

Before We Pack Christmas Away...

by Mark Knapp

One day, I was rocking my grandson in a chair close to the Christmas tree. Since it was during the day, the lights on the tree were off. As I looked up at the tree, I noticed how beautiful the tree was, even without the lights. When the lights are on, however, there is a whole new dimension of beauty. The same is true for people. ***There is a real difference between worldly beauty and Godly beauty.***

Someone might look like they have it all together – good looks, family, career, finances, possessions, and the like, and yet the beauty is, as they say, fleeting, skin-deep, worldly. When someone has the one true Light as the foundation of their beauty, some – if not all, of those worldly things may be absent, and yet there is beauty.

As we contemplate New Year's resolutions and life changes for 2024, let us make sure we have as our life foundation the one true Light.

“Arise, shine; For your light has come! And the glory of the Lord is risen upon you.”

Isaiah 60:1

“...I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.”

John 8:12

“Charm is deceitful and beauty is passing, but a woman who fears the Lord, she shall be praised.”

Proverbs 31:30

GOD Honors Bold Prayers, Because Bold Prayers Honor GOD.

Does your prayer life feel a little stale? Do you find yourself saying the same things, asking for the same needs, praying over the same situations? Or do you ever sit down for some quiet time, hoping to get closer to God, and find yourself getting closer to dreamland instead?

Prayer is a powerful privilege given to Christians, but we often struggle to know how to make it a part of our daily lives. Why is that? It's not that we don't realize prayer is important – we know it is! When we look back & reflect, we can see many situations in which God has answered our prayers. So, what can we do to enrich our prayer lives and make them more meaningful?

Here are a few tips to keep in mind:

- **Remember that our prayers do not have to be lengthy or complicated. Prayer is simply having a conversation with God.**
- **Our skill & sophistication don't matter, because our confidence is not in the power of our prayers – our confidence is in the power of God!**
- **Our heavenly Father is bigger than any situation we will encounter. So, whatever it is that is on your mind, big or small, pray about it.**
- **Prayer should be our 1st resource, not our last. Pray 1st about a situation, and then, “give feet to our prayers” by doing whatever we can to put our prayers into action.**