

NEWS AND VIEWS
from
MOUNT OLIVET BAPTIST CHURCH
3500 Edwards Mill Road
Raleigh, North Carolina 27612-5362

Phone... (919) 787-1910
FAX... (919) 787-0085
E-mail: office@mobic.org
Web Page: www.mobic.org

**“Southern Baptists with the Full
Gospel for the Whole World”**

SAM GORE, Senior Pastor
EDITH JACKSON, Prayer Coordinator

NANCY MCBRAYER, Office Manager
MIKE KING, Maintenance Supervisor

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Sometimes we all need to hear a good story. This is how the newsletter in June began. In that edition we were rejoicing in the story of how God has allowed Abiodun Akinsola to come into our midst at Mount Olivet with a heart to worship Him. Several weeks ago we had a celebration where many testified as to the power of God and the privilege of prayer and the faithfulness of God’s people to believe that He can do mighty things that only God can do. Some stories are that way. People have given up hope and almost give up on living and the Living God. But as it is when a great author is telling a story, God is never finished writing ours. Sometimes we not only need to hear a good story but we need to hear another chapter of a *really* good story. Let me try to tell it to you if I may.

Not long after Abiodun’s arrival I told her that I would like to meet with her and explore how she could remain connected to the widow and orphan ministry that God had revealed to her in Nigeria. I also desired to see how Mount Olivet could become more involved and partner with her as she continues to remain in contact with those surviving the sorrowful season of life after the death of a spouse. A couple of weeks ago we met together. And I began to hear about the next chapter of this amazing story.

The widow of Sunday Akinsola began to tell me the story of how the Lord God encouraged her to minister to widows and orphans in a time where she was at a low point in her grief. She approached the leadership of the church that she and Sunday had begun to serve and they embraced it as a ministry. God began to bring widows to her and the ministry quickly grew. Offerings we would send to her in Nigeria were often disbursed and distributed to those she deemed more needy than herself. This moved me greatly. But not as much as the folders.

She gave me sixteen folders. Each folder represented a family ravaged by the death of a husband and father. Each folder contained a picture of the widow and her children. The pictures were no doubt precious to each family. On the back of many of them was the evidence that they had been torn out of a photo album or out of some picture frame. Each folder contained the widow’s name and their story. When I asked if I could make copies I was told, “*These are yours to keep, Pastor Sam. The Lord wants you to have them.*” As I began to study their stories I found that out of the sixteen families, the late husband’s family have refused to help them in their struggle. Two of these ten widows have suffered the death of a child after their husband has died. Sometimes you don’t have to know all the answers. You only need to know the right questions. One of them is *Lord what would you have me do with what you have revealed?*

Each family can be greatly helped by a contribution of 10-20 dollars a month. What would it take to be able to contribute that amount for a sustained period of time? For me, it would be to miss a lunch meal once a week, maybe on Thursdays, our noon prayer time. On Sunday, August 14, 2011 there will be an appeal to our congregation to adopt a family. Some may say, how will we afford the sacrifice? I say it’s time we learned to ask a different question...*Is this the will of God?* My appeal to you as a reader and perhaps someone connected to this story from so long ago, would you be willing to be a partner in a ministry I like to call *James 127*? Listen to what God thinks about what I’ve been talking about...

Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world. (James 1:27)

On that Sunday we will see a power point presentation that will also be posted on the church website with the stories of these sixteen families. There are another six families without folders for a total of twenty-two. I believe that the Lord and Abiodun Akinsola will not let us forget them! Keep in touch for more details.

Blessings to you,
Pastor Sam