

11-20-2024 – Taking Stock of “More in 2024”

T-giving... Year coming to a close. Take stock... not about goals, but did we gain more of 4 things: **Person. Power. Peace. Passion/Purpose.** **Be thankful!**

We are strangers living in a foreign land. Holy people in an unholy place.

- To make it thru, we need a **person**... not just any person ... **Jesus**.
 - Person w/ vision. **Direction**. Don't just need company.
 - *“The Lord is my Shepherd.”* He leads us in the right path.
 - *“He restores my Soul.”* He restores our **hope**. Soul lifted up.
 - *“For You are with me.”* No more **sadness**. Not alone.
- Having Jesus in life makes all the difference. Have hope.
 - Sometimes He changes circumstances, other times **changes us**
- Be Thankful – we have **Jesus**. If He's **all we have, we have all we need**.
 - Getting thru this life isn't worth it if we come out w/out Jesus.

Need Healing? Need Jesus. The leper... blind... lame... grief... **Jesus**.

- “By His stripes we are healed.” **Isaiah 53:5**.

Resources too low? Jesus provides. 5,000 fed ... 1 basket, 2 fish, 5 bread.

- **Phil. 4:19** – “And my God will supply all your needs according to *His riches* in glory in Christ Jesus.”

Loved? No one will ever love you more than Jesus. Think of **John 15:13**:

“There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends.”

- ** What we need is more of Jesus in our lives. Thankful – have Him!

Power. Thankful we don't have to **make our own way**, use our strength.

- **Philippians 4:13** - “I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength.” It's not us; not our strength.
- This strength is available to all Believers:
 - Acts 1:8** – “U will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon U”...
- God's power is on full display when it looks impossible – face **Red Sea**.
- God's power makes the difference . . . ask **Joshua**/walls of **Jericho**.
 - What walls u trying to bring down? Need His **Power**.
- You got **battles** in your life? **David** took down **Goliath** w/ a small stone.

- In the natural, stone is too small. Insignificant.
- **Stone shows us... it was God.** God magnifies what we do.
 - Don't look at the size of your giant, but the **size of your God.**
- Ask Paul & Silas. Jail...Chains... did nothing wrong. Freedom @ midnight
 - God knows how to **break your chains**. Shake foundations for you.
- God's power does what we can't do -- nothing is impossible for Him.
 - **John 15:5** – “. . . apart from Me you can do nothing.”

Peace.

- The most faithful followers still struggle with Peace. Maybe that's why so many verses are in the Bible about Peace... more than 750 verses:
- **Psalms 119:165** – “Abundant peace belongs to those who love Your law; nothing can make them stumble.”
- **Psalms 4:8** - “In peace I will lie down and sleep, for you alone, O LORD, will keep me safe.” **Peace for Sleep.**
- **John 14:27** – “My peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled; do not be afraid.” **Comforting Peace**
- **Isaiah 26:3** – “You will keep in perfect peace all who trust in you, all whose thoughts are fixed on you!” **Guiding peace.**
- **Psalms 29:11** – “The LORD gives strength to his people; the LORD blesses his people with peace.” **Peace is a blessing.**
- **Phil. 4:7** – “And the peace of God, which surpasses every thought, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.”
 - **Cont.Eng.Ver.** – “because you belong to Christ Jesus, God will bless you with peace that no one can completely understand. And this peace will *control the way you think and feel.*”

So thankful - we can live **in peace no matter the problem we face!**

- It's possible b/c - the **power** of God **changes** things, the **presence** of God **calms** us, & the **love** of God was **conveyed** in the gift of Jesus.
 - “To us a child is born . . . Wonderful counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father . . . Prince of Peace.” (**Is. 9:6**)

Purpose. Be thankful **we were created for a purpose.** Not an accident. Too many people believe the lie – insignificant; our lives don't matter.

- Not true. We were made by God, for God.

Eph. 1: ¹¹⁻¹² *“It’s in Christ that we find out who we are and what we are living for. Long before we first heard of Christ and got our hopes up, he had his eye on us, had designs on us for glorious living, part of the overall purpose he is working out in everything and everyone.”*

Our purpose begins & ends w/ God. Don’t get that, life won’t make sense.

So what is our purpose?

1 Pet. 2:9 – “you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his possession, so that you may proclaim the praises of the one who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.”

- Our purpose is to worship God & proclaim what He has done.
 - o Don’t confuse what you do with your **life’s purpose**.
 - How we make a living doesn’t change our purpose.
 - **Col. 3:23** – “Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as though you were working for the Lord and not for people.”
 - You can be successful in this life, but miss your true purpose.
 - Achieving goals, records... Not same as fulfilling our life’s purpose.
- **Our purpose is to praise God.** Do it by telling our stories. . . what we see...

He is so worthy of praise. We’ve been blessed. Thankful. Have all we need.
Come thru storms . . . flooding, tornadoes, hurricanes. Still standing!
For every challenge, Jesus was there. . . strength, comfort, & peace.

Our lives are not an accident. Tell **story** of the **Tablecloth**.

Brings together God’s purpose, peace, power.

- Young minister...old church. 1948. Restore. 2 days. Saw: God’s purpose.
- Youth auction, \$6.50. Next day, bus. “My banquet cloth!” Vienna.
- Cmas Eve service. Reunion. Chance happening?
- Leak – auction – job search – bus – cold ... that was God. Praise Him!