
LET GOD USE YOU!

Life, New Year's and What's truly Important

1. NOAH WAS AVAILABLE:

Key Verse: *"Noah did everything just as God commanded him."* (Genesis 6:22) Noah's story highlights the importance of being available for God's purposes. At a time when the world was consumed by sin and corruption, Noah stood out because he listened to God. When called to build the ark, Noah made himself available despite the ridicule he likely faced. His obedience saved not only his family but also preserved creation for God's redemptive plan.

Key Verse: "Noah did everything just as God commanded him." (Genesis 6:22)

Historical Context: In Noah's time, the world was described as corrupt and filled with violence (Genesis 6:11). His obedience stood out as he lived in a pre-flood era where God's judgment was distant and unimaginable. Building the ark required total dependence on God, as it was a task unlike anything anyone had ever attempted.

Metaphor: Being available to God is like having an open-door policy with Him. Just as Noah opened his heart to God's instructions, we must leave room in our busy lives for God to come in and guide us. Availability is the foundation upon which God builds His purpose.

Supporting Characters:

- Samuel: A young boy who didn't know God's voice initially but remained available, allowing God to shape Israel's future.
- Mary: Despite her youth and social status, Mary's availability brought the Savior into the world.

Other Examples:

- Samuel (1 Samuel 3:10): As a young boy, Samuel answered God's call by saying, "Speak, for your servant is listening." His availability allowed God to use him as a prophet.
- Mary (Luke 1:38): Mary's response to the angel, "I am the Lord's servant," shows her willingness to let God use her to bring the Savior into the world.

Application for Today:

- Are you too busy for God?
- Make availability a priority this year—whether through daily prayer, volunteering, or simply saying, **"Here I am, Lord."**

2. GOD USES PEOPLE WHO DARE TO BE DIFFERENT

Key Verse: *"Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind."* (Romans 12:2) Noah dared to be different in a world filled with wickedness. He lived righteously and blamelessly, standing out because of his faith and trust in God (Genesis 6:9). His willingness to be set apart allowed God to use him for His divine purpose.

Historical Context: Noah lived in a culture of widespread moral decay, yet he dared to follow God. He faced mockery and rejection but remained faithful, demonstrating that daring to be different often comes with opposition.

Metaphor: Standing out for God is like a lighthouse in a storm. The light may seem small compared to the raging waves, but it is essential for guiding others and staying true to its purpose.

Other Examples:

- **Daniel** (Daniel 6:10): Daniel dared to pray openly to God despite the king's decree, trusting God's power over human authority.
- **John the Baptist** (Matthew 3:4-6): John's life and message were countercultural, preparing the way for Jesus and calling people to repentance.

Supporting Characters:

- **Daniel:** His refusal to stop praying despite the lion's den threat exemplifies standing firm in faith.
- **John the Baptist:** He boldly proclaimed repentance, paving the way for Jesus, despite criticism and eventual imprisonment.

Application for Today:

- In a world where societal pressures encourage compromise, are you willing to stand firm in your faith?
- Resolve to live counter-culturally, guided by God's Word, even when it's not popular.

3. GOD USES PEOPLE WHO FOLLOW HIM COMPLETELY

Key Verse: *"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding."* (Proverbs 3:5)
Noah followed God completely, even when the task seemed impossible. Building an ark on dry land, gathering animals, and preparing for a flood when there was no sign of rain required total faith. Noah's complete trust in God's plan was rewarded with salvation.

Historical Context: Noah's complete obedience required radical faith. Without modern tools, materials, or understanding, Noah followed God's precise instructions to build the ark, showcasing his complete trust.

Metaphor: Following God completely is like a GPS for life. Even when the path seems unclear, trusting the directions ensures you'll reach the destination. Straying from God's path, however, leads to unnecessary detours and delays.

Supporting Characters:

- **Abraham:** He left his homeland and later trusted God with Isaac, demonstrating unwavering faith.
- **Peter:** Walking on water required Peter to completely focus on Jesus, even as the storm raged around him.

Other Examples:

- **Abraham** (Genesis 12:1-4): Abraham followed God's call to leave his homeland, trusting God's promise to make him a great nation.
- **Peter** (Matthew 14:29): Peter followed Jesus completely when he stepped out of the boat to walk on water, demonstrating faith even in the face of fear.

