**WHAT MOTIVATED JESUS? (Athens, Sunday, July 10, 2022)**

My Wade ancestors came to Oregon on the Oregon Trail. Travel was by wagons pulled by oxen and on foot for 2,170 miles from Missouri to Oregon. In Wyoming there is a place where the trail traveled over rock and you can see the wagon ruts in rock. If you look close, to the side of the wagon ruts, you can also see where people’s foot prints wore down the rocks 2-3 feet deep. My ancestors were one family of 6,000 people who traveled the trail in 1850. According to HistoryNet, “The 2,200-mile east-west trail served as a critical transportation route for emigrants traveling from Missouri to Oregon and other points west during the mid-1800s. Travelers were inspired by dreams of gold and rich farmlands, but they were also motivated by difficult economic times in the east and diseases like yellow fever and malaria that were decimating the Midwest around 1837.” Many died on the way, but that did not keep others from completing the harsh journey. Many books have been written about the Oregon Trail, with stories of folks who had a strong faith in God, helped each other along the way sometimes in dramatic fashion, and of friendships that developed and lasted the rest of their lives.

Dust Bowl/Oklahoma – Levis Massey Born in 1907 in Toccoa, Georgia - In 1936 my Grandpa Massey loaded up his Model T truck with my grandmother, my uncle, my aunt, with $600 and traveled from Oklahoma to Oregon to find fertile land & mild climate he had read about.

We have many who have moved to East Tennessee in the last couple years. From Indiana, California, Texas, Georgia, Virginia etc. Moving is a major undertaking for any family. The motivation may be for a better job, better economics, fulfilling a dream of owning a home, finding a better place to raise a family, etc. These are all noble motivators. I know a lot of those things were on my mind when I moved Beth and Daniel to East Tennessee in 1990. And I wanted my family to be in a place where we could live and grow as Christians trying to get to Heaven! Seeking a better place is what motivates folks to sell their possessions, leave loved ones, pack up belongings, and in many ways start over. Because getting to that special place is worth the sacrifice and trials along the way!

**When Jesus walked this earth, what motivated Him?** This morning I want to touch on four motivators that can teach us how we can be more like our Lord.

**1. Pleasing the Father** (**Gen. 1:31, Jn. 8:29, Matt. 17:5, Col. 1:19, 2 Pt. 1:16-17**).

**2. His love for all** (**John 1:29, Ephesians 3:17-18, 5:2, Hebrews 10:10**).

**3. Victory Over Satan** – Winning is a great motivator (b-ball/Fantasy Football/Gin rummy)

(**Jn. 16:33, 1 Cor. 15:54-58, Col. 2:15, Rev. 1:4-6, 7:13-17, 5:9-10, 12:11, 15:2, 17:14**).

**4. Heaven** – (**Luke 5:16, 6:12, 11:1, John 14:1-3, 17:1-5**). Prayer keeps us as close to God as possible while on earth and is one reason Jesus prayed so much. To be like Jesus, we need to realize our time on earth is short and we long to be in Heaven with God! In the NKJV of the NT there are 254 references to Heaven!

What motivates you? Are you pleasing The Father every day? Are you driven by your love for your neighbor? Are you winning your battle with Satan? Are you heading to a better place? Where God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are (**Colossians 3:1, 1 John 5:7**)? Sometimes it gets difficult and we are here to help.

Be motivated like Jesus today! If you are not a disciple of Jesus this morning, become one by repenting of your sins and being baptized to wash them away. Then start your walk to a better place! Come forward now if we can help!