

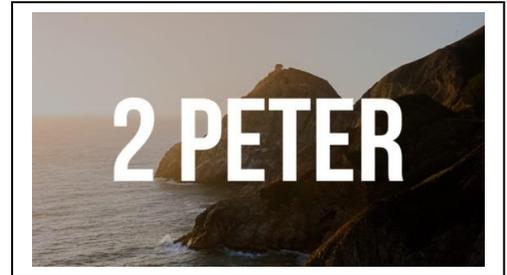
Partners in Prayer: "Everything We Need!"

Looking for the 'Son' in 2021!

January 10, 2021

Dear Partners in Prayer Team,

*"For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain."
Philippians 1:21 (NKJV)*



"His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and goodness." 2 Peter 1:3 (NIV)

Have you ever been in trouble? These two boys were notorious for causing trouble, and the principal was at his wit's end in knowing what to do with them. As he called the first boy into his office alone, the principal thought he would try to discern where the boy was spiritually, since this was a Christian school. Maybe what this little boy and his troublemaking friend really needed wasn't another round of after-school detention but a true relationship with Jesus. So as the boy walked into the office, he sat down nervously in a chair facing the stern-looking principal who asked him a question in a very serious and controlled voice: "Son, do you know where Jesus is?" At first the question didn't seem to register with the little boy, because he just stared back at the principal with a blank look on his face. The principal asked him again, this time with an even more stern tone to his voice and a bit less controlled: "Son, do you know where Jesus is?" The principal knew he struck a note of conviction in the young boy. He could see through his eyes that this little guy was feeling conviction and was swelling with tears. By now, the boy was frightened. His little heart was beating rapidly, and sweat started to run down his back. But still, he said nothing. Exasperated, the principal asked the question one more time, but this time he was very strong and let himself shout: "Son, do you know where Jesus is?" At this, the little boy jumped out of his seat, ran out of the principal's office, and sat down next to his friend with a terrified look on his face. The other boy asked, "So what did he say?" The terrified boy responded, "Jesus is missing, and they're trying to pin it on us!"

A cute story, no doubt, but seriously- how many times have you felt that Jesus is missing from the lives of others around us? You pray, but your prayers may seem unanswered. You ask but do not receive. You knock but it seems like there is one closed door after another. What area of your life is so full of uncertainty, that you strongly doubt you will not make it through? What is your greatest worry that you fear will come true? What is the besetting sin you fear will be discovered, or you wonder if you will ever gain control of? What about your personality- do you feel so blinded to; wondering if things will ever

change? What about this coming year... do you feel you will not survive? When was the last time you felt so stable, that you knew your hope and faith was planted on the "solid rock" of Jesus? If you've begun to wonder if you have everything you need to survive this year ahead, take heart, because you are in good company, the company of saints. Peter, John, and Jude all wrote their letters to saints, fellow believers who from time to time felt like God was absent, that life was out of focus or control, or that the future was uncertain. We know that the Bible teaches us that God is in control and that He is very present. In this New Year we are looking to keep our eyes upon the Son, Jesus, and His marvelous light, as we travel through this coming year of 2021. Last week I introduced our two verses for the year. I want to take a moment and remind you of those verses.

First, "Jesus, He is our everything!" So the first verse for our 2021 is:
"For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain." Philippians 1:21 (NKJV)

Just like last year's verse that really came true "as we walked by faith", I know that this year we will be saying, "Jesus is my everything, for me to live is Jesus!" I also copied other some great translations of this verse. Notice the different emphasis that this little verse gives us:

- a. Our source is Jesus: "For to me, to live is Christ [He is my source of joy, my reason to live] and to die is gain [for I will be with Him in eternity]. (Amplified Bible).
- b. All that is important comes from Jesus: "To me, the only important thing about living is Christ. And even death would be for my benefit." (ERV)
- c. Our purpose comes from Jesus: "Christ means 'everything' to me in this life, and when I die I'll have even more." (GW)
- d. And hope for Jesus: "For living to me means simply 'Christ', and if I die I should merely gain more of Him." (J. B. Phillips)

Since this verse is very easy to learn, I wanted to get our focus upon something that will help us exercise more effort.

