10 January 2024

Dear Praying Partners,

Happy New Year. I trust you had an enjoyable Christmas celebration and enter 2024, trusting the LORD to return or let you ***do more than ever before in 2024****.* That accurately represents our goals for the year. I have chosen “…a time to get and a time to lose…” as our theme. I felt let of the LORD to encourage the people with ***let’s get***: closer to God, godly attitudes, associates and actions, one choice at a time, let’s ask God to help us make them habits. AMEN. ***Let’s lose:*** ungodly actions, attitudes and associates. Let’s see how close to God we can be while remaining culturally effective.

That doesn’t suggest that we compromise – not at all. Rather, it is to overtly state it takes a minimum of two things to reach the world for Christ. First, it requires a changed life #2Corinthians5:17. Also, it requires that we engage the world. How can we reach those whose lives we never touch, with whom we never talk!

Let me encourage you with what the LORD is doing at Heritage right now. We see constant Hunger, Hope, Happiness and Help. Hunger for God and His Word. Nearly every day, I receive a text, call or email asking me to help one member or another understand some certain portion of Scripture. We have a church texting thread. More mature saints assisting the less mature to grow in grace and knowledge. We have a few people who have surrendered to serve God in one capacity or another. Those are meeting on Tuesdays in addition to our other services for what I call intense discipleship. Our first meeting of ManChurch of 2024 had a larger than normal attendance and great participation. The *Women of the Word* picks up this week.

We see hope. There’s the hope for revival or rapture. Folks are tuned in and really taking in God’s Word. I have had liberty and seemingly the entire congregation’s attention – even when I went over customary service lengths. We have had four record high attendances in the last few months. Our high attendance for 2023 was north of eighty people. God is building His Church here; we are thankful to be a small part of that.

We see happiness: Folks stay after church, sometimes for absolutely hours fellowshipping and talking. Folks politely admonish if I stop a service “for the sake of time.” A merry heart doeth good like a medicine. There is laughter and joy amongst adults and children alike. It’s pleasant to get messages like: “My daughter woke up singing the song she learned on Wednesday.” “My daughter asked to go somewhere because we haven’t left the house in days. I said, ‘We went to church yesterday, dear.’ Church is just part of our home, Momma.”

Finally, we see help. We have seen 20 people saved and baptized. We have seen marriages grow closer. We have seen answered prayer. God and His people are helping one another. His Name is glorified. ***We just want to see Him let us do more than ever before in 2024***. “A time to get and a time to lose.”

Striving to Stay SemperFi for the Savior,

John Hallman

I Cor. 1:26-29