

LIVING IN THE NOW

Foundation scripture Isaiah 43:18,19 ***“...Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing. Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the desert and streams in the wasteland***

Tonight you may be thinking about the week ahead or are regretting something that happened last week, or years ago. Either way, you are missing NOW. Now is what is live, it is not recorded – it’s real.

The past is past, and the future is what will be
Now is where the action is
Now is where you are encountering God by His Spirit
Not just because you are in church, because tomorrow there will be another “now” when the Holy Spirit is with you

2 Corinthians 6:2 ***NOW is the day of salvation*** = much more than just being born again – deliverance, preservation, provision, healing. God is active in our lives now.

Mark 11:24 ***believe that you have received it – and it will be yours***

I find that in order to truly experience the present, we need to have the right perspective on our past and future.

We deal with the past
Live in the present
Entrust our future to the Lord

PAST

Isaiah 43:18 ***“...FORGET the former things; do not dwell on the past.***

Winston Churchill said, “If we open a quarrel between the past and the present, we shall find that we have lost our future”. If we get all worked up about what might have been – looking back – and we can lose the future.

Isn’t it amazing how clever everyone is with the benefit of hindsight!

Do not dwell on the past. We all have a past, and it has brought us to where we are today. But God says don’t live there.

I have found that all too often my past talks to me and if I allow that dialogue to continue, my present sinks into self pity and I lose focus on the future. Which is why God says – don’t go there. If we do, like Winston Churchill said – we will find that we have lost our future – suddenly life has passed you by.

“IF ONLY” are two small but very dangerous words.

God made time. ***14 But I trust in you, O LORD; I say, "You are my God." 15 My times are in your hand...***

God is over time and he can redeem it. In Isaiah 46 God says ***“...I make known the end from the beginning.”*** He knows our future and he can redeem our past.

Joel 2:25 ***“...I will restore to you the years that the swarming locust has eaten.”***
God can recover and restore that time to us.

Ephesians 5:15-16 God instructs us to ***redeem the time for the days are evil.*** NIV ***make the most of every opportunity***

Philippians 3:13-14 ***“...Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: FORGETTING WHAT IS BEHIND and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.”***

OK so you’ve made some mistakes. Join the club. I bet the devil has tried to isolate you – that what you have

done is unlike anyone else – He is a liar. You are not alone.

Even the apostle Paul found himself desiring the wrong things.

Peter denied Christ. King David had a guy killed so he could take his wife – and God called him a man after his own heart – how? Because we are forgiven!! He chooses to remember our sins no more.

In the same Chapter Isaiah 43:25 “...***I, even I, am he who blots out your transgressions, for my own sake, and remembers your sins no more.***”

So we can be like God and choose not to remember the past

Isaiah 43:18 “...***FORGET the former things; do not dwell on the past.***”

PRESENT

Isaiah 43:19 “...***See, I am doing a new thing. Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?***”

Each day we can confess 2 Peter 1:3 “...***His divine power has given everything we need for life and godliness...***”

Psalms 118:24 “...***This is the day the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.***”

In The Message v19 “...***be alert, BE PRESENT. I'm about to do something brand new.***”

It speaks about the importance of now – today.

As we open ourselves up to God, we find a divine connection. Tonight, right now, God is at work in us. Now it springs up. Spirit to spirit – I am changed from the inside out. ***Now it springs up – do you not perceive it?***

There is a part of me that is wall to wall God – my reborn spirit. It is sealed and nothing that is impure can enter in and defile it. This is where we communicate spirit to Spirit with the Lord. We are one spirit with Him.

Today is the best day because God is active in your life.

God holds the future and because of that we can rest in His love today, Jeremiah 29:11 “...***For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.***” GOD knows the future, not us

Hebrews 11:1 ***NOW Faith.*** The word now is not a fill in word. God is saying that Faith always operates in the now, in the present!

So we say – Lord I offer my life to you today (Romans 12:1).

You may have a very busy job – and the devil says you are no good to God because you don't give him any time.

But did you know that the Holy Spirit is with you leading you and guiding you – that you are exactly where you need to be.

You are in a motorboat – the wake looks powerful but its history.

It is the engine driving you forward right now that is all-important. It is the decisions you make now, today, that affect tomorrow.

Take a wrong turn – no problem with God – He will get you back on course. Abraham and Lot – Abraham was relaxed in God enough to say to Lot – you choose: right or left.

Jesus said in Matthew 6:25 ***DO NOT WORRY about your life.***

He said in v 34 ***Do not worry about tomorrow. For tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.*** TODAY has enough issues for you to focus on. Why bring the potential issues of tomorrow into today?

Do not waste the precious God given NOW by worrying about your future. Put your life in His hands. I may not know what the future holds – but I know who holds the future.

As the hymn writer says: ***“I sing because I'm happy; I sing because I'm free. For His eye is on the sparrow And I know He watches me.”***

19 ***“...See, I am doing a new thing. Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?”***

FUTURE

Isaiah 43:19 ***“...I am making a way in the desert and streams in the wasteland”***

Just as we can live in the past, we can also live in the future.

I'll be happy when...

I have a better job

I get married

I have a holiday

I clear my overdraft

No – God says be happy today for I am with you.

Our vision of the future, our destiny and our goals are important and have an influence me today. You want to provide for my family, so you work hard today. You want to be in the worship team, so you take singing lessons today. You want to be a lawyer, so you study law. You want a great marriage so don't have sex until you are married.

Discipline today brings rewards tomorrow.

Jesus ***for the joy set before him endured the cross***. His understanding of destiny enabled him to concentrate on today. And in the midst of hardship, our vision of the future carries us through. Jesus is coming back for us and is preparing a home for us for eternity – ***He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away*** (Revelation 21:4)

Habakkuk 1:5 ***“...Look at the nations and watch— and be utterly amazed. For I am going to do something in your days that you would not believe, even if you were told.”*** There are many things that Lord keeps to Himself because He holds the future.

Walk by faith and expect great things!

I am facing some issues about which I don't have any answers.

But I act on 1 Peter 5:6,7 ***Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.***

In due time, I will be exalted with the wisdom to handle these issues. Meanwhile, Its over to God. He knows the future.

Isaiah 46:10-11 ***“...Remember the former things, those of long ago; I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me. I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say: My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please.”***

God knows the future. His plans will prevail.

God makes a way, where there is no clear path.

You may feel like your life is a desert at times. I have been there as well. Nothing seems to be going right. But God make a way. Streams begin to flow over the parched landscape. Hope rises. A verse springs to life in your spirit and you know God has spoken to you. The devil is defeated in your life once again and all is well.

Remember we are on a Road of Redemption not a Path of Perfection.

It is necessary to experience the desert heat. Trials are not for ever. The come to pass – they came so they

could pass.

Do you want to be strong, firm and steadfast?

Then embrace the storms, face them head on and endure. 1 Peter 5:9,10 (paraphrased) “...**Resist the devil, stand firm in the faith... and the God of all grace... after you have suffered a little while, will HIMSELF restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast.**”

If there is no immediate solution – wait for God’s timing and leading.

It is the thoughts and direction that spring up – that enable us to pass through the desert and stay on course. As we know more of the Word of God, more can “spring up” in us as God breathes life on it and it becomes a Rhema word for us for the moment.

Isaiah 43:18-19 “...**Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing. Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the desert and streams in the wasteland.**”