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SALVATION

If you are not a believer in Jesus Christ, or aren't sure and would like to become one, then you need to believe that Jesus Christ was and is the Son of God, that he was God who became a man, that he lived a sinless and perfect life, keeping the Law of God perfect in every way, that he kept faith perfectly, and that he was crucified on that cruel cross for your sins, mine and the entire world- he died for our sins! His death on the cross paid the penalty fully, one time for all sins that we have ever committed and that we will ever commit. He died; he went down into the bowels of the earth, even into Hell, and was raised from the dead on the third day in a resurrected, eternal body. He ascended back into heaven, was seated at the right hand of God, and is now Lord over heaven and earth. He is coming again to judge the world, to raise the dead, where he will give an eternal, resurrected, glorified body to everyone that has believed on him as their Lord and Savior, and to establish his kingdom one earth.

You come become a Christian right now as you read this, by personally placing your faith and trust in Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior; believing that he is God's only begotten Son, that he died on the cross for you and that he was raised from the dead and is now seated in heaven at the right hand of God the Father. *"Believe on the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved.." Acts 16:31a* And when you do trust Christ, and Christ alone, as your Lord and Savior, then go to God the Father in heaven in prayer and tell him so. Tell him that you have believed on his Son, thank him for his Son, and thank him for forgiving your sins and saving you! *"That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord", and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved."* Romans 10:9,10 *"For, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."* Romans 10:13 *"Therefore, being justified by faith (declared righteous), we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."* Romans 5:1

PERSONAL GOALS

Long Range Goals

These are goals that one would have for a lifetime. They mainly center around a spiritual concept.

There are many goals in life for which the Christian can go after, one of them being maturity. Paul said that he buffeted his body and did whatever was necessary that he might receive for himself the Wreath of Righteousness. 1 Cor. 9:24-27.

This wreath speaks of the attaining to that highest development of Christian's growth and maturity. It was likened to the wreath that was awarded to the runners in the Games. In the old days Zeus was their god and they had a statue of him at the end of the stadium where they ran their race. And as they ran, they kept their eyes upon the statue forgetting all else that went on around them and behind them. The only thing that mattered to the runners in the race was being first to the finish line and receiving that prized wreath. Which is the historical background surrounding the concept found in Heb.12:1, 2; "*Looking unto Jesus*".

When Paul wrote this letter in 57 A.D. the only thing that mattered to him, as he so wrote the Corinthian Church, was to press on in the Christian life that he might come to this place of absolute maturity. But in four years Paul had had a lapse in his growth in grace to the place when he went to the Temple in Jerusalem to sacrifice, Acts 21. Paul, in his desire to be a witness for God's grace and wanting to minister to the Jerusalem Church in that capacity, went along with their suggestion to go to the Temple and sacrifice and worship to demonstrate that he was really for the Law and was one of the boys.

He went against his grace norms and standards in order to be accepted by the powers that be, the crowd. For which God disciplined in prison for 4-5 yrs. While in prison Paul reflected over these things, realized where he had gone wrong, and decided to press on once again for this place of Christian Maturity and his ministry for the Lord.

The two things Paul actively practiced in prison so he could, by faith in the Lord and his Word, reach this level of maturity and ministry for Christ were: 1) Forgetting what lies behind, and 2) reaching forward to what lays ahead. Php. 3:12-14. So Paul fought back to get to that place again by an intensive intake of BD and total occupation with Christ through his word and prayer.

Did he make it? To the praise of God's grace he did, and the Lord let us know about it that we would be encouraged. Paul had not only reached his place of maturity but had gone on to absolute maturity and would receive that Wreath of Righteousness. 2 Tim. 4:6-8; Php. 3:12, 15.

Now God has written these things for our encouragement, not only to go on and set goals for ourselves life (as Paul did) but to actively go after them, and to give us the courage and faith to get up and keep going on in the race even after we have miserably failed.

