

Today's Scripture

Pr 3:1 My son, do not forget my teaching, but keep my commands in your heart,

3:2 for they will prolong your life many years and bring you prosperity.

3:3 Let love and faithfulness never leave you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart.

3:4 Then you will win favor and a good name in the sight of God and man.

3:5 Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding;

3:6 in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.

3:7 Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD and shun evil.

3:8 This will bring health to your body and nourishment to your bones.

3:9 Honor the LORD with your wealth, with the firstfruits of all your crops;

3:10 then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine.

As we look forward to 2009, I am looking for a word that describes what it will take for us to have a great year.

What will it take for us to see improvement – growth – happiness – joy – peace – winning & satisfaction?

The word is; "Best" Yes, we must give our "Best."

Looking back to 2008, can you say, "I always gave my best?"

What does it mean to give one's best? Do you know of someone who has given his or her best? Have you ever given you best for anything or anyone? Who or What deserves your best – my best?

❶ God Gives His Best

In creation, following each day's creation, God said, "It is good." After He had created man and woman He said, "It is very good."

He then placed them in the Garden – (A Paradise) and He blessed them. Throughout history He gave His best for His people.

In Isaiah 1:18 we read, "Come now, let us reason together," says the LORD. "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool. Verse 19 continues, "If you are willing and obedient you will eat the best from the land;"

Later in Isaiah 48:17. “This is what the LORD says – your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: “I am the LORD your God, who teaches you what is best for you, who directs you in the way you should go.”

Do you know that today, God still always does what is best for His people.

Jesus spoke a parable of two sons – one left home – wasted all his goods. After a long time, he came to himself and said, “What am I doing out here, my Father’s servants have more food than this. I’m going home. He went home - humiliated, broke, and stinking from working with the pigs, which in that day was an embarrassment. His Father ran to meet him, threw his arms around him and said, ‘Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet – more signs of His best love being shown towards His son.

On another occasion Jesus went to a wedding. All the people celebrated in that day by drinking wine. Finally it ran out. They approached Jesus and said, “The wine has ran out.” Jesus said, “Fill the jugs.” They drank, and said, “Everyone normally brings out the choice wine first and then the cheaper wine after the guests have had too much to drink; but you have saved the best till now.” Jesus always does what is best for the people – even yet today.

In Hebrews 12:10 we read, “Our fathers disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness.” Isn’t it awesome that God disciplines us that we may become more like Him?

God always does what’s best.

② Satan (The Devil) always gives His Best.

Has He worked on you this past year? It’s sad, but sometimes He works through us - yelling at people – “Hey, dummy - stupid,” to our kids – grandkids – neighbors – other drivers on the highway, or maybe it’s a football player or coach.

But Satan has worked on you and will in 2009. He is the Accuser of mankind.

In Revelations 12:10 we read, “Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say: “Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God,

and the authority of his Christ. For the accuser of our brothers, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been hurled down.

Satan attacks many of us by accusing – slandering and putting us down.

He sought out Jesus – even from birth – tempted him severely – eventually taking His life on the cross. Satan is the god of this age. He will enter every household – every mind – every school – every business - even attack Washington DC.

He is a destroyer of all that's good – a terrorist invading humankind from east to west & north to south.

Keep on the watch – He is giving His best to get to you.

③ Will you give your best? Will I give my best?

Do most people in our world give their best? That includes everything, eating – drinking – exercising.

There's relationships too; marriage, do we give our best? What about our kids – grandkids – brothers – sisters – friends? What about our jobs? Can we say we give our best in all these relationships? What about wasting time on our jobs, or working to the best of our capacity?

Most important of all, what about our relationship with Jesus Christ, this includes our prayer life – Bible reading – witnessing – inviting new people to worship – calling on absentees & visiting them?

Doing one's best makes a difference in the results of life.

A- God has done His best. He gave His one and only Son. Would we?

B- Satan has done His best. Look at last years statistics in our city – our nation – our world, the rapes, murders, robbers, divorces, teen age pregnancies, and all the other violence, the demonstrations, terrorists attacks, war in the mid-east and much more?

What about me? What about you?

Have I done my best for Jesus this past year? Will I do my best for Jesus this year?

The results will truly amaze us in this church and in your home if we give our best.

In the days of Moses God said to the people, (Ex 23:19) “Bring the best of the firstfruits of your soil to the house of the LORD your God.

The same command is repeated in Ex 34:26 “Bring the best of the firstfruits of your soil to the house of the LORD your God. ”

In Numbers 18:29 we read, “You must present as the LORD'S portion the best and holiest part of everything given to you.’

The Apostle Paul told Timothy “Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth. (2 Tim 2:15)

In conclusion God’s Word tells us, “If you are willing and obedient, you will eat the best from the land; (Isaiah 1:19)

What about giving your best in 2009