Application for Today:

- Are there areas in your life where you're still holding back from God?
- Trust God fully with your plans, relationships, and challenges this year.

4. GOD USES PEOPLE WHO NEVER GIVE UP

Key Verse: *"Let us not grow weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up."* (Galatians 6:9) Noah's perseverance is evident in his 120 years of building the ark while enduring mockery and isolation. His unwavering commitment to God's mission demonstrates the importance of endurance in faith.

Historical Context: Building the ark wasn't a short-term project. Scholars estimate that it may have taken Noah up to 120 years to complete it. Despite the enormity of the task and the ridicule of others, Noah pressed on.

Metaphor: Perseverance is like planting seeds in rocky soil. At first, progress may seem slow or impossible, but with time, care, and faith, growth will happen.

Other Examples:

- **Job** (Job 1:20-22): Job remained faithful to God even in the face of immense suffering, trusting that God's purpose would prevail.
- **Paul** (2 Timothy 4:7): Paul's life was marked by hardships, but he never gave up on spreading the Gospel, ultimately saying, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith."

Application for Today:

- When challenges arise, remember Noah's perseverance. God calls us to be faithful, even when the reward seems far away.
- Trust that God sees your faithfulness and will bless your efforts in His time.

Supporting Characters:

- **Job:** He endured great suffering without losing his faith in God.
- **Paul:** Despite beatings, shipwrecks, and imprisonment, Paul never gave up sharing the Gospel.

GOSPEL MESSAGE: JESUS—THE ULTIMATE EXAMPLE

All these biblical characters point us to Jesus, who perfectly embodies availability, courage to be different, complete obedience, and perseverance. Jesus made Himself available by humbling Himself to become human (Philippians 2:7-8). He lived a life that was radically different from the world, followed the Father's will completely, and endured the cross, never giving up on the mission to save humanity (Hebrews 12:2).

Noah, Daniel, Abraham, Job, and others point us to the ultimate example of faithfulness: Jesus.

- Jesus made Himself available to the Father, saying, "*Not my will, but yours be done.*" (Luke 22:42)
- He dared to live differently, offering grace to sinners and challenging religious authorities.
- He followed God completely, fulfilling the law and offering Himself as the perfect sacrifice.
- He persevered, enduring the cross and despising its shame (Hebrews 12:2), to bring us salvation.

Challenge for the New Year:

- Are you making yourself available for God's purpose?
- Are you willing to stand out for your faith?
- Will you follow God wholeheartedly, even when it's difficult?
- Can you persevere, trusting God to work through you for His glory?

Let this New Year be a time to commit to letting God use you fully for His purpose, just as He used Noah and so many others. Trust in His grace and walk boldly in faith!

Through Jesus, we see that letting God use us leads to eternal blessings and a life of true purpose.

CLOSING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, Thank You for using ordinary people to accomplish Your extraordinary purposes. As we begin this New Year, help us to be like Noah—available, faithful, and committed to following You completely. Give us the courage to stand out for our faith, the trust to follow Your plans, and the perseverance to never give up, even when the road ahead is hard. Above all, let us look to Jesus, who shows us the ultimate example of surrender and obedience. Use us for Your glory and help us to reflect Your love and grace in everything we do. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Here are spiritual thoughts and questions tied to the themes of "Let God Use You!" and how Jesus or God might respond:

1. Am I Available to God?

Thought: Am I truly listening for God's call in my life, or am I too busy pursuing my own plans?

Jesus' Response: *"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."* (Matthew 11:28) -- *"Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me."* (Revelation 3:20)

God Whispers: *"Be still and know that I am God; I am ready to lead you when your heart is open."*

2. Do I Dare to Be Different?

Thought: Am I willing to stand out and be set apart for God, even if it means opposition or rejection?

Jesus' Response: *"If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first."* (John 15:18)

"You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden." (Matthew 5:14)

God Whispers: *"You are chosen, holy, and dearly loved. Shine for Me, even when it feels hard."*

3. Am I Following God Completely?

Thought: Am I holding back parts of my life from God, or am I fully surrendered to His will?

Jesus' Response: *"Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me."* (Luke 9:23) *"I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."* (John 14:6)

God Whispers: *"Follow Me wholeheartedly, and I will direct your paths in ways you cannot imagine."*

4. Do I Persevere When I Face Challenges?

Thought: Do I trust God's plan when the journey feels long, and do I rely on His strength instead of my own?

