

Hope: An Advent/Christmas Journey

December 27, 2020

Next Steps 2021

Welcome - What is one thing that you hope to do differently this year?

Introduction

This moment is just what we have been waiting for; finally 2020 is over and we can begin to live in 2021! When we follow Jesus, fear and worry are replaced with faith and action. Let's make 2021 different as Christians living the faith in a brand new way! 2021 is finally here! Each month of 2020 seemed to bring a new challenge that many have been waiting for the new year. Yet as followers of Jesus, we recognize that our life is short and precious.

“The days of a human life are like grass...” (Psalm 103:15)

Celebration is a year long activity, not just for the best moments of life.

1. What can you celebrate about 2020?
2. How can you take Christmas, all the hope, peace and joy, into January of 2021?

“Don't Worry, Be Happy”, title to the iconic song from Bobby McFerrin captures our desire on how we want to live. When Jesus speaks on worry, it isn't in the context of happiness, but rather on knowing that God cares deeply for us. Worry tears us down and eats away at our self-worth and value.

3. Think about your worries. Name them in order to take away their power. Which, if any, of those worries can you control? Are there action steps you could take to ease the worry?
4. Take the worries that are out of your control and rewrite them in a prayer to the Lord.
5. Instead of focusing on the worry, what opportunities do you see in the new year?

Fear is dangerous because it can prevent us from surrendering to God's preferred plans for our lives. Fear tells us lies and derails us from following God's path. The opposite of fear is faith and hope. In the celebration of Advent and Christmas we learned of a Savior who is very present and provides us the hope to live in this in between time.

6. How does having hope in Jesus ease your fears?
7. What do you need to lean on trust and hope verses your fears?

A faithful response in 2021 is to turn to positivity. Positivity is a choice and when put into action can be built like any good habit. It takes effort, faith and choosing each day to remain positive.

8. What is one thing you could do each day to build the habit of positivity in your life?
9. What scripture or phrase could become your breath prayer when you find yourself leaning in to negativity?
10. What message of Jesus in the last 5 weeks will you carry throughout an unknown 2021?

Next Steps

- Write down one fear or worry each day. Then pray: Jesus is not on the way, Jesus is here. Jesus never left me; Jesus is always with me.
- What do you need to let go of to better focus on positivity that will come during 2021?