

THOUGHTS ON LESSONS LEARNED

By John F. Hall

I've always believed that life is a test, not only of our faith, but of our perseverance to stay the course, until the test is finished. William S. Cottringer, agrees with me in his poem, "Life is a Test." These are his words: "Life is one big test, an ongoing "final exam." We're given the talents we need, with many chances to succeed. If we only knew what to do; and what was false and what was true. As it turns out, we are just stewards, renting this life, managing our resources; charged to do our best, using our talents to



increase the harvest. And we do get graded, not by some absolute standard or within some bell curve; but against ourselves. How well we used what we had, helping others get a better grade."

It's a Friday morning in April. I looked out the window of the second floor where I am writing this story. It is raining. Craig Perry, the corporate farmer, renting the farm from the widow lady, had his workers disked the fields, over night. I'm just guessing that he will plant corn this year. The temperature was 84 degrees when my wife, Paula and I drove to Fort Campbell to pick up medications, yesterday. The forecast is calling for a low of 37 degrees on Sunday morning. Today, April 21st is my oldest granddaughter's birthday. She turned 27. I sent her a text and wished her happy birthday. We celebrated her birthday on Easter Sunday, with family and friends.

Five years ago, a man with the name of Nuridin wrote a poem called, "Life is a Test." These are his words: "You possess what many don't digest, live up to it and in yourself invest, take time alone to pursue your quest, wake up at night when others are at rest, read and learn in your own little nest, pursue the knowledge and be bold to request, when you don't know, ask those who know best, don't reinvent the wheel, take a load off your chest, always be sincere and remember that you are a guest, this life is short but it's a grand test, so pass it with honors and keep your eyes on what's next." This is excellent advice for granddaughters Skyler, a student at Murray State University; Lexie, a student at Georgetown College, and Jade, a student at Western Kentucky University.

When the Pandemic hit in 2020, I began to write, about one story a week, and mailed them to Skyler, Lexie, Jade and her godmother Trish; Daniel and Audrey. The purpose was to entertain, inspire, and motivate. One lesson here is that What we choose to do today might echo for all eternity. In Revelation, Chapter 2, Verse 19, are these words: "I know your deeds, your love and your faith, your service and your perseverance, and that you are now doing more than you did at first." I've watched others do all the right things, up until near their death. Then they just lost their faith and their hope in Jesus Christ. In running the race of life, one must persevere, until that person crosses the finish line. In Hebrews, Chapter 10, Verse 36, are these words: "You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what He has promised."

I use to say that Christ is keeping me around to write just one more great story. When I missed dying, by one hour, on March 2th, I realized not to take, what ever time I have left, for granted.

I've experience more trials than I care to count, but the lessons that I've learned from those experiences, taught me a thing or two. I learned not to give up in the face of adversity. I learned to ask others, and Jesus Christ for help. In James, Chapter 1, Verse 12, are these words: "Blessed is the one who perseveres until trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those that love him."

I know that I am a steward of everything that I possess. The talent, that I have to write this story, is on loan form Jesus Christ. It is his grace upon grace upon grace, and His inspiration, that I try to convey on the pages that I mail to family and friends. When I began writing stories, 45 years ago, the purpose was to help one person with one of my stories. I did not know exactly how one of my stories was suppose to help that person. I did stress the importance of having that person believe in Jesus Christ; to give Him some of our time, and to love Him. He told us how to show that love by keeping his Commandments, and by loving one another as He loves us.

We are renting our time on earth. We just don't know when our lease on this earth will be up. Another lesson that I learned is that by helping others, I am also helping myself by fulfilling Christ's mandate. In Matthew, Chapter 25, Verse 40, are these words: The King will reply, "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of his brothers and sisters of mine, you did for Me." Show a little kindness to the beggar on the street. Don't be judgmental, a dollar or two may help him on his way.

I learned that failure is not the end of my quest. I learned the most from my mistakes and failures. I learned that going for awards and metals is vanity, and they have no value in eternity. I learned that it is not my place to be judgmental, as I don't want others to judge me. I learned that I can give a little joy, in my stories, and that is something that money cannot buy. I learned that kindness, in deeds and words, is good for the heart and good for the soul. I learned that putting some cheer into the lives of people, that read my stories, is my time well spent. '

I'm a lay, nonfiction Christian writer, and hopefully, an instrument of Christ's peace. I'm a maverick in that I just enjoy writing for the sake of writing. I seek no fame or fortune for crafting words. My stories are true and based on my life. I'm a jack of all trades and a master of none. While I write for my young readers, I recognize that my stories bring some joy to my older readers too. As to my final thoughts on the matter, I learned that loving Christ and loving others is what our short time on this earth is all about. I learned that having Christ in my heart and by my side is a wonderful thing. And until He takes the talent away, I'll continue crafting my words for those that I love.

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*Read other stories by John F. Hall and others at: <http://www.ajlambert.com>