Jesus' Response: *"In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."* (John 16:33) -- *"Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him."* (James 1:12)

God Whispers: *"Lean on Me in the storms; My grace is sufficient for you."*

5. Am I Faithful in Using the Gifts God Has Given Me?

Thought: Am I investing the talents and opportunities God has entrusted to me for His glory?

Jesus' Response: *"Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things."* (Matthew 25:21)

"Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven." (Matthew 5:16)

God Whispers: *"Everything you have is a gift from Me. Use it faithfully, and I will multiply it."*

6. Am I Trusting God for the Reward?

Thought: Do I focus on eternal rewards rather than seeking recognition or success in the world?

Jesus' Response: *"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth... But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven."* (Matthew 6:19-20) *"I am coming soon! Hold on to what you have, so that no one will take your crown."* (Revelation 3:11)

God Whispers: *"What I have prepared for you is beyond what you can imagine. Stay faithful; My reward is eternal."*

Call to Action:

Reflect:

- What steps can I take today to let God use me?
- Where am I holding back from full surrender?

Pray: *"Lord, make me available to You. Help me dare to be different, follow You completely, persevere in trials, use my gifts for Your glory, and trust in Your eternal promises."*

God Whispers: *"You are My child, called for a purpose. Walk with Me, and I will lead you into abundant life."*

Here are spiritual thoughts and questions tied to the themes of "Let God Use You!" and how Jesus or God might respond:

DAY 1: Be Available to God

Key Verse: *"Here am I. Send me!"* (Isaiah 6:8)

Expanded Devotion Thought: Noah's availability to God set him apart in a world that had turned its back on the Creator. He didn't hesitate or make excuses—he was ready to obey. This same willingness is seen in Mary when she responded to the angel's announcement with, *"I am the Lord's servant"* (Luke 1:38). God works through those who make themselves available for His purposes, even when the task feels overwhelming.

The Gospel invites us into a life of availability. Jesus made Himself available to the Father's plan to save us, stepping into the brokenness of our world. By His availability, we are reconciled to God and given a new purpose.

Modern Analogy: Imagine a fire station full of firefighters. Each is trained and equipped to respond to emergencies, but their effectiveness depends on their readiness to act when the alarm sounds. Similarly, God calls us to always be spiritually "on-call" for the purposes He has prepared for us.

Prayer: Lord, I want to be available to You. Help me to set aside distractions and excuses and trust that You will equip me for whatever You call me to do. Thank You for the example of Jesus, who willingly gave everything for Your plan. Amen.

Challenge: Ask God today how He might use you. Be intentional about saying "yes" to an opportunity to serve, encourage, or share your faith.

Gospel Focus: Jesus' availability to the Father's will brought us salvation. Because He was willing, we are now able to say, "Here I am, Lord. Send me."

Here are spiritual thoughts and questions tied to the themes of "Let God Use You!" and how Jesus or God might respond:

1. Am I Available to God?

Thought: Am I truly listening for God's call in my life, or am I too busy pursuing my own plans?

Jesus' Response: *"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."* (Matthew 11:28)

"Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me." (Revelation 3:20)

God Whispers: *"Be still and know that I am God; I am ready to lead you when your heart is open."*

DAY 2: Dare to Be Different

Key Verse: *"Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind."* (Romans 12:2)

Expanded Devotion Thought: Noah's willingness to stand apart from a sinful world was a bold act of faith. He didn't conform to the culture around him but remained obedient to God. Likewise, Jesus dared to be different. He chose to love when others hated, to serve when others sought power, and to offer grace when others demanded judgment. When we follow Jesus, we too are called to live differently. The Gospel transforms us to reflect God's light in a dark world, even when it's uncomfortable or countercultural.

Modern Analogy: Think of a lighthouse standing tall on a rocky shore. While the waves crash violently around it, the lighthouse shines steadily, offering direction and safety. As Christians, we are like lighthouses—standing firm and shining God's light even when the world's storms rage.

Prayer: Jesus, give me the courage to live boldly for You. Help me to resist the pressures of the world and reflect Your love and truth in all that I do. Thank You for being the ultimate example of living differently. Amen.

Challenge: Identify one area in your life where you feel pressure to conform to worldly standards. Pray for strength and take one step to live according to God's truth instead.