Now there are many goals in life that we can go after, the desires of our own heart: Psa. 37:4. Abraham, for example, wanted to have a son more than anything, Gen. 12-17. But we need to run the race of faith and patience, that we may inherit the promises, Heb. 10:37.

Now whether you are one, who has failed so far, or one that hasn't, this same principle applies to both. Nothing else in life can matter to you more than reaching that place of Christ likeness, spiritual maturity. Paul said one thing I do and nothing else, reaching forward to what lies ahead, forgetting the failures of the past.

Which means you do not allow yourself the luxury of wallowing in guilt, remorse, self-pity, bitterness or regret? Once you've confessed your sins and failures, forget them, and move on in life toward your goals. There can be no subjective feelings, or emotionalism in this, but the clear-headed, objective thinking of relying on God's grace in Christ.

So you don't listen to what your friends think about it, you don't listen to what you think about your failures, or what Satan tells you; you just grab a hold of God's grace and move ahead and grab a hold of all the grace blessings he still has for you in life and eternity.

And regardless of what you have done and how miserably you have failed, or how old you are, you move on ahead in faith and in the Word and appropriate God's plan for your life. If you're still alive, God has a plan for your life. Find out what it is and do it.

The secret to getting to this place in life is absolute and total dedication to Christ and his word. The life of faith, grace and doctrine can be the only life you know. Nothing else is real, nothing else exists, nothing else matters. And then you start setting goals for yourself. Long-range goals and short-range ones. Pray about these things, put them in the Lord's hands, and then work towards their fulfillment with the Lord's help.

Short Range Goals

One must learn to clearly define goals, set reasonable attainable goals, pursue them and don't give up.

Spiritual

Studying Bible Doctrine.

Reading the Bible.

Memorizing Bible Verses.

Developing Prayer Life.

Learning How to Witness.
Using the Word – Everyday Living.
Practicing Grace Giving.
Resisting Satan.
Walking in the New Nature.

Physical

Working at and sticking to a feasible exercise program for you yourself.
Correcting one's diet to stay away from bad foods – sugar, coke, white breads, refined foods, pastries, etc., and adopt wholesome natural foods and vitamins.
Preventative maintenance, dental work, glasses, take care of body's defects.
Getting proper sleep each night, taking at least one day off each week, and 3-4 weeks off each year, sleep and rest from activities.

Emotional

Getting proper help to correct emotional maladjustments. Eph. 6:14.
Emotional disturbances hinder one's growth and fulfillment in life. Often as the result of not having proper childhood adjustment.
One needs to take advantage of a trained Counselor, Pastor or Psychiatrist.

Financial

Getting one's financial affairs in order, debt being one of the greater frictions and pressures in the marriage, as well as something that enslaves you.
Getting out of debt and staying out of debt can be one of the goals, to owe no man anything, get on a cash basis.
Try and pay cash for new purchases, if you can't hold off from buying.
Pay off old bills, start with smallest and work up, cut up and throw away credit cards.
Learn to live within your husband's paycheck, do without if need be; a little suffering builds character!

Education and Career

Applying yourself in your studies, but being realistic, not everyone is 'A' student material.
Pursuing higher education to accomplish your career goals.
If you're not sure what you want to be, keep studying until you find out. You won't waste any time and you'll still be advancing in life.
Study and advance toward what you want to be, not what others think you ought to do. It's your life; you do with it what you want to do.
Conform your goals to God's Plan, the perfect and wonderful way. Rom. 12:1, 2.

Social Inter-Action

Learning to develop new friends by becoming a friendly person.
Lean towards positive people & stay away from negative ones.
Develop new interests, activities; photography, painting, skiing, hiking, bridge, poetry, piano, guitar, cooking, cars, hobbies, motorcycles.
Find out what interests you, what you seem to have a natural bent toward, and learn to develop your talent. Broaden your horizons.
Developing and enhancing the family relationship.