



July 2015

Dear friends,

Today I looked in the mirror and I saw grey hair, more of it than I had ever noticed. My age is showing. I'm growing old. My body has evidence of the process of dying. Every day, I die a little more.

But I feel so alive.

And for today, I am very fully alive. For this moment, my heart pounds, the lungs work as breath comes in and out, and my eyes blink on automatic. My ears listen. My legs walk and they can run too. My hands type and my arms help me prep dinner for my family. My heart feels, deeply feels. My brain keeps learning. Somehow my brain scans pages and pages of books and my brain comprehends the information. My life is full of great joy and great sorrow. Circumstances are always changing, but my God never changes. He's steady. He's faithful. He's real. He's in control and I'm not.

God reminded me this morning, as I looked in the mirror, half my life may be over or maybe I only have one day left. What am I going to do with that last day or the last half of my life?

Maybe life seems slow to you? I don't know?! But mine, it's flying. I remember meeting Jesus when I was five. Surreal, 32 years of living with Jesus. I don't know how that happened. Blink, and the next year passes. 16 years of marriage. Two kids, one a middle schooler and the other in fourth grade. Six years and our oldest graduates. How is that possible? I remember holding her as a newborn, watching her try to walk in snow, and listening to her tell me about her kindergarten friends. Last night she was standing in front of a church group sharing scripture and encouraging strangers to follow Jesus.

Stop right here, pause. You are reading this letter which means you are alive, living that little dash between birth and death. We are like a vapor, here today, gone tomorrow.

"Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes." - James 4:14

Why do we waste time caring about things that won't matter next year or even next week? Anxiety and worry can own me, but why? What do I have to be afraid of? Does it matter if I have any worldly possessions? What's the point of all that?

What if tomorrow is my last day? Have I lived a life that mattered? Isn't that the point?!

Did anyone see Jesus seep out of my life?

Did I love well?

Did I hear his voice and did I obey it?

Did I pray for others before myself and lay down my life for others?

Was this little gig about me?

Did my husband and kids know how much I adored them?

What about my friends, was I quick to give grace, did I encourage them, did I sacrifice anything or everything to love them?

My co-workers? Did they know I loved Jesus? Did I tell them about the One who gave His life for me? Who gave His life for them?

Did stuff matter too much to me? Did I scream at my kids when they broke something? Or curse when my car got a scratch? Or spend resources on stuff I don't use? Or indulge myself so I had nothing left to share?

The grey hair has shaken me. I don't think I will color it, hide it or make it disappear. I think I need to see it to remember, I am dying, so how am I living?

Maybe you are around my age, and with general life expectancy half your life is done too. Assuming we don't fall sick of cancer or crash in an unexpected car wreck, maybe we have 40 years left. Maybe.

40 years. What can I do in the next 40 years to make some noise for the Kingdom of God, to minister in Jesus' name, to share where my hope comes from, and to live a life that matters?!

A few ideas for how I believe God wants me to live my last days....

1. Love people more, more than I ever have, more than is humanly possible. Crazy Jesus, lay down your life, kind of love.

Jesus said, "this is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you." - John 15:12

2. Listen to Jesus. Quit talking so much when I am praying and really listen for His voice. And do what He says, right away and with a joyful heart.

"Here is a call for the endurance of the saints, those who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus." - Revelation 14:12

3. Live simply. Get rid of any possessions that encumber me or my family. Live on little, possess little and protect any time that would otherwise be wasted maintaining stuff.

"For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." - Matthew 6:21

4. Give everything. The more resources we free up, the more we have to share with the Kingdom of God. Give my life, my time, my work, my knowledge, my idleness, my best, and my money. Live in such a way that "what's mine is yours" really is.

"I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." - Galatians 2:20

5. Don't judge or compare my life with anyone else's life. God has a calling on our lives and we cannot stray from His calling for us even though it may look different than someone else's.

"Judge not, that you be not judged." - Matthew 7:1

Here's the deal, I chose to follow Jesus when I was five years old and He is so amazing, I have never stopped. Every last breath I have, I want to give to Him as an act of worship. I don't want to waste time on what doesn't matter. Jesus has changed my life and I am all in.

Up to today, my life has been amazing, but mostly in a consumerism kind of way. School was free and college was a gift my parents gave me. 90% of the stuff in our house different friends gave us. I drive a company vehicle and our house has water and electricity. I have a family and tons of friends and every day I have a job to work. Sure, I can share some "war stories" of times life has been hard, but compared to my friends all around the world, life has been pretty easy.

Has my life produced any fruit these last 38 years? Man, I hope so. The Bible says that we will be recognized by our fruit. Do others recognize Jesus?

Matthew 7:20 "you will recognize them by their fruits." (And maybe their grey hair.)

Living for Jesus.

“Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.”-Hebrews 13:16