Gospel Focus: Jesus' life was radically different, showing the world what God's love truly looks like. By following Him, we are called to share that same love and truth.

2. Do I Dare to Be Different?

Thought: Am I willing to stand out and be set apart for God, even if it means opposition or rejection?

Jesus' Response: *"If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first."* (John 15:18)

"You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden." (Matthew 5:14)

God whispers: *"You are chosen, holy, and dearly loved. Shine for Me, even when it feels hard."*

DAY 3: Follow God Completely

Key Verse: *"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding."* (Proverbs 3:5)

Expanded Devotion Thought: Noah followed God's instructions completely, even when they didn't make sense. His obedience wasn't partial or hesitant—it was wholehearted. Jesus exemplified this perfectly in His life. He said, ***"I seek not to please myself but Him who sent me"*** (John 5:30). The Gospel calls us to a life of complete trust and obedience. Just as Noah's obedience saved his family, Jesus' obedience to the cross brought salvation to the world.

Modern Analogy: Following God is like trusting a pilot on an airplane. We don't know every detail of how the plane flies or the journey ahead, but we trust the pilot to guide us safely to the destination. God is our ultimate pilot, and His plans for us are always good.

Prayer: Father, help me to trust You with my whole heart. Teach me to follow You completely, even when I don't understand Your plan. Thank You for Jesus, who obeyed fully for my salvation. Amen.

Challenge: Take time today to reflect on areas of your life where you've been hesitant to follow God. Surrender those areas to Him in prayer.

Gospel Focus: Jesus' complete obedience to the Father's will brought us the gift of salvation and the promise of eternal life.

3. Am I Following God Completely?

Thought: Am I holding back parts of my life from God, or am I fully surrendered to His will?

Jesus' Response: *"Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me."* (Luke 9:23)

"I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." (John 14:6)

God Whispers: *"Follow Me wholeheartedly, and I will direct your paths in ways you cannot imagine."*

DAY 4: Persevere in Faith

Key Verse: *"Let us not grow weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up."* (Galatians 6:9)

Expanded Devotion Thought: Noah persevered for decades as he built the ark, enduring ridicule and doubt from those around him. Jesus also persevered, facing rejection, betrayal, and suffering on the cross. His perseverance was driven by His love for us and the joy of bringing us salvation. The Gospel gives us the strength to persevere because we know our labor is not in vain. God's promises sustain us when we feel like giving up.

Modern Analogy: Think of marathon runners pushing through fatigue and pain to cross the finish line. They focus on the goal ahead, knowing the reward will be worth the struggle. In our faith journey, God is our strength, and His promises are our reward.

Prayer: Lord, when I feel weary or discouraged, remind me of Your faithfulness and give me strength to press on. Thank You for Jesus, who persevered for my sake. Amen.

Challenge: Encourage someone who may be struggling in their faith or life circumstances. Offer to pray with or for them.

Gospel Focus: Jesus persevered through unimaginable suffering, securing our salvation and giving us hope to endure.

4. Do I Persevere When I Face Challenges?

Thought: Do I trust God's plan when the journey feels long, and do I rely on His strength instead of my own?

Jesus' Response: *"In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."* (John 16:33)

"Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him." (James 1:12)

God Whispers: *"Lean on Me in the storms; My grace is sufficient for you."*

DAY 5: God's Grace Sustains Us

Key Verse: *"My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness."* (2 Corinthians 12:9)

Expanded Devotion Thought: Noah's survival through the flood was entirely due to God's grace. Similarly, our salvation is not earned but is a gift of grace, given through Jesus Christ. His grace strengthens us in our weakness and sustains us in every trial.

Modern Analogy: Grace is like a life preserver thrown to someone drowning. It's not earned or deserved, but it's freely given to save. God's grace, through Jesus, is our ultimate life preserver.

Prayer: Jesus, thank You for Your grace, which carries me through every challenge. Help me to rely on You, knowing that Your grace is all I need. Amen.

Challenge: Reflect on how God's grace has sustained you in the past year. Write down your reflections and thank Him for His provision.

Gospel Focus: God's grace, demonstrated through Jesus' sacrifice, sustains us and offers us the gift of eternal life.

5. Am I Faithful in Using the Gifts God Has Given Me?

Thought: Am I investing the talents and opportunities God has entrusted to me for His glory?