Our second verse is to remind us that Jesus has provided everything we need to survive this coming year is: **"His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and goodness." 2 Peter 1:3 (NIV)** We are going to learn as we study 2 Peter that God is giving us everything we need to survive this year. He has provided everything we need to accept Him as our personal Lord and Savior. He has provided everything we need to live godly lives. He provides everything we need to live holy lives and get over our fleshly failures, mistakes, and mess-ups. We don't have to fear that we will never change, or ever get a handle on those areas of our lives that seem to have a "stronghold on us." He has given us every precious promise and He will make sure He is true to His Word. What promises have you claimed to get you through this year? Are you fearful that you will not have adequate financial provisions for this year? Do you know Jesus has it covered, even if you don't see it yet? Do you know that

Peter says, “He has given us His very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature, having escaped the corruption in the world caused by evil desires” (1 Peter 1:4)? The promise in essence is that the same mighty power Jesus has given us, along with all the other rich and wonderful blessings He promised, will help us. We have “everything” for victory from the lust and rottenness all around us, and gives us His promises to make us into His own character so we can know we will grow in Him. We are not surviving meagerly like a group of war-ravaged refugees waiting for Jesus to come, living off of meager rations. We have tremendous and richly lavished supplies to draw from to live for Jesus this coming year.

Here is a beginning principle for us to make sure we get everything we need- we can't survive this world alone. No matter how strong we are, we actually can't make it through the survival of this year alone trying to do church online, or grow to be everything Christ wants us to be. As we start this year, I want to bring some wonderful things our way to help us be alert for God's presence in the fellowship of other believers. Whether it's reading about D. L. Moody, George Muller, Hudson Taylor, Jonathan Edwards, or Mother Teresa, as we see the presence of God working in and through our lives, we can be greatly encouraged. This is why the writer of Hebrews admonishes all believers to be a part of a local church: “Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another- and all the more as you see the ‘Day’ approaching” (Heb. 10:25). What day is approaching? We are living in the last days. The more we gather at church with fellow believers in small groups, worship services, and genuine friendships, the more we will experience everything of God's presence in our lives. We must contend for the faith. Last week several asked me to copy this wonderful reminder of living for Christ:

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“IT DOESN'T MAKE SENSE...

- THAT PEOPLE WHO DO NOT ENJOY GOING TO CHURCH ON EARTH THINK THEY WILL BE HAPPY IN HEAVEN.
- THAT PEOPLE WHO DO NOT GO TO GOD'S HOUSE ON EARTH WANT A MANSION PREPARED BY GOD IN HEAVEN.
- THAT PEOPLE WHO DO NOT SERVE THE LORD AS PART OF GOD'S PROGRAM ON EARTH (THE CHURCH) EXPECTS TO HAVE A REWARD IN HEAVEN.
- THAT PEOPLE WHO ARE UNCOMFORTABLE BEING WITH GOD'S PEOPLE ON EARTH WANT TO SPEND ETERNITY WITH THEM IN HEAVEN.

What is the point? We need to get back to church with our church family. Make it our greatest prayer that we see people return. So what about you? What do you need most right now? Enough money to pay the bills? Enough

strength to finish your work? Enough friends to provide companionship? Enough time to complete your assignment? Enough patience to put up with a difficult person? God knows how to give us everything we need. He delights in providing for us! The Living Bible paraphrase of Psalm 23:1 says, "Because the Lord is my Shepherd, I have everything I need!" This is the broad theme of our study. As we work our way and pray our way through this New Year, we are in a world filled with pressure. The most confident people are the ones who realize God has given us *everything we need*. Even more, as we study and pray through this wonderful book of 2 Peter, you'll find *Jesus is everything you need*. I don't want to pressure you, but what are you waiting for? Is life getting easier? No? Then let's get started!

Pray with me:

"Faithful God, we come to You today as deeply forgetful people. You have been so much better to us than we deserve, faithfully fulfilling Your commitment to give us good things in Christ. Yet we quickly forget all the wonderful gifts and don't claim the precious promises of Your Word. Jesus, thank You for remembering the truth faithfully on our behalf and giving us everything we need for living a godly and holy life. Help us cherish You and Your unchanging character. Help us hope in You in the midst of our continuing weakness. Thank You, Jesus, that You continue to advocate our cause as our heavenly High Priest. We have no other hope, nor do we need one. Holy Spirit, we need Your power at work in us daily. Help us to find confidence in Jesus. Help us pray and expect to receive everything we need today, and tomorrow, and the following days this year. Open our lips to join in praise of our joyful hope in Christ, and find strong confidence as we look forward to the triumphant coming of our heavenly King. Amen."



**Knowing we have everything to start this year,
Pastor Corvin <><**

*Hymn: "I've found a friend in Jesus, He's 'everything' to me,
He's the fairest of ten thousand to my soul;
He's the lily of the valley, in Him alone I see
All I need to cleanse and make me fully whole.
In sorrow He's my comfort, in trouble He's my stay,
He tells me every care on Him to roll:
He's the lily of the valley, the Bright and Morning Star,
He's the fairest of ten thousand to my soul."
... Charles W. Fry (1881)*