

1.06.19 ~ Trusting and Serving God in 2019...

My hope is that you will leave here today motivated to become more honest and intimate with God; that you will learn to trust Him more and more, not only when things are going well, but also when bad things happen and you find yourself spiritually dialing 911-Help-me-God!

Most of us had a variety of both good and bad things happen this past year; some of us are still in the midst of, or perhaps recovering from, the effects of one or more of the bad things that have happened to us or to those we love and care about.

But today, I want to encourage you to really trust God, and to let go of those things from this past year that might preclude or hinder you from experiencing God's presence, peace, and provision in 2019..

Isaiah 43:18-19, "Do not call to mind the former things, or ponder things of the past. Behold, I will do something new, now it will spring forth; will you not be aware of it? I will even make a roadway in the wilderness, rivers in the desert."

Jeremiah 29:11, "'For I know the plans that I have for you,' declares the Lord, 'plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope.'"

Everything God's Word foretold about the birth, life and death of Jesus, has come true, just as God said, for God is faithful and trustworthy. He gives us everything we need to know Him, serve Him and to enjoy our life on earth, while trusting Him for eternity in heaven.

2Peter 1:3, "His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and [goodness] excellence."

God has provided magnificent and glorious resources:

His Word (see **John 1:1-2, 14; 5:39; 14:6; 17:17**)

His Spirit (see **John 3:5-8; 14:15-17,26; 16:8-9**)

His Church (see **1Corinthians 12:12-14, 18-20, 27; Colossians 1:18**)

God's Word is revealed by God's Spirit (who indwells in all of those who belong to God), Christians are members of the body of Christ, God's Church, of which Christ is the Head. His sacrificial death and sovereign resurrection have secured forgiveness and salvation for all who believe in Him (see **Romans 1:1-4; 10:9-10; 1Corinthians 15:1-4**).

God's desired, expressed and repeatedly stated will is to save us through Christ the Lord, bringing us into a personal and eternal relationship with Him.

1Timothy 2:3-4, "God our Savior, ...desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth."

2Peter 3:9, "The Lord is... ..patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance."

So what is the problem? Why don't we naturally trust God and desire to serve Him? The Bible tells us that it is sin in us that separates us from God.

Romans 3:10-12, "There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God. All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one."

Romans 3:22-24, "There is no distinction; for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus."

Romans 6:23a, "For the wages of sin is death."

What is the solution, the remedy, for our sinfulness?

Romans 6:23b, "The free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Romans 5:8, "God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

Romans 10:13, "Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved."

God created us to have fellowship with Him, but through Adam's sin death came to all of us, and so God, in His great mercy provided Christ, through Whom we receive forgiveness & eternal life (see **Romans 5:12-14; 12:1-2**).

As we enter 2019, let us seek to know God more intimately, and serve Him obediently and honorably.

Jeremiah 29:13, "You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart."

Hebrews 4:16, "Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need."

James 4:8a, "Draw near to God and He will draw near to you."

But, how do we approach or come near to God? We do that by way the Word of God [Jesus Christ], through God's Spirit in you!

Colossians 3:16-17, " Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching... ..with thankfulness in your hearts to God. Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father."

Hebrews 10:22-24 tells us to, "draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith," and "hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging *one another*; and all the more as you see the day [of the Lord] drawing near."

Every Christian has God's Spirit in them (cf **Ephesians 1:13-14**); in fact (cf **1Corinthians 2:16**), we can know the very mind of God; for we have the light [or *revelation*] of God, and are able (**Matthew 5:16**), to let [God's] light shine through us, so that others may see our good deeds and praise God in heaven."

As you draw near to God, through His Word, learning to trust Him, you'll want to serve Him and tell others about Him, so that they too might come to know Him, as a dearly loved child knows a loving father.

1Peter 2:12, "Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles [unbelievers], so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe them, glorify God in the day of visitation."

1Peter 3:15-16, "But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect."

Honoring God by the way you live your life is essential, especially if you want unbelievers to take notice of the God in you, so that they might believe and be saved.

Are you really trusting God with your life or just trying out Jesus, like some new hobby, diet, or exercise plan? The proof of your commitment will be evidenced by the way you live your life.

1John 2:4-5, "The one who says, 'I have come to know Him,' and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him; but whoever keeps His word... has truly been perfected. By this we know that we are in Him."

Our trust of, and intimacy with, God will show in the way we engage and respond to daily life, both the good days and the bad days.

Proverbs 3:5-6, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He will make your paths straight."

Philippians 4:6-7, "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

Philippians 4:12-13, "I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need. I can do all things through Him who strengthens me."

Philippians 4:19, "And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus."

God doesn't promise His children a trouble free or painless life, He does

however, provide all we need to know Him, love Him, trust Him, and serve Him; while we are here On this earth, as we wait to be brought into heaven with Him, forever!

If you belong to God through Christ, you will desire to know and apply God's Word to your life, and you will attend, fellowship, and serve in a local Church, where Christ is the center of worship and God's Word is taught, obeyed and honored.

Today is the first Sunday of January 2019, in a few minutes we will serve Communion, taking time to prayerfully consider and to remember the Lord's sacrificial death and sovereign resurrection. As we celebrate the Lord's Supper for the first time in this new year, I hope you will consider all that God has done for and given to you, so that you will trust and serve Him with your life.

It is my earnest prayer that we all will seek to honor the Lord, by proclaiming the Good News to all who will listen: that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures, was buried, and then rose again on the third day, according to the Scriptures, and everyone who believes in Him for the forgiveness of sins will be saved!

You and I can trust God now and forever, because of what He has already accomplished through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, as has been revealed to us in the 66 Books of the Bible; and not only that, but everything in God's Word, as originally given, is sovereign truth, in which there is no error or falsehood.

1Corinthians 15:58, "Therefore, my dear brothers (*and sisters*), stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain."

Colossians 3:12-17, "Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him."

Pastor Mike

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