

This N That Plus Some More Stuff

I was trying to come up with a catchy title for this first article of 2021 but I decided the above is better than “How Much Worse Can It Get?” I do hope this year is a good one for everyone but we know there will be challenges and blessings. When you are young the passage of time means good things. You can’t wait to drive, or get out of school, doors opening, new possibilities, new events in your life. As you get older it sometimes means your circle of friends becomes smaller, events get harder, and sometimes you can’t find the door.

It is good we mark the passage of time for it reminds us of what is and is not important. One big lesson I have learned is the value of time and its relation to opportunities. “Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.” (Galatians 6:10) Our lives are like a bag in which we pull out one day, the number of days in that bag is limited. One does not know the number of days one has, therefore, don’t take it for granted.

While writing this article, Friday, January 1, 2021 I came across an article by Ken Weliever which I thought worthy of sharing as it relates to one of today’s sermons.

Happy New Year 2021!

People want to be happy. We pursue happiness with passion. But happiness does not come by looking for it. Eric Hoffer correctly stated, “The search for happiness is one of the chief sources of unhappiness.” Happiness is a by-product. It is the result of right living, of seeking something greater than one’s own interest.

Today’s List to Live By is in the form of a simple acrostic wishing you a “Happy New Year” from a spiritual perspective. And offering 12 ways to experience both happiness and joy.

Hold fast to your Faith (1 Cor. 15:2).

Assemble weekly with your church Family (Heb. 10:25).

Pray every day (I Thess. 5:17).

Purify your heart from worldly lusts (2 Tim. 2:22).

Yield not to temptation (1 Cor 10:13).

Never give up (1 Cor. 15:58).

Examine yourself spiritually (2 Cor. 13:5)

Walk in love (Eph 5:2).

Yield your will to God's will (Heb 13:21).

Enthusiastically live each day for the Lord (Col. 3:23).

Add the Christian graces (2 Peter 1:5-7).

Read your Bible daily (Ps. 119).—Ken Weliever, The Preacherman (Slightly edited, D.T.)

Finally, I noticed the celebrity deaths in 2020. All the way from the young Chadwick Boseman to the elderly Sean Connery. But one of the last deaths was of Dawn Wells, otherwise known as “Mary Ann” on the television show Gilligan’s Island. The show only ran for three years and was widely panned by the critics but I grew up watching it. Over the last few days, I read some things about the show and the actress Dawn Wells.

Some of the actors were well known, Bob Denver (Gilligan), Alan Hale Jr. (the Skipper), Jim Backus (Mr. Howell), and Natalie Schafer (Mrs. Howell) were well known. While Tina Louise (Ginger) and Dawn Wells (aka Mary Ann) were just starting out. In writing the show most of the roles were clearly laid out, such as Gilligan being the bumbling idiot along with the Skipper, the Howell’s being the uber rich couple, Ginger being the young sexy starlet wanting to

make it in the movies, and the “Professor” who could figure out the solution to every problem except how to get off that island. Mary Ann’s role was undefined except she was a young farm girl. The pilot show, along with its theme song didn’t even mention her character, only later was it added. She did not make a lot of money from the show as the highest paid stars made \$750 a week and they did not get money from the residuals. Dawn Wells went on to other acting jobs but she will always be connected to “Mary Ann”.

A few years ago, I put together a lesson based on some things I learned from “Gilligan’s Island” which we should remember.

No matter where you are, you will have a sphere of influence. One of the constant plot lines of the show and criticisms, is the number of people who would some how get to that island and then leave. While on the island they learned some lessons, which made them better people. In the Bible we read of numerous people who had great influence on others despite their circumstances. Joseph was a slave in prison but influenced Potiphar, the jail keeper, Pharaoh’s butler and cupbearer, and Pharaoh himself, Exodus 39-40. No matter who you are and where you are, you will influence those around you.

You have to use what you have, and what you have is more than you think. From time to time a problem would arise, a storm coming, illness, etc. but the Professor would somehow come up with a solution using the things on the island. They were able to make huts, have beds, clothes, and even electricity. Moses was a man who had to learn what he had and he had more than he realized. When called by God to go back to Pharaoh, Moses’ excuse was his slowness of tongue. God gave him Aaron to be his mouthpiece, a staff which turned into a snake and then back into a staff. God gave him more but the fact is, a piece of wood and God is enough. We all have abilities and usually we have more than we realize.

Team work can overcome a lot of obstacles. At times the castaways on the show had to bind together to survive. This is a principle taught in the Bible. The word “fellowship” among other things means working together.

Finally, expect the unexpected. The premise of the show was a group of people going on a three-hour tour but a sudden storm caused them to be marooned on an island. In the Bible we are told to be prepared for we do not know the hour or the day our lives may end, Luke 12.13-20.

Hence, my final words in this first article of 2021 are I hope this year is a good one for everyone but we know there will be challenges and blessings, and we determine how we respond to those events. – Dennis Tucker