

The Lily Pad

“I am a rose of Sharon, a lily of the valleys.” Solomon 2:1



BE WORRY FREE - IN 2017

I start 2017 with a great deal of excitement and hope! I believe the year ahead holds a lot of exciting developments for us as a church; I really sense that the Lord is with us and that we have a momentum generated by the Holy Spirit.

The turn of another year signals the passage of time and reminds us that we live within the time/space limitations set by God. Thousands of years ago the boundaries of life on earth was stated in Psalms 139:16: *“but with your own eyes you saw my body being formed. Even before I was born, you had written in your book everything I would do.”*

No one has an unlimited amount of time in his or her account of life. Since everyone has a finite amount of time to spend, on what should it be spent? Here are a few ideas:

- Trust God for what you cannot see.
- Maintain a regular prayer time each day.
- Read through the Bible in 2017.
- Make practical plans to show love to your neighbors.
- Release someone who hurt you from his or her wrongdoing and tell them so.
- Forgive yourself and don't turn back for another look.
- Choose to be thankful in every circumstance.
- Take a risk and learn something new.
- Keep a journal.

What will the New Year bring to your front door? What joys and challenges await you in 2017? Will this be a pivotal year with exciting landscapes to explore? Or will 2017 be another year of sameness and obscurity? Will you meet a new lifelong friend or lose one? Will investments succeed beyond your wildest dreams or will meager fortune be ravished by hard economic times? Will you discover a hidden strength that propels you into a new direction or will you experience lessons of failure that will temper your heart?

The answers to these and many more questions remain a mystery still to be unraveled in the scroll of God's plan for your life. Yet, Jesus provides some great advice for us:

“I tell you not to worry about your life. Don't worry about having something to eat, drink, or wear. Isn't life more than food or clothing? Look at the birds in the sky! They don't plant or harvest. They don't even store grain in barns. Yet your Father in heaven takes care of them. Aren't you worth more than birds?”

Can worry make you live longer? Why worry about clothes? Look how the wild flowers grow. They don't work hard to make their clothes. But I tell you that Solomon with all his wealth[f] wasn't as well clothed as one of them. God gives such beauty to everything that grows in the fields, even though it is here today and thrown into a fire tomorrow. He will surely do even more for you! Why do you have such little faith?

Don't worry and ask yourselves, "Will we have anything to eat? Will we have anything to drink? Will we have any clothes to wear?" Only people who don't know God are always worrying about such things. Your Father in heaven knows that you need all of these. But more than anything else, put God's work first and do what he wants. Then the other things will be yours as well.

Don't worry about tomorrow. It will take care of itself. You have enough to worry about today. Matthew 6: 25-34

The worry-free life Jesus spoke of does not remove our responsibility to work hard, be diligent, value ingenuity, and remain patient. Nor does Jesus' promise say, "Void during crisis." What Jesus tells us is that we are "more important" and "more valuable" to God than anything that could possibly worry us.

Don't let the silent thief of worry claim 2017! Place your faith in God who considers you more valuable and more important than anything you could ever imagine or worry about.

An optimist stays up until midnight to see the New Year in. A pessimist stays up to make sure the old year leaves. Let us be forward thinkers who are filled with hope because we know the secret of Romans 8:28: *"We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose."*

Expect a glorious 2017! Martin and I thank you for your kindness, support, and prayers. We love each of you and may God's richest blessing be bestowed unto all of you. In the joyous name of **JESUS!**

Pastor Clarissa & Martin

*May the peace and hope
of the New Year be with you
now and in the days ahead*



"It takes more than a busy church, a friendly church, or even an evangelical church to impact a community for Christ. It must be a church ablaze, led by leaders who are ablaze for God." Wesley L. Duewel