



Making the Most of Wednesday, December 30

Standing and Expectant at the Gate of the New Year

“...be ready in season and out of season” — 2 Tim. 4:2



BETWEEN 6:00 AM—9:00 AM: “I’M GOING IN?” — DAVE AYRES

Back in February, Dave Ayres, who works for the American Hockey League’s Toronto Marlies, was forced into action as an emergency goalie for the Carolina Hurricanes. He was passing time in the arena’s media room when the coach texted him that he was needed to play. So, Dave suited up and took the ice in the second period.

Just so you know, Dave’s “day job” is to manage the building operations at the Mattamy Athletic Center in Toronto. Sometimes that means driving the Zamboni, that large, garbage-truck-resembling machine that resurfaces the ice. What’s more, Dave is 42-years-old and the recipient of a new kidney tens years ago. From a common-sense perspective, he was hardly the ideal candidate. But when injuries sidelined the two regular goalies, the coach called for Dave. All he did was stop 8 out of 10 shots and help his team win the game. Only his teammates were more excited for Dave than Dave himself. Actually, his wife was pretty stoked also!

We must always be ready to serve whenever and however the Coach calls our number. See, the King calls us not just into *relationship* but into *representation*. We’ll talk more about that in Joel Moment today. However, let’s start by praising Him who shaped and saved us over the course of this hard year.

Psa. 118:18 *The LORD has disciplined me severely, but he has not given me over to death.*

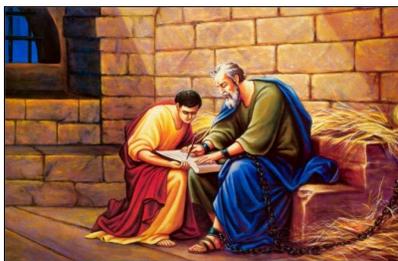
Psa. 118:19 *Open to me the gates of righteousness, that I may enter through them and give thanks to the LORD.*

Psa. 118:20 *This is the gate of the LORD; the righteous shall enter through it.*

Psa. 118:21 *I thank you that you have answered me and have become my salvation.*

How did God discipline you to make you more dependent this year? How did he sustain you. What “openings” are you hoping for in 2021? If you can read these words, give God thanks for your vital signs.

BETWEEN 9:00 AM-12:00 PM: BE LIKE DAVE AYRES, EAGER AND AVAILABLE TO GET INTO THE GAME.



2Tim. 4:1 I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom:

2Tim. 4:2 preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching.

2Tim. 4:5 As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry

Reflect on these verses in Paul's letter to Timothy. Notice the call to be prepared. God wants us to talk to people whose ears are full of mistaken and deadly ideas about him. Expect an opportunity to share with someone ("do the work of an evangelist"). If an opportunity doesn't come your way, create one.

BETWEEN 12:00 PM-3:00 PM: WHO AROUND YOU IS WORSE THAN SICK?

Our family just watched the first part of "It's a Wonderful Life," the classic 1946 movie starting James Stewart. It has a few theological problems, but we can overlook them because it provides great prayer inspiration for priestly believers like us. Read this dialogue that starts the movie.



First Man: I owe everything to George Bailey, help him, dear Father.

Second Man: Jesus...Help my friend Mr. Bailey.

First Woman: Help my son George tonight.

Third Man: He never thinks about himself, that's why he's in trouble.

Fourth Man: George is a good guy, give him a break, God.

Second Woman: I love him, dear Lord, watch over him tonight.

Little Girl: Please, God, something's the matter with Daddy. Please bring Daddy back.

Fifth Man: Help my friend George tonight.

Heavenly Figure: A man down on earth needs our help.

Second Heavenly Figure: Splendid, is he sick?

Heavenly Figure: No, worse, he's discouraged.



Who is your George Bailey? Pray as simply as the people in the movie. Can you also call or text him or her?

BETWEEN 3:00 PM-4:00 PM: Join the Joel Moment Prayer Gathering. Go to Zoom.com and enter Meeting ID and Password.



