

MERRY CHRISTMAS!



DECEMBER 2020 LAMPLIGHTER

Pastor Mark's Minute:

My mom used to tell me I wouldn't accomplish anything by lying in bed all day. But look at me now, Mom! I'm saving the world!

Although this has been the craziest and most unexpected year ever, we can still enjoy the Christmas season. My prayer for you is that you will do more than simply endure this wonderous time of the year, but you will enjoy it. I want this to be for you the best Christmas ever! In Philippians chapter 4, Paul gives us four simple statements about how to make the most of this season.

1. Don't worry, be happy. **"Do not be anxious about anything..."** Philippians 4:6

Worry has challenged many of us this year. It's a killjoy, and it adds unnecessary stress to our lives. We worry about getting sick. We worry about making someone else sick. We worry about how our churches and jobs and community will respond to the unique challenges that the pandemic brings. But worry, even during the holiday season of 2020, isn't inevitable. It is something we learn. If it is learned, it can also be unlearned. Jesus tells us how in Matthew 6:34: "So do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself."

Thought: In order to relieve stress, decide to enjoy today.

2. Be happy and pray about everything. **"Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition..."** Philippians 4:6

Whenever God tells you to eliminate something in your life, He always has something better in store. He always replaces a negative with a positive. In this case, he wants you to replace worry with prayer. When you stop worrying, you'll create more space in your life that can be filled with prayer. The time you once spent worrying will now be spent praying, and you'll have less stress in your life. God wants you to pray for all areas of your life, including the areas that are stressing you out. Philippians 4:6 says we're to pray **"in everything."** If it's big enough to worry about, it's big enough to pray about.

Thought: There is no problem that is too big for God's power or too small for God's concern.

3. Thank God for all things. “Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, **with thanksgiving...**” Philippians 4:6

The attitude of gratitude is the healthiest human emotion. It actually increases your immunities. Ungrateful people also tend to be unhappy people. Nothing ever satisfies them. If you're depressed, make a list of 50 things for which you can be grateful. When you're grateful, it gets the focus off your problems and puts the focus onto the many blessings in your life. First Thessalonians 5:18 says, “Whatever happens, give thanks, because it is God's will in Christ Jesus that you do this.” God's will for your life is to constantly give thanks—for the good days and bad days.

Thought: There is always something for which to be grateful.

4. Think about what you think about. Train yourself to think about the right things. “Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—**think about such things.**” Philippians 4:8

You'll need to change how you think to reduce stress. The stress is inside of you, not outside of you. Your mind is a special gift from God. It's capable of storing more than 100 trillion thoughts. What you think about impacts your entire life. And God gave you the freedom to choose what you think about. God wants you to use your brain's power to focus on “whatever is right.” Yet many people, even Christians, are totally indiscriminate about what they allow to enter their minds. They let all kinds of negative books, movies, music, and television shows into their heads. Then they wonder why they are depressed. Your thoughts affect how you feel, and your feelings affect your actions. So, keep your mind on the right things.

Thought: Whatever I think about is the direction my life is going.

Philippians 4:7 says, “And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” God stands ready and able to give you peace that goes beyond anything you can imagine—even in the middle of one of the busiest seasons of the year, in the strangest year anyone can remember.

I love you so much and can't wait until we are together again!

December Reading Plan

I encourage you to begin on December 1st and read one chapter a day from the book of Luke. Read it at night with your family. Read it at work over lunch. Read it in the morning. Read it in the afternoon. Just read it. Because when you do, it will well prepare you for the best Christmas Day!

Christmas Eve Service & Communion

This service has always been one of the year's highlights for me. Join us as we light candles, sing carols and take communion. Bring your family and join us at 9:00pm as you prepare your heart for the coming of Jesus on Christmas.

Youth Group

Stay in touch with Sister Pam for up to date activities and events.

Giving Tree

Please consider how you can support our missionaries this Christmas. Hopefully we will be together for church on December 7th. Please send your Giving Tree gift to the church on or before the 7th. The church will be open Monday, December 1st – Friday, December 5th from 9:00am-9:00pm so you can participate in the Giving Tree at your convenience.

Or call or text Pastor Mark (785) 527-3510 to have your gift picked up.

Our Missionaries: Jason & Kerensa McFrederick (Mollyn & Nehemiah) - Czech Republic

Randy & Lynda Freeman - South East Asia + Casey and Kendra Culver (Anna) - Europe

Isaac & Ami Thompson (Ian & Karis) - Ecuador + Ashby House - Salina

George & Sheree Wuertz (Daniel, Nathan & Joel) - Ecuador

Salina Rescue Mission - Salina + Chelsey Horkman - Africa

Peter & Brenda Burgos (Rebecca, Stephen, Rachel, Catherine, Hannah, Matthew & Deborah) - Asia



Special Projects

It was just a few months ago that we began showing our Sunday morning service on the internet. It has taken, time, talent and money to put everything together. Thank you to everyone who pitched in! We have also been blessed with several other accomplishments:

New Christmas Lights outside – Kevin, Marlin & Deanna

Cleaned fascia and awning for painting – Kalen, Allen & Warren

Youth Room painted – Youth Group

Upgrade to computer software – Pastor Seth, Dan & Allen

We praise God for each of you! Thank you for sharing!

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