



NEW YEAR'S EVE MESSAGE

Jon Acuff

BREAKING THE ICE

- What is one thing you learned about yourself in 2023? What is one thing you learned about God in 2023?
- What is something you are looking forward to in 2024?

MAIN CONTENT

Happy New Year! We are so excited you decided to start a new year with God and in your small group! This week's message was very interactive and encouraged us to consider our purpose, potential and some of our best moments in life thus far.

Jon began his message by sharing some statistics. Out of 3,000 participants in a recent study, they found that:

- 96% of people said they were not living up to their full potential
- 50% of people felt that their full potential was and is currently untapped.

He said this would be like walking down on Christmas morning and only 50% of the gifts under the tree can be opened. Can you imagine?

1. What do you think when you hear these statistics? Are you surprised at all?

Read Proverbs 13:12

Although we have a hope from Christ that is constant and is a gift available to us, we often do not live hope-filled. Specifically, we can live with a mindset of hope deferred. Jon shared these simple examples of what it may look like to live with a mindset of hope deferred: "My next relationship will be different" or "My next job will be different". On the other hand, this verse says, "...a longing fulfilled is a tree of life."

2. What does it look like to defer hope in your life? Why is this a problem? Have you ever experienced a longing in your life to be fulfilled? Share an example from your life with the group.

Read Psalm 103:1-5

This passage reminds us to praise God for who He is and all that He has done for us. It shifts the focus from ourselves onto Christ. Life can become so busy, chaotic and often worldly-focused, that it can be easy to forget what Christ did for us and still does for us daily. In addition, we can miss the gifts and goodness God has available for us.

3. What spiritual rhythms do you or can you incorporate weekly to help you refocus your heart and mind toward Jesus? Share ideas with the group and discuss how you can hold one another accountable to these rhythms in 2024.

Jon shares how life is full of moments, both big and small. We are going to take some time to reflect on the moments in our own lives and discuss them as a group.

4. As a first step, take some time right now to write down a list of the best moments in your life. This list should include even the smallest memories and those big awe-inspired moments.

Next, you will categorize these moments. As Jon shared, moments will typically fit into one of three categories: classic, custom or consistent. Here is some context and examples from the message to help as you do this exercise:

- Classic moments: Seeing New York City at Christmas time, getting married, paying off student loans, buying your first house, etc.
- Custom moments: These can be moments that are unique to your own life. Moments like eating 9lb lobster at Martha's Vineyard or petting your neighbor's dog Scout after a run.
- Consistent moments: A meeting being canceled or one that ends early. When a package arrives and you see it sitting on the porch, or small moments of laughter with your family.

Now take a look at the list you wrote down and categorize them into one of the three examples above. When you are finished, share a few of these moments with your group.

5. As you reflect on these moments, consider how God played/plays a role in them. For example, did God weave your story in such a way that you were able to experience a breakthrough? Maybe God closed a door that then allowed a better door to open.

6. Read Romans 8:28 and share an example from your list of a way God worked all things for good.

“Being present is just being nostalgic about the moment you are still in.” -Jon Acoff

7. Why does it matter that we remain present? What does it look like for you to be present in your daily life?

Now, let's lean into the things we learned from this message on potential, goals, and living a life of and on purpose.

8. In what ways, do you think purpose aligns with potential? How does purpose influence the way we live? How does God's purpose for your life align with the potential God has given you?

Jon closed his message by encouraging us to ask, “Could the rest of my life be the best of my life?” He shared Proverbs 16:3. Read this verse with your group.

9. What can and should you commit to the Lord as you consider your purpose, potential and goals?

Read Psalm 37:4

10. What does it mean to delight yourself in the Lord? How could this shift the desires of your heart? Why does this matter?

We have a God of Redemption. Even if you are sitting here and thinking you have wasted time, potential, or your purpose ... God can and will redeem it! God wants what is best for you. We were created to give Him glory so as you go into this new year, ask yourself – am I using my potential to give God glory? Am I seeking God in all I do?

CLOSING PRAYER

Father, thank you for this day and the life you have given us. Lord, we thank you for who you are and for your consistent character no matter our life circumstances. Your faithfulness and love propel us in this life. We pray, God, that you will continue to move in our hearts, in our daily actions, and in every moment of our lives. Help us to live out the calling you have set before us. Help us to be present in all of the small and big experiences this life brings us. Guide us to be more like you in each of these moments. Help us to pursue more of you in this new year. Thank you for your love, your goodness and your light in our lives. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

ACTION STEP

- Pray. As you enter into a new year, we want to encourage you to start this year with some time of prayer. Listen to what God is saying to you. Consider what it means to learn more about God in this prayer time.
- Take some time to write down a more comprehensive list of the moments in your life. Reflect on those moments and take notice of how they make you feel. Find a friend to do this with and then share it with each other.
- Even if you are currently in a group, consider starting a new small group. Maybe this is an activity group, a men's or women's group, or a group that prays together once a month. Groups are a great way to connect and also a great way to discover the potential God has for you. For more information about leading a group: crosspoint.tv/group-leaders