GAIL HUGGER [She has Scripture about breaking the silence about Jesus and not being intimidated.]

Phil. 1:12 *I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel,*

Phil. 1:13 *so that it has become known throughout the whole imperial guard and to all the rest that my imprisonment is for Christ.*

Phil. 1:14 *And most of the brothers, having become confident in the Lord by my imprisonment, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.*

Phil. 1:15 *Some indeed preach Christ from envy and rivalry, but others from good will.*

Phil. 1:16 *The latter do it out of love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel.*

Phil. 1:17 *The former proclaim Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely but thinking to afflict me in my imprisonment.*

Phil. 1:18 *What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed, and in that I rejoice. Yes, and I will rejoice,*

STEW PEEBLES [This faithful man will share how God has led him to minister to athletes.]

SUSAN SOMES [She'll read this piece from the legendary English poet Alfred Lord Tennyson called "A New Year's Poem." He's pictured to the right with his wife and children. Despite his stern appearance, he was a hope-driven Christian who looked ahead to the return of King Jesus, one of the ten Gospel Events that we'll get to in time. This poem seems particularly appropriate for us as we close a challenging year.]



*Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,
The flying cloud, the frosty light;
The year is dying in the night;
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.*

*Ring out the old, ring in the new,
Ring, happy bells, across the snow;
The year is going, let him go;
Ring out the false, ring in the true.*

*Ring out the grief that saps the mind,
For those that here we see no more;
Ring out the feud of rich and poor,
Ring in redress to all mankind.*

*Ring out a slowly dying cause,
And ancient forms of party strife;
Ring in the nobler modes of life,
With sweeter manners, purer laws.*

*Ring out the want, the care, the sin,
The faithless coldness of the times;
Ring out, ring out my mournful rimes
But ring the fuller minstrel in.*

*Ring out false pride in place and blood,
The civic slander and the spite;
Ring in the love of truth and right,
Ring in the common love of good.*

*Ring out old shapes of foul disease;
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold;
Ring out the thousand wars of old,
Ring in the thousand years of peace.*

*Ring in the valiant man and free,
The larger heart, the kindlier hand;
Ring out the darkness of the land,
Ring in the Christ that is to be.*



GROUP PRAYER PROMPT #1 (7 min.): Ps. 118:13 *“I was pushed hard, so that I was falling, but the LORD helped me.”*

So much has happened this year. So much pain. But also so much preservation for the people of God. Let’s appreciate our Caretaker in words of thanks and praise.

GROUP PRAYER PROMPT #2 (7 min.): Heb. 6:8 *“Here I am! Send me.”*

Like Dave Ayres in the story on the first page, let’s be ready to skate into the game. For Dave, this meant having hard rubber pucks fired at him at 105 mph. But by stepping in, he lived that day to the full. No guts, no glory. Let’s pray for readiness to serve God and speak for him at a moment’s notice in 2021.

GROUP PRAYER PROMPT #3 (7 min.): Ps. 118:11-12 *“They surrounded me, surrounded me on every side....They surrounded me like bees;”*

Many people near and far still feel hemmed in by illness, financial pressure, loneliness and other fears. Let’s be their strong prayer advocates. Lift up all the needs of all the needy ones in your network.

BETWEEN 5:00 PM-10:00 PM: REMEMBERING OUR GLOBAL PARTNERS

Here’s a picture from this last Sunday’s Church on the Grass. With Pastor Thomas looking on, Pastor Glen commissioned [Dan de Villiers](#) as he prepares to head back to the mission field. (For more details about what he’s doing and how to support him, please email Dan at dandev93@gmail.com). Also, don’t forget about Valley’s online Global Outreach Conference 2021 called [“Unrestricted Gospel”](#) on January 16-17. Please visit valleychurch.org to register or get more details.

Finally, end the day by asking our Heavenly Father to supply the needs of our missionaries through our generous giving and prayers (*“...you sent me help for my needs once and again”* — 1 Thess. 4:16).

