

4 Blessings a Jubilee Year Brings You in 2020

December 28 marks the most significant date in my life. On this date in 1969 I was born again and began the adventure of a fresh start in life.

Previously I was spiritually lost as a drummer for the Cleveland rock group, The Lost Souls. We're not in the "Rock-n-Roll Hall of Fame," but Joe Walsh and the James Gang, Phil Keaggy and Glass Harp, Alice Cooper, the Outsiders and Eric Carmen were all locals as I departed the music scene with my newfound freedom in Christ.

The Bible speaks of a Year of Jubilee (Lev. 25 and 27) every 50 years signifying the opportunity to start over, be liberated from enslavement and gain economic blessing. It's what Jesus declared upon launching His ministry (Luke 4:18-19) and what I'm celebrating five decades after He "brought me out of darkness into His marvelous light" (1 Pet. 2:9).

The early Christian colonists put a passage from Leviticus 25 on the Liberty Bell: "Proclaim Liberty Throughout All the Land Unto All the Inhabitants thereof..." (v. 10). They intended to lay hold of God's promises in the New World and enjoy liberty and prosperity as God's covenant-keeping people.

As Naomi had lost hope for her future and family described in the book of Ruth, she entered a Jubilee year of renewed blessings, returned to her roots, was reunited with her family and enjoyed a wonderful inheritance instead of horrible hardship.

Entering 2020, are you ready to have a fresh start and experience some Jubilee Year blessings I'm honored to share with you and your family? Do you desire fruitfulness and yearn for a breakthrough? Have you learned the lessons God intended

from mistakes and setbacks to now “set your face like a flint” to experience more of the abundant life by faith and obedience in the year ahead?

Celebrating my 50th Year of Jubilee knowing “It is more blessed to give than to receive” (Acts 20:35), let me encourage you with four gifts in the form of inspirational exhortations, helpful recommendations and some practical resources. Reflecting on the goodness of God in my life over 50 years, it’s a privilege to pass along these blessings to you.

4 Timely Tips and Ready Resources

- 1. Get better organized.** “For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace... Let all things be done decently and in order” (1 Cor. 14:33a, 40).

Starting the new year is an excellent opportunity to make necessary changes to live a more peaceful life. Determine to overcome the tyranny of the urgent, set priorities and declutter. Remind yourself regularly with this mantra: “Less clutter, more calm.”

Months ago I devoted a number of days to clearing out accumulated clutter in my study and it’s made all the difference in the world! Whether it’s your kitchen, closets, a desk, your study or garage, don’t procrastinate any longer but tackle the task.

Let the Good Shepherd guide you in recalibrating your life for less stress.

“Psalm 23 Antithesis” by M. Hornok is a gift in the form of a poem that I give to motivate you.

The clock is my dictator, I shall not rest. It makes me lie down only when exhausted. It leads me to deep depression. It hounds my soul. It leads me in circles of frenzy for

activity's sake. Even though I run frantically from task to task, I will never get it all done. For my ideal is with me. Deadlines and my need for approval, they drive me. They demand performance from me, beyond the limits of my schedule. They anoint my head with migraines. My in-basket overflows. Surely fatigue and time pressure shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the bounds of frustration forever.

Not a description of you anymore. Go for it!

2. **Pursue personal growth.** “Do you not know that all those who run in a race run, but one receives the prize? So run, that you may obtain it” (1 Cor. 9:24).

For the glory of God and the advancement of His Kingdom, it's important we stay committed to personal growth. Let me offer you the gift of encouragement to do something radical: Set aside some special time to evaluate areas of your life and ask God what He might have you do differently. Give yourself permission to do what Jesus told His disciples, “Come away by yourselves to a remote place and rest a while” (Mark 6:31).

Let me gift you with 10 benefits you'll derive from a commitment to personal growth. By so doing you will:

1. Honor God.
2. Gain hope.
3. Find focus.
4. Create momentum.
5. Increase fruitfulness.
6. Expand influence.
7. Extend life.
8. Improve sleep.
9. Draw encouragement.
10. Inspire others.

Are you long overdue to take a day off for solitude and

silence to simply hear God's still, small voice for your life?

Make sure in your areas of growth you include your health! Our "body is the temple of the Holy Spirit... Therefore glorify God in your body..." (1 Cor. 6:19-20). God wants us to live long and have maximum impact by temple maintenance!

John Wesley and George Whitfield were Christian leaders in the 1700s. Whitfield neglected his health while Wesley was devoted to it. Whitfield died at 58. Wesley lived till 88. The latter had 30 more years of fruitful ministry.

Dr. Oz shared a recent study of over 190,000 people showing we can reduce dementia risk by 60% irrespective of genetic background, simply by making five basic lifestyle changes: 1) Healthy food choices and portion control; 2) regular exercise; 3) engagement in cognitively stimulating activities; 4) avoiding tobacco exposure and 5) moderate alcohol intake.

Receive my gift to you of this exhortation for a healthier, more productive and even more attractive you this year.

3. Recognize divine appointments.

"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, so that we should walk in them" (Eph. 2:10).

Make a quality decision that you will be intentional like Jesus in 2020 "to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10). Not only is there "more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents" (Luke 15:7), but you'll experience "joy unspeakable" by proactively sharing your faith consistently, relationally, naturally and enjoyably.

I'm a Christian today because an inner-city black brother gave me a ride when my car broke down, invited me to his church service and gave me a leaflet that God used to draw me to Himself.

Now simply click on “Loving Lifestyle Evangelism,” which is a free gift to help you. You’ll have five 20-minute videos to equip and inspire you! Engage for 100 minutes spread over five days and your life will be changed and you’ll be confident in sharing your faith.

4. Become informed influencers.

“Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; *make the most of every opportunity*. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, *so that you may know how to answer everyone*” (Col. 4:5-6, NIV). [emphasis mine]

Deception abounds in our culture. Biblical illiteracy is rampant. News commentators, celebrities, sports figures and politicians propagandize unsuspecting masses. “By smooth talk and flattery they deceive the minds of naïve people” (Rom. 16:18b).

It’s time for Christians to rise to the occasion to counter the lies by winsomely and confidently communicating truth!

Again I offer you a free gift instantly available on YouTube called the “Bullseye Challenge”: 30 compelling three-minute videos to prepare you to engage with people boldly and from a biblically informed worldview on the hot button issues of our day!

You’ll make a difference in people’s lives and rescue them from deception on issues like marijuana, abortion, homosexuality, gay marriage, immigration, transgenderism, Islam, living together and social justice to name some of the issues covered.

Here’s the deal: Amidst the encroaching darkness and deception, 2020 gives you a tremendous opportunity for a new start and to do exploits! Celebrating my Year of Jubilee, I’m passionate to prepare you to be an impact player making a difference for the harvest at the end of the age.

“Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever” (Dan. 12:3).