ESSAY · DECEMBER 30, 2021

This Guarantees You'll Smile in One Year

Written by Bill Perkins

Stretching before you, further than the eye can see, lays a New Year--365 Days, 8,760 hours, 525,600 minutes, 31,536, 000 seconds. Over that time, you'll take around 8,000,000 breaths, blink over 11.5 million times, and spend over 100 days sleeping—assuming you sleep 7 hours a night.

All of these are given. However, there are blocks of time that await your decision regarding their use. If you're an average husband and father, you'll spend more time talking with fellow employees than your wife and you'll spend more hours on the internet than listening to your children.

Of course, none of us can control things like breathing and blinking. And we must sleep every night to stay alert and healthy. But we can control who we live for.

This Guarantees You'll Smile in One Year

Ultimately, on December 31st when you reflect on how you spent the previous year, you'll smile or frown. If you decide on December 31st to order your life around God and those who will cry at your funeral, chances are you'll smile at the end of the year. Why? Because you'll have spent more time alone with God, your wife and your family.

Never forget, a little time each day adds up over a year. If you spend ten minutes with God a day it will add up to 3,650 minutes or sixty hours alone with your heavenly Father during the year. If you choose to listen to your wife 30 minutes a day, it will add up to 10,950 minutes or 182.5 hours over the year. The same is true of 30 minutes a day listening to your kids.

One Day at a Time

You won't become a godly man in one day. And you won't become a great husband or dad in 24 hours. But if you chose to love God and your family one day at a time, you'll be a different and better man in a year.

Plead With God

Don't be deceived into thinking it's meaningless to number your days. It isn't. And don't kid yourself into thinking it's easy. That's why the psalmist pleaded with God to help him. In Psalm 39:4 he cried, "Show me, O LORD, my life's end and the number of my days; let me know how fleeting is my life." In Psalm 90:12 he uttered a similar prayer but mentioned why he wanted to count every day, "So teach us to number our days, that we may present to You a heart of wisdom."

God Gives A Sense of Priority

Ultimately, if we're going to live for God and our family one day at a time, God must give us a sense of priority and urgency. And if he does, we'll give him the gift of a life well lived.

Can you see the New Year stretching out before you? Don't try to see the end from the beginning. That would be a waste of effort since you can't see it yet. But you can see the first day of the year and a few days beyond that. Ask God to enable you to value those days. And each day that follows—one day at a time. Plead with him to motivate you to live each day for those who love you the most. If you do—you'll not only smile on December 31st you'll smile each day along the way.