

A Note from Pastor Wendy 21

I have missed sharing with you during the last two weeks. When Russ' Mother passed away a few weeks ago on August 29th we became occupied with settling her affairs. We never seem to be ready for our parents to leave our earthly family.

Many of you may have experienced the task of sorting and packing your parent's belongings. Some things that you discover bring back memories that make you cry. Some things provide wonderful memories of joy that you share with your family—the things you find may even make you laugh or wonder how you could never have known those things about your parents.

As we have been going through this process, we have found certificates of their achievements in life; college yearbooks; photos of them when they first met; photos of relatives and friends from long ago; photos of their 50th and 60th anniversaries and Alice's surprise 90th birthday party; photos and souvenirs from their world travels. We even found clothes and a toy tractor that was Russell's when he was little. There were teapots, fine china, nutcrackers, trains and collector mugs galore and so much more.

All these things people collect over their lifetime, some as gifts, some they obtain for themselves. It is something we all tend to do to bring us pleasure and fulfillment in life.

There is nothing wrong with this; however, I got to thinking about how all these items accumulate and take up a lot of room in our lives. When parents are gone, it is the children who are left with the stuff of the parent's memories and the hard decisions about what to do with those items. This is not all bad, but it does take a lot of time and can bring a lot of stress to those left behind.

This also made me think about our spiritual lives. Do we spend as much time collecting and storing God's Word and promises as we do to accumulate our worldly possessions? It is more important for us to store God's Words in our hearts so that we can grow in the wisdom and stature of Jesus Christ. God's Word is what gives us the strength to get through our toughest storms in life. His Word protects us and guides us as we move out in faith to serve others and to fulfill His purpose in our lives.

When we focus on our personal self-fulfillment, it is so easy to allow things to accumulate in our lives that prohibit us from serving God and living the Christian life full of kindness and love for others. What are you allowing to accumulate in your life? Are you allowing them to stand in the way of your being the servant God called you to be?

This is a good time to evaluate what your priorities in life are going to be. Are you satisfied to accumulate worldly possessions and spend your whole time keeping busy with everything else in the world so that you do not have time for serving God? God created you and placed you here for a purpose. It is your job to find that purpose and to serve God fulfilling that purpose. God is calling us during this time of pandemic to Let go of the "old". We cannot receive what is "new" when we are holding tightly to the old things in our life, the old traditions. God says, "I know the plans I have for you." We need to let go of the old things cluttering our lives and be ready to move forward to freedom; new habits; and a new heart for God.

Let us each spend time to meditate in God's Word, accumulate the truth of God's messages in our hearts, then live it daily. Tell others that God loves them not only with your words you speak but show them in the way you live your life and in the words you say. Live your life by what you profess to believe in God, not by what the world tells you to say, or believe. Read, Fast and Pray. If you do this daily, your life will change—the way God wants you to change.

I pray for you and ask God's love and direction for your life as you seek His guidance and transformation in your lives. Let us loosen our grip on the things filling our lives that keep us from moving forward to the newness of life God has for us. May we release our old expectations so we can receive what we have never known before. God is ready to show us His plan, and our new way of life. Are you ready to let God show His way?

God bless, Pastor Wendy Gunn