

I. INTRODUCTION.

-  A. Scripture text: **2Corinthians 5:6-10**.
Therefore, being always of good courage, and knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord-- [7] for we walk by faith, not by sight-- [8] we are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord. [9] Therefore also we have as our ambition, whether at home or absent, to be pleasing to Him. [10] For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.
-  B. Og Mandino is a motivational speaker and writer. He believes that the Bible is the greatest self-help book ever written.
- C. In one of his books, *The Greatest Salesman in the World* he gives 10 rules of conduct to be successful. All of these principles can be found in the NT.

II. FIRST: TODAY, I WILL BEGIN A NEW LIFE.

-  A. Practically speaking, the only difference between those who have succeeded and those who have failed lies in their attitude.
- B. We must cultivate new thought patterns as did Paul:
 1. Forget what lies behind (Phil. 3:13).
Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of *it* yet; but one thing *I do*: forgetting what *lies* behind and reaching forward to what *lies* ahead,
 2. Realize you are a new creature (2Cor. 5:17).
Therefore if any man is in Christ, *he is* a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.
 3. Re-created in X for good works (Eph. 2:10).
For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.
 4. Never defeated (2Cor. 4:7-10).
But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the surpassing greatness of the power may be of God and not from ourselves; [8] *we are* afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing; [9] persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; [10] always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body.
- C. "Today is the first day of the rest of your life." Think of the power of God's forgiveness of your past and the possibilities of the future!

III. SECOND: I WILL GREET THE DAY WITH LOVE IN MY HEART.

-  A. Paul said that "Love never fails." What a motto to greet each day; you have a strategy that will work no matter what happens!
- B. Look again at 1Cor. 13:1-8:
 1. All ABILITY TO DO fails without love (1Cor. 13:1).
If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.
 2. All KNOWLEDGE TO THINK fails without love (1Cor. 13:2).
And if I have *the gift of prophecy*, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.
 3. All WEALTH TO SPEND does not avail without love (1Cor. 13:3).
And if I give all my possessions to feed *the poor*, and if I deliver my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing.
 4. All bitterness and wrath will be replaced with love (1Cor. 13:4-8a).
Love is patient, love is kind, *and* is not jealous; love does not brag *and* is not arrogant, [5] does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong *suffered*, [6] does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; [7] bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. [8] Love never fails;

- C. People will not see your faults if you show fervent love in everything you do (1Pet. 4:8).
Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins.

IV. **THIRD: I WILL PERSIST UNTIL I SUCCEED.**

-  A. Jesus said, “By your perseverance you will win your souls” (Lk. 21:19).
- B. Mandino writes:
1. The prizes of life are at the end of each journey, not near the beginning; and it is not given to me to know how many steps are necessary to reach my goal.
 2. I will never consider defeat and I will remove from my vocabulary such words and phrases as quit, cannot, unable, out of the question, impossible, improbable, failure, unworkable, hopeless, and retreat; for they are the words of fools.
- C. We must remain faithful to win the crown of life:
1. Remain faithful unto death (Rev. 2:10).
‘Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.
 2. Fought, finished, and kept (2Tim. 4:7,8).
I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; [8] in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.
 3. As long as you practice (2Pet. 1:10,11).
Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble; [11] for in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you.
- D. The only way you can fail with Jesus is when you quit.

V. **FOURTH: I AM GOD'S GREATEST MIRACLE.**

-  A. The greatest thing that can happen in your life is becoming a child of God—a Xian. That is the greatest “miracle” of all.
- B. The blessings due a Xian are fantastic:
1. All physical blessings are assured (Mt. 6:33).
“But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you.
 2. All past sins are forgiven (Col. 1:13,14).
For He delivered us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, [14] in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.
 3. You are a member of the church (Ac. 2:47).
praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved.
 4. Access to God’s throne room in prayer (1Pet. 3:12; Heb. 4:16).
(Heb 4:16) Let us therefore draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need.
(1Pet 3:12) “FOR THE EYES OF THE LORD ARE UPON THE RIGHTEOUS, AND HIS EARS ATTEND TO THEIR PRAYER, BUT THE FACE OF THE LORD IS AGAINST THOSE WHO DO EVIL.”
 5. You have the hope of eternal life (1Jn. 5:11).
And the witness is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.
- C. You have great value, God loved you enough to send X to die (Jn. 3:16).
“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.

VI. **FIFTH: I WILL LIVE THIS DAY AS IF IT'S MY LAST.**

-  A. Paul only knew 2 days—today, and the day. Paul forgot the past, he didn’t worry about the future, but lived for today in preparation for the day.

- B. Use each day to its fullest:
1. Be careful how you walk for the days are evil (Eph. 5:16).
making the most of your time, because the days are evil.
 2. Realize that evil days are coming (2Tim. 3:1,13).
(2Tim 3:1) But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come.
(2Tim 3:13) But evil men and impostors will proceed *from bad* to worse, deceiving and being deceived.
 3. Encourage today and every day (Heb. 3:12,13).
Take care, brethren, lest there should be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart, in falling away from the living God. [13] But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is *still* called "Today," lest any one of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.
 4. Be a disciple every day (Lk. 9:23).
And He was saying to *them* all, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.
 5. God's longsuffering is salvation (2Pet. 2:9,15).
(2Pet 2:9) *then* the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from temptation, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgment,
(2Pet 2:15) forsaking the right way they have gone astray, having followed the way of Balaam, the *son* of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness,
- C. Make time each day for the important things; your spouse, your kids, your friends, your God.
- D. Time is your most precious commodity (you're running out of it) invest it wisely.

VII. CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.



- A. Five new habits:
1. Today, I Will Begin a New Life.
 2. Today, I Will Greet the Day with Love in My Heart.
 3. Today, I Will Persist Until I Succeed.
 4. I Am God's Greatest Miracle.
 5. I Will Live This Day as if It is My Last.
- B. Are you doing these things? Will you begin to do them today?
- C. Bad habits are hard to break; good habits are hard to keep. With God's help you can do it.
- D. The best habit is to know Jesus and serve Him. Will you obey His voice and make Him your Savior and Lord?
- E. Plan of salvation for non-Xians; erring Xians.