S ANNUAL CHRISTMAS CANTATA

Christmas Cantata — City of Zion's Music Department (Band, Choir, Praise and Worship Team, and Dance Ministry) are excited about our annual Christmas Cantata. This year's Cantata will be held on Sunday, December 25, 2016 (Christmas Day) at 10:00am, at City of Zion Church, 14100 Laurel Park Drive, Laurel, MD 20707. Each year, these ministries work together for this special festivity to create an uplifting and joyful celebration including live song and dance presentations, readings, and songs of Praise. *See pictures below from our 2015 Christmas Cantata.* Be sure to spread the good news about our upcoming Christmas Cantata 2016 and invite others!



CITY OF ZION'S EVANGELISM MINISTRY & MISSIONS MINISTRY

Laurel Main Street Festival (May 7)

National African American Mission Conference (June 25)

Together 2016 Evangelism Event on the National Mall (July 16)



A TASTE OF CITY OF ZION'S MINISTRIES (visit www.cityofzionlaurel.org for a complete list of our ministries).

<p>Children's Church. Children's Church is committed to providing the Youth and Children of COZ with a substantive and meaningful Worship experience. Lessons and activities are prepared for our Youth and Children using age appropriate materials. This ministry takes place during Sunday Morning Worship Services and various COZ events. Point of Contact: Sister Charyn Cade and Deaconess Shirley Ford.</p>	<p>Missions. In Matthew 28:19 Jesus gave His church the mandate to go out and reach all nations with the message of the gospel. COZ achieves this goal through our missions team which has traveled as far away as Thailand, Haiti, and New Orleans, LA and as close as southern Maryland and Southeast, Washington, DC. Point of Contact: Elder Don Watson.</p>
<p>Christian Education. COZ's Christian Education Ministry is the teaching arm of our church that replaces the tradition of Sunday School. Through this ministry, Wednesday Night Bible classes are provided for all ages. Systematic curriculums designed to edify disciples, and equip them for ministry to others, are used in all classes. Point of Contact: Pastor Strong.</p>	<p>Marriage Fellowship. Hebrews 13:4 teaches that "Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure." COZ's Marriage Fellowship meets to encourage, edify, and equip husbands and wives according to God's Plan. Coming "together and having all things in common" (Acts 2:44), this ministry seeks to strengthen and encourage Believers through fellowship and unity. Point of Contact: Pastor and Lady Mineva Strong.</p>
<p>Dance (Daughters of Zion - Adult/Power with a Purpose - Youth). COZ is quite deliberate in seeking to create a vibrant, Biblical, worship experience for those who attend our Services. One of the reasons we are considered a "higher place of Praise," is because of our Dance Ministry. In this ministry, women and children are given the opportunity to "praise His name with dancing" (Psalm 149:3), as a part of our Worship Services. Point of Contact: Deaconess LaKisha Edwards.</p>	<p>Visitation Ministry. Matthew 25:31-46 depicts Jesus judging the nations based on their service. One of the reasons some will be rewarded is because Jesus said, "I was sick and you looked after me." The goal of the Visitation Ministry is to extend the love of Christ to those who are "sick and shut-in." This is done through various acts of compassion, hospitality, and service to those who are not physically able to attend COZ due to sickness or disability. Point of Contact: Minister Yvette Gandy.</p>
<p>Evangelism. COZ's Evangelism Team actively travels to the hedges and highways, spreading the Word about the ministries of our church. This includes activities like passing out tracts at a Metro Station, participating in local Crusades, as well as participating in the Prince George's County's Adopt-A-Road Program. The goal of this ministry is to reach the "unsaved and unchurched" for Jesus Christ. Point of Contact: Elder Don Watson.</p>	<p>Wellness Ministry. 3 John 2 Reveals that it is God's will that we "enjoy good health." This ministry's goal is to educate and expose God's people to healthy lifestyle choices. This ministry conducts seminars, screening and community events on various health issues in addition to providing resource information upon request. Point of Contact: Sister Alfreda Woods.</p>
<p>Free to Worship. In Matthew 19:14 Jesus said, Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them." It is in this same spirit that the Free to Worship Ministry simultaneously allows parents the freedom to participate in COZ's Sunday Morning Worship Service while also allowing their children ages 5 and under the freedom to play in a safe, secure and supervised environment. Point of Contact: Lady Mineva Strong.</p>	<p>Women's Ministry (WIP –Women In Pursuit). Proverbs 31:10 asks the question, "Who can find a virtuous woman? For her price is far above rubies." COZ's Women's Ministry meets monthly to encourage, edify, and equip women according to God's Plan. Coming "together and having all things in common" (Acts 2:44), this ministry seeks to strengthen and encourage women through fellowship and unity. Point of Contact: Lady Mineva Strong.</p>
<p>Men's Fellowship. Psalm 133 teaches us "How good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity." COZ's Men's Fellowship meets monthly to encourage, edify, and equip men according to God's Plan. Coming "together and having all things in common" (Acts 2:44), this ministry seeks to strengthen and encourage men through fellowship and unity. Point of Contact: Pastor Strong.</p>	<p>Youth Fellowship. Ecclesiastes 12:1 (KJV) teaches us to "remember now thy creator in the days of thy youth." Our Youth Fellowship meets once per month to encourage, edify, and equip our youth according to God's Plan. This ministry seeks to strengthen and encourage our children and young adults through fellowship and unity. Point of Contact: Deacon John & Deaconess LaKisha Edwards.</p>

