

My First and Second Goal

My first and most important goal in this life is to know I am right with the Lord for when He soon returns. None of us live 'that long'. The second is to rejoice with those who show to be seeking the glory of God over and above themselves. While we don't portray this perfectly in the flesh, but its who we are in the spirit, according to His faithfulness. We are not content with simply talking the talk, but who strive daily to walk the walk, according to God's word. Our ongoing desire is that the most important things going on in our lives will revolve around this first and second goal.

We love the precepts of God! The bible, alone, and in its entirety is our ultimate authority in life (Joshua 1:8; Isaiah 28:10; 2 Timothy 3:16). Reading and studying the Holy Bible is the only way God speaks to us regarding the Gospel of His Son. We won't settle for anything less than His word that comes to us from, Genesis to Revelation, where nothing is subtracted, nor anything added (Duet 4:2; Re 22:18-19).

When sharing God's word, we do this from a practice of avoiding the isolation of verses from the gospel of Jesus Christ. We will not add our own ideas to His word that cannot harmonize with all of scripture. We may be extreme and narrow minded for some, when witnessing ourselves as being nothing without the Lord who is all in all. But we ought not allow ourselves to be anxious about the negative thoughts of others, as we discuss His Truth in a patient, loving and sound manner (2 Tim 2:15; Tit 2:1). If we should fail to bring His word faithfully, by His grace we ought to find a desire to be corrected, however, and through whomever it may come. Individually we find it is the Lord of the Holy Bible who shows us when to be on our hands and knees beseeching Him that we might become more faithful. As we become more like Christ, we would answer to God and not man (John 5:34).

Many of us have lived a wicked life. Regarding past sins and weaknesses, when desiring the company of the opposite gender, I had little difficulty. I wasn't the initiator mostly, but was not able to say no too many times. However, in the past fourteen years, through daily prayer and fasting, *[desiring His spiritual food more than my own way]*, the Lord has strengthened me and taught me through His word how to avoid these encounters, as well as how to conduct myself when they might occur. I've purposely denied myself sinful relationships with the opposite gender that I might see the Lord in me as I had seen Him prior to these sins; for the Lord answers prayer!

I believe it is impossible that my works could make me right with God (Ga 2:16). Rather, it's my ongoing desire that His works, ordained before the world began, will in truth show to be in me as I take up my cross to follow Him, looking to see His will being done and not my own (Romans 6:16; Ephesians 2:10).

I honestly don't know, nor do I try to know the eternal hearts of others from an election standpoint. I've only, approximately, in the past fourteen years been able to show His compassion and gentleness to all people no matter who they are. I've never been a respecter of persons, however, previously, I had been unable to get outside of my own past experiences of emotional abuses since a young child – anger, self-pity, etc. Through decades of prayer without ceasing, while being around others of like-minded beliefs, I've watched the Lord strengthen me in spiritual maturity more and more desiring my obedience to His word; as I have moved away from self to Christ. Since this journey started in the late 70's, I've stumbled several times; yet, have always found a loathing and hatred towards my sin, with an on-going desire to repent and to follow His word that remains in me.

The Lord has taught me not to judge according to the outward appearance, nor to accept the unrighteous judgments of others (Tit 2:15). I know who I am, and that my assurance and confidence come from the word of God, not from my own ability, friendships with others, or worldly connections (Ps 14:2-3; Isa 59; 1Co 6:9-11). As scripture says, I believe God looks at the heart. One of my first prayers for myself and all whom I encounter has been:

Psalm 51:10 Create in me (us) a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me (us). 11 Cast me (us) not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me (us).

This humble prayer of David shows how he was being made right with His Lord, *[from before the foundation of the world]*, though he had become a gross sinner, who would commit adultery and murder regarding another man's wife. Through Nathan, David's eyes would be opened to God's eternal mercy and love and forgiveness. As I have lived a life many times worse than David, this prayer, amongst many others is my true and honest desire before God, which I also desire for all that the Lord puts in my path, no matter who they are or what they've done. "I believe there's no sin He cannot show to have forgiven when we find His repentance, according to the scriptures".

I pray for others the way I pray for myself, seeing myself no better or worse than anyone else (Psalm 14:2-3; Rom 3:23).

Once I prayed the Lord might give me a help meet whose authority would be her Lord above herself and all others. She'd believe that the man God gave her would see the Lord as his ultimate authority above himself and all others. That the two as one flesh would love each other in the Lord. In all of this it would be the Lord who brings the two together so that they are equally yoked as one flesh in Christ. There would never be the thought of cheating, and the sun going down on their anger would not go well with them. Their God given love for one another and forgiveness would always prevail. While nothing is too hard for the Lord, yet, having been divorced, and from what I have seen in today's Christian's, I've found myself over the years digging into the idea that marriage will probably not be for me any longer, as I strive to be content with His will and not my own.

Seeing myself as being right with the Lord, while striving to faithfully witness His word, according to His word, with others who are like minded, is the most important thing to me, and is my goal for the remaining years He gives me. To God be all the Glory.