Jesus' Response: *"Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things."* (Matthew 25:21) *"Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven."* (Matthew 5:16)

God Whispers: *"Everything you have is a gift from Me. Use it faithfully, and I will multiply it."*

DAY 6: God Rewards Faithfulness

Key Verse: *"His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant!'"* (Matthew 25:21)

Expanded Devotion Thought: Noah's faithfulness resulted in a new beginning for humanity. Similarly, God honors our faithfulness, not through earthly rewards but through the eternal hope we have in Christ. Jesus' faithfulness to the Father's plan brought us the ultimate reward—eternal life.

Modern Analogy: A gardener faithfully tends their plants, watering and pruning them daily. Over time, their care produces a bountiful harvest. In the same way, God rewards our faithfulness by cultivating fruit in our lives and blessing us with His presence.

Prayer: Lord, help me to live faithfully each day, knowing that my ultimate reward is in You. Thank You for Your faithfulness to me through Jesus. Amen.

Challenge: Think of someone whose faithfulness to God has inspired you. Encourage or thank them today.

Gospel Focus: Jesus' faithfulness to the cross secured the greatest reward for us—reconciliation with God and the promise of eternal life.

6. Am I Trusting God for the Reward?

Thought: Do I focus on eternal rewards rather than seeking recognition or success in the world?

Jesus' Response: *"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth... But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven."* (Matthew 6:19-20)

"I am coming soon! Hold on to what you have, so that no one will take your crown." (Revelation 3:11)

God Whispers: *"What I have prepared for you is beyond what you can imagine. Stay faithful; My reward is eternal."*

DAY 7: Listening for God's Whisper

Key Verse: *"Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying, 'This is the way; walk in it.'"* (Isaiah 30:21)

Expanded Devotion Thought: Noah's story reminds us that listening for God's voice changes everything. He didn't have all the answers, but he trusted what God whispered to his heart: to build an ark and prepare for what was to come. Like Noah, we can attune our ears to God's Word and Spirit in the midst of the world's noise. Jesus is God's ultimate whisper to us. Through His life, death, and resurrection, God calls us into a loving relationship and directs our path. Jesus said, *"My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me"* (John 10:27). As we enter a new year, let's resolve to make space in our hearts and lives to hear God's voice and walk boldly in His ways.

Modern Analogy: Think of how GPS systems work. When you're traveling to an unfamiliar destination, the GPS provides step-by-step directions to guide you. However, it's easy to miss a turn if you're distracted by the radio or a conversation. In the same way, God's voice is always there to guide us, but we must silence the noise of life and tune in. When we listen, His guidance is sure and true, leading us to places we could never reach on our own.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I want to hear Your voice more clearly in my life. Help me to quiet my distractions and focus on You. Guide me in Your truth and show me the way forward. Thank You for speaking to me through Your Word and through Jesus, the Word made flesh. Lead me into the new year with a heart ready to follow You. Amen.

Challenge: Spend 30 minutes today in intentional quiet time with God. Read a passage from Scripture, meditate on its meaning, and ask God to reveal what He wants you to hear. Write down any thoughts or impressions that come to mind.

Gospel Focus: God's whisper came to us in the most profound way—through His Son, Jesus Christ. As we listen to Him, we receive the gift of salvation and guidance for our daily lives. Jesus is the ultimate direction for our journey, calling us into a relationship with the One who created us and has an eternal plan for us.

Call to Action: Reflect:

- What steps can I take today to let God use me?
- Where am I holding back from full surrender?

Pray: *"Lord, make me available to You. Help me dare to be different, follow You completely, persevere in trials, use my gifts for Your glory, and trust in Your eternal promises."*

God Whispers: *"You are My child, called for a purpose. Walk with Me, and I will lead you into abundant life."*

Let God Use You

In the stillness, God calls your name,
To rise in purpose, not seek the same.
Like Noah, bold in a world astray,
Be available, walk His way.
Dare to be different, a light that's rare,
A beacon of hope in the darkest air.
Follow completely, trust His voice,
In every step, make Him your choice.
When trials come and paths seem steep,
Persevere in faith, His promises keep.
His grace sustains, a love so true,
Each day a gift, His mercies new.
Faithful and steadfast, with eyes above,
Receive His reward: unending love.
Let God use you; the world will see,
Through Christ in you, eternity.