CITY OF ZION'S DEACON AND DEACONESS ORDINATION

On Sunday, August 7, 2016, City of Zion Church appointed a very special couple to the office of Deacon and Deaconess. City of Zion Church is grateful for the dedication and service of Deacon and Deaconess Shirley and Philip Ford.



CITY OF ZION'S HOSPITALITY MINISTRY

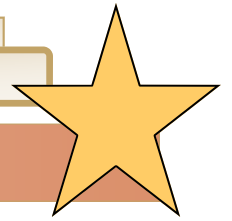
Annual Easter Egg Hunt (March 26, 2016)

SAVE THE DATE: Annual HarvestFest (October 29, 2016)

City of Zion's annual Easter Egg Hunt was held on Saturday, March 26, 2016. Children and adults participated in various activities and games, enjoyed a light lunch, and went home with goodie bags! The City of Laurel's Police Department also participated in our Easter Egg Hunt. PFC Schmidt provided free fingerprinting for children, and Corporal Johnson gave them lessons on how to ride the Segway. Some adults also received a Segway riding lesson of their own. The general consensus was, riding a Segway is not as easy as it looks! City of Zion Church appreciates the City of Laurel's Police Department for participating in this event, and for keeping us safe!



HarvestFest 2016: City of Zion Church will host its annual HarvestFest Celebration on Saturday, October 29, 2016 from 10:00 am—12:00 pm. This year's event will include exciting games, craft activities, face painting, and much more! HarvestFest is coordinated by City of Zion's Hospitality Ministry under the leadership of Sister Antoinette Hawkins. For more information about City of Zion's Hospitality Ministry, or to volunteer, please see Sister Antoinette Hawkins.



DISCIPLE SPOTLIGHT — *SISTER NIESHA MCGRAW-JOHNSON*



City of Zion's disciple, Niesha McGraw-Johnson is always smiling. A woman of grace, she is very pleasant and always willing to help. Gifted to us by her parents James and Leona McGraw, Niesha was born and raised in Albany, NY where she attended Albany High School and Hudson Valley Community College.

Niesha first heard of City of Zion Church when she visited her sister, Davia Walker during a visit to Maryland. Upon visiting, she enjoyed the Service so much, that when she relocated to Maryland, City of Zion was definitely on her list of churches she knew would be a good fit for her family.

