

Pk's Perspectives ... Happy Birthday!

(Confetti falling...) (Band playing...) (Balloons floating...) (Thunderous crowd noises of celebration...) That's what I'm talking about!! I had a birthday last week. I celebrated the completion of my 55th year of living and am already into the sixth day of my 56th year. But I have to be honest with you: I can't quite wrap my mind around having lived 55 years. I mean – most things have lost their value after 55 years. Who is going to drink a 55 year-old gallon of milk? Or buy a 55 year-old sirloin to throw on the grill? How many of you drive a 55 year-old automobile? How many articles of clothing in your active wardrobe are 55 years old? (I have my dad's high school letterman jacket, which is 68 years old, but I don't wear it.) I don't know of anyone who has a 55 year-old pet. Do you watch a 55 year-old TV or walk on 55 year-old carpets in your home or wash dirty clothes in your 1961 model washing machine? How does that 55 year-old mattress feel at night? I'm thinking your current grill is nowhere near 55 years old and neither is your telephone! You may possess some 55 year-old pieces of furniture, gewgaws, photographs, or bank statements/documents gathering dust in a dark corner of the attic...but most things are discarded long before they reach 55.

Except humans! Aren't you glad?!? Human beings – me & you – are the crown jewel of God's creation. We alone are created in His image. So not only has God created us in such a way that we live longer than any other mammal and are able to experience intimate relationship with our Creator, what truly sets humanity apart is the fact that our significance can actually increase as we age! Our purpose; our maximum potential; our peace; the yearnings at the very core of our soul are met in Jesus Christ. A person who is passionate in his/her pursuit of God during the course of life will be growing in the knowledge and wisdom of God's holiness. As we bloom into the image of Christ, our lives radiate the beauty and holiness of Christ in ways that impact the people around us.

I've been walking with Jesus for 48 of my 55 years on this earth; I've passionately pursued intimacy with Christ for 35 of my 55 years on this earth. Let me share some things I'm learning:

- As my experience of Christ deepens, I realize how little I truly grasp of God's unconditional love. I am so thankful to know I'll have eternity to explore the depths of God's holiness.
- Though the door of freedom was opened by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, I often choose to remain in the prison of rule keeping and self-righteousness. Dying to self is, for me, a frightening proposition. It is one of the brutal side effects of sin that I would consider chains of bondage more appealing than walking in the freedom of grace.
- I think God's pleasure is amplified every time I choose to love someone, anyone, with the unconditional, outrageous love of Christ.
- I can't imitate, generate, manufacture, or duplicate the love of Christ. Either Christ loves through me (by way of His Holy Spirit) or my attempts at love are weak, selfish, and totally lacking in transformative power.

I'll cya Sunday morning in Sunday School & Worship, PK.