GOD’S BUCKET LIST” 1 Peter 4:7-11 October 8, 2022 Rev. Alpha Goto

Now that Covid is down, we’re all eager to get back normal. But the truth is there is no normal anymore. Maybe that’s a good thing. It’s a wake-up call. Life is fragile, it can be cut short at any moment. And things that we tend to take for granted (family, friends, God) we gain new appreciation for. Because the truth is, our time IS limited. That’s why as some people get older, they start a “Bucket list” of things they want to do, etc. I have a Bucket List and have already accomplished a few: did an old school hang ten, ate beluga osetra caviar, I took a 21 day road trip on Route 66. What would be on your Bucket list? If you knew you only had one year to live, what would you do?

1 Peter 4:7–8: ***“The end of all things is near. Therefore be alert and of sober mind so that you may pray. Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins...***

Peter puts it this way and expands on the idea of the Bucket List. In v. 7:“The end of all things is near.” In other words: Time is of the Essence. There are a lot of things that we can put off until tomorrow that are no big deal. And there’s a lot of that aren’t worth us spending ANY time on. But there are some things in life that are far too important to put off... because for you or someone close to you- tomorrow may never come.

Peter goes on to say that because time is of the essence, we ought be ***“alert & of sober mind.”*** To be ***“alert”*** means to be aware, to recognize what’s going on around you. Someone who is alert is ready to act, respond at a moments notice.

Then Peter says we are to be ***“of sober mind”***. This is not sombre, sad or without joy, but sober minded. It means to be in control of one’s thoughts, not given to irrational thought or mental confusion. For Peter, that comes as an result seeing life from God’s point view via Scripture.

So Peter says: because time is of the essence, we ought to be alert (aware & ready to respond) and we are to be sober minded: taking God’s word to heart, believing that it’s true and living it out in our lives.

Now WHY should we be alert & sober-minded? ***“So that you may pray.”*** This is not so much prayer as in reciting a religious poem, but expressing truth of our hearts & minds to God and being in relationship and close communion w God. So that: ***“Above all, love each other deeply”***

Jesus did NOT come to earth just so we could run an event called “church” on Sundays. As important as it us for us to gather for worship, Jesus died, rose & He calls you to be His, for something more than that. If doors of the church are where your faith begins and ends, you are missing the core of the Christian lifestyle.

You see, God has Bucket List of His own, if you will. Only God’s Bucket List is not filled w things that He wants to do before He dies, God’s Bucket List is filled with things that He wants YOU to experience and do in your life before YOU die.

You were created for a reason: to fulfill G’s purposes in your life. Here are few key aspects of God’s Bucket List for you & me (abridged from “Purpose Driven Life” by Rick Warren)

#1- You were CREATED for ministry!

Ephesians 2:10: ***“For we are what He has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life.”***

The ministry for which you were created is not something we put on and take off, as we go in and out of church like a coat. It’s meant by ***“our way of life”-*** Christ living in you... overflowing into everything you do, wherever you are. You are an “Ambassador of Christ” to everyone you meet. You’ve been created for this ministry.

#2– You’ve been GIFTED for ministry!

Sometimes people are reluctant to engage in ministry because they think they have nothing to offer. But 1 Corinthians 7:7 says: ***“Each of you has your own gift from God.”***

The truth is each one of us is a unique creation. There’s no one else just like you. Each one of us has different

skills, abilities and passions given in different measure and we are also given spiritual gifts to help us in the

ministry that God has given to us.

#3– You’ve been CALLED to ministry!

Paul writes, Ephesians 4:1: ***“I urge you to live a life worthy of the callng you have received.”***

& Peter in 1 Peter 2:9 expands on that & says your calling is this... ***“You are chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of Him Who called you out of darkness into His wonderful light.”***

That calling upon your life is that you are to declare God’s love and His splendor to the world...

and accomplish the things God has called you to.

#4– You’ve been AUTHORIZED for ministry!

Matthew 28:18–20: ***“Then Jesus came to them and said, ‘All authority in heaven & on earth has been given to Me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in name of Father and of Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.’”***

By what authority do we minister? By authority granted to us in Jesus. You are created for it, equipped for it and you are given the authority to live it out wherever you are.

#5– You’re ACCOUNTABLE for your ministry!

Romans 14:1: ***“So then, each of us will give account of ourselves to God.”***

Colossians 4:17: ***“See to it that you complete the ministry you have received in The Lord.”***

All of this takes diligence, faithfulness, surrender. Most of all, it requires complete change in your world view in order to see and understand God’s calling. Remember “sober mind”- having God’s point of view via Scriptures. You need that to accomplish God’s purposes for you.

The things on God’s Bucket List are meant for us to do, will not happen by accident nor will they happen just by our own best intentions or efforts. They will happen by choosing to live out the Word of God as we see the world around us through God’s eyes and drawing upon His power to help us accomplish that which God calls us to. Remember: we are of God and God wants to use us.

There was a woman who had finished her shopping and went to her car. When she got there, there were four men in it. She dropped her shopping bags, drew a handgun (hmm... must be Texas). She screamed: “I have a gun! and I know how to use it! Get out of the car!” The men got out and ran like crazy. The woman, still shaking, put her groceries in the car and got in to drive home.

But no matter how hard she tried, she could not get her key into the ignition. It suddenly dawned on her- it was not her car. It looked like hers, but her car was parked four spaces over!

She took her grocery bags and put them back n her own car and drove to the police station to report what happened. She was telling story when the desk sergeant nearly fell off his chair laughing. He pointed to other end of counter- where four men were reporting a carjacking by “a wild woman with thick glasses & curly hair, less than 5’ tall, & carrying large handgun”.

No charges were filed.

You see, she thought it was her car, and she had right to do what she did to those men who were in it.But the car really belonged to someone else.

We think this world belongs to US & WE can do what we want w people in it. But this world & people in it- belong to God. We belong to God. And we are appointed as stewards, who have been given great responsibility until The True Owner returns.

It is important is be faithful and not forgetful all of these important truths. Remember who you are. Remember Whose you are. Remember what we are created to do. In all this, Prayer is Essential! We need keep talking to God, listening to God, doing what God tells us!

PRAYER: God, we thank You for the hope & life we have in Jesus. God, we thank You for the Cross– for forgiveness of sins and peace with You. We thank You for then empty tomb and risen Lord Who will 1 day come in final victory. May we be reminded of all blessings we have in Christ and of His love that made it all possible.

Amen.