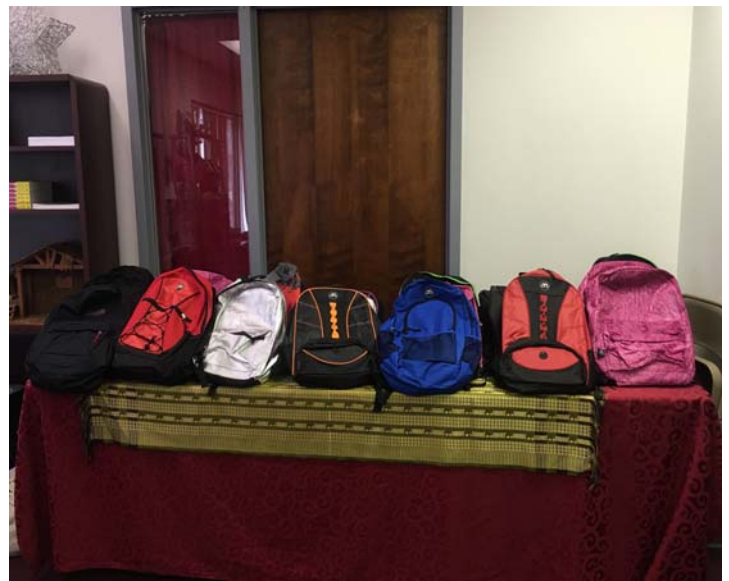
Niesha has a passion for the youth. Her heart's desire is to one day start a youth group to help our youth navigate everyday issues. "And if they know God, remind them how Great He is." As for her testimony, Niesha is humbled and excited about what God has done for herself and her children. She's grateful for the trials she has endured because they were part of her story (God's Plan). Niesha's favorite Bible verse is Isaiah 54:17, "no weapon forged against you will prevail, and you will refute every tongue that accuses you. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and this is their vindication from me," declares the Lord."

Niesha believes God gave her the gift of a servant's heart, and she is willing to do whatever God would have her to do. She loves to encourage others. "Trials may come, and it may seem like you are all alone, but God is ever-present. When you're in a place of frustration, if you can't do anything else but cry, get on your knees and cry out to God, because He hears your tears and understands them."

Since joining City of Zion Church, Niesha has made a great impact in building relationships and encouraging our youth as she directs the Youth Choir. Niesha also serves on City of Zion's Praise and Worship team and Children's Church ministries. Niesha has two beautiful daughters, Nyrene (15) and Nylea (10) who are very active in our Church, and such a joy to be around. "I am truly blessed that God gave me the best children I could have." City of Zion is thankful for our disciple, Sister Niesha McGraw-Johnson.

CITY OF ZION'S BACK TO SCHOOL PRAYER AND BACKPACK GIVEAWAY

On Sunday August 21, 2016 City of Zion Church had a special prayer for students, teachers, administrators, and anyone who participates in a school program (in any capacity) as they prepared to begin the 2016-2017 school year. City of Zion also provided more than 35 free backpacks filled with basic school supplies. We look forward to a successful school year!





City of Zion Church — "Making Disciples, Serving Jesus Christ, Living Abundantly"



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Pastor Gregory O. Strong

www.cityofzionlaurel.org

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

2016

Prayer Vigil, October 21
Fall Refreshing Services,
October 26—28
HarvestFest, October 29
Christmas Cantata,
December 25

2017

Prayer Vigil, January 20
COZ's Annual PowerFast,
January 1 — January 22
Good Friday Service,
April 14
Resurrection Sunday,
April 16
Mother's Day, May 14
Father's Day, June 18

ANNOUNCEMENTS

NEW DISCIPLES CLASS AND SPIRITUAL GIFTS INVENTORY

New Disciples classes are held the second Sunday of *every other* month at 9:00 am. Once you become a disciple of City of Zion Church, you are strongly encouraged to complete a Spiritual Gifts Inventory. The Spiritual Gifts Inventory is offered once every four months. This inventory helps you identify your Spiritual gift(s), and helps you determine a ministry area that aligns with your Spiritual gift(s).

The next Spiritual Gifts Inventory will be administered on Sunday, October 23, 2016 at 8:30 am. Please contact Deaconess Kim Watson for information.

CITY OF ZION'S BOOKSTORE

Please visit our bookstore during the hours of 5:30 — 6:45 pm every Wednesday, and immediately following Worship Service every Sunday. Items include CD's (pre-ordered with payment), Bibles, books, ink pens, shirts, and more. Special orders are also available.

Registration and payment for City of Zion's events and fellowships, are also coordinated through the bookstore.

For questions or inquiries about in-stock items, please see Sister Antoinette Hawkins. You may also forward your inquiries to her by email at antnhwk@aol.com

YOUTH FELLOWSHIP — YOUTH EMPOWERMENT AND COOKOUT (JUNE 19, 2016)



CITY OF ZION CHURCH — A HIGHER PLACE OF PRAISE!

