

May Newsletter 2023

Thank you so much for your faithful support this month. We truly appreciate you, and the Lord will use your giving for the kingdom as we place it in His hands with faith. Here's where we are in...

Fundraising:

We are continually amazed when we receive a donations report from the office! The Lord shows his faithfulness to us and the world through you (the body of Christ). Thank you so much for your prayers and giving!!! It's nothing less than the Lord's work; we praise Him for that.

We are working on raising support for the third ministry year, of which we have 20% approximately in pledges and one-time gifts as of April. Thanks to the Lord and the Lord through you, we have reached the goal for two years of ministry (\$105,000.00) to be launched to go to Peru approximately in February 2024 (we have to finish our yearly contracts before moving) with one-time gifts and pledges. We continue to assist Pastor Beto, who lives in Huancayo, Peru (where we will start serving initially), with online Bible study groups with fellow Peruvians. He was very grateful for the help in ministry this month. By God's grace, I was able to lead the Matthew Bible study three times, and it was such a blessing to me personally and the group. The Lord helped me through it a lot. We are also preparing and praying for a week visit to Peru in July, to see family and how Peru is.

Circumstances:

I saw a quote on my phone I had taken a picture of. It said, "Sweat more during peace, bleed less during war (Sun Tzu)." I am not quite sure about the author, though I believe Sun Tzu wrote a book on the art of war, so it is a military quote. But it does have some truth in it. It reminds me to take advantage of the time we are given. Ephesians 5:15 says, "Be very careful, then, how you live not as unwise, but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is."

I am learning not to despise small beginnings (Zech. 4:10) because if we make the most of what we have, and with all our hearts/might/mind/strength serve others- that is making the most of every opportunity. Be it the small things on the planet, go and put a coin in the blind man's hat; God can use it! Remember the widow's offering in Mark 12:41-44? A poor widow came and put in two tiny copper coins worth only a few cents. Calling his disciples to him, Jesus said, "Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others." What you do means something; the devil is who wants to tell you what you do means nothing and to discourage you from stepping in the right direction. Don't buy that lie! Move forward step by step in faith, knowing that with Jesus in you, you make a huge difference! Plus, without any small steps, there won't be any big ones.

Hebrews 10:24-25 says, "And let us consider how we may spur one another toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another-and all the more as you see the Day approaching." This is the reason we maximize our efforts in the time we have with the Spirit's help because the Day of Christ's return is approaching. The apostles and disciples in Acts had that sense of urgency that I am afraid many

of us have lost. But if we see that moment when we are before our Lord, he says well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful with a little, and I will put you in charge of many. It becomes more real.

Galatians 6:9-10 says, "Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers". When we become weary of doing good (our best in everything for His glory), we can find rest always in God's grace and unending love. And it's from there that we are empowered and able to give.

How can one take their mind off temptations, evil, sin, distractions, etc., and be free from it? Look for what God has for you to do in the smallest of things, and when we look, there is always something most of the time. It's about more than just filling the schedule with things to do. That will be miserable and not work at all. It's not just about being busy; it's not just about doing busy work or nonsense. It's about walking out of the trap with the Lord by faith, trusting and believing He has something more significant for you, and making the most of every little bit! The famous Wesley quote is, "Do all the good you can, in all the ways you can, to all the souls you can, in every place you can, at all the times you can, with all the zeal you can, as long as ever you can."

One of the reasons David fell into adultery with Bathsheba, was that was he misplaced that day. Everyone was in the battle, and he was in the palace. Spiritual boredom and idle time can sometimes be deadly; even procrastination can be dangerous. This doesn't mean filling your schedule up with a bunch of meaningless tasks that don't work. As in the temptations of Adam and Eve, Satan tries to shift Eve's focus from the fantastic world and creation that God has given her to the one thing she "didn't have." If we are grateful for what the Lord has given us, we can say with David in Psalms 16:5-6, "Lord you alone are my portion and my cup: you make my lot secure. The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; surely I have a delightful inheritance." We will move within the boundaries to make the "land" or inheritance given to us fruitful. Make that land fruitful, plow it, water it, work it, and show gratefulness in the stewardship of all He has given us.

This was also the third servant's mistake when hiding the talents given to him and burying them in the ground. He bought into the devil's lie that nothing you can do is worth it, so you might as well not even try. Yes, there is fear also. We all are more fearful than we think of the fear of failure. The opposite of this is faith in the Lord; we have got to get up and conquer that promised land, despite those giants in the land. If not, we will be wandering in the wilderness.

In the context of Ephesians 5, saying to make the most of every opportunity, Paul suggests waking up from our sleep, being risen from the dead, and Christ will shine on us. Also, an encouragement/ warning is to have nothing to do with the darkness because it is fruitless and will be exposed by the light. Similarly, in Romans 13:11-14 he suggests behaving as always in the daytime or the light, knowing the day of Christ's return is approaching: "And do this, understanding the present time: the hour has already come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed. The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. Let us behave decently, as in the daytime, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual

immorality and debauchery, not in dissension and jealousy. Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the flesh." In the last verse, another translation says, "Make no provision for the flesh."

This encourages us to be prepared with our lamps burning as the ten virgins wait on their groom and always walk in the light. 1 Jn 1:7. "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, His Son, purifies from all sin." Because the night is nearly over, and the day is almost here!!! We don't want the master to return finding us sleeping but alert. Even in the present, we need to be alert. "Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kinds of suffering. (1 Peter 5:8)."

Final Thought:

Philippians 2:13 says, "For it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure. Another version says, "For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him." Sometimes in between these two: the will and the work is courage. He can put the will inside us and give us the power to do it, but are we willing to trust Him by stepping out? Ultimately, if we trust Him, faith will move us. However, if we just have the desire and are unwilling to do what it takes to get where He wants us to go, it's most likely a lack of courage. What if I fail? We begin to look at our weaknesses instead of God's almighty strength. I don't know how- I don't know where- I don't know when (time); we don't know many things, but we do know the most important thing for certain, and that is Him! He will guide us; he will be with us. He will carry us through to the end. "For the Spirit of God gave us does not make us timid, but give us power, love, and self-discipline." (2 Tim. 1:7). As we trust in Christ, our timidity and fear will fade, and this is where we find courage, it's in Him!

