



Your Dearest Bob and Marilee,

May the year before us be filled with hope!

God is good all the time, and He is faithful to those who are His. Even in the dark times of chaos and confusion, God can write beautiful, triumphant chapters for those who live for Him!

As we plunge into 2016, it is thrilling to remember that *God wants to give us victory* as we pursue His agenda for reaching the nations!

Of course there will be a cacophony of voices and pundits as a country goes into an election year. But God's word is clear and simple. God's plan is set. His kingdom is staying the course. He has established the strategy from the beginning, and our destination is a resounding victory over the kingdoms of men.

Our best strategy is to embrace God's strategy and God's agenda. We will not redeem the world through any political scheme.

"Guard your heart above all else," Proverbs 4:23 NLT declares, "for it determines the course of your life"! **The heart—the fountain of the issues of life—is the ultimate prize.**

The competing philosophies of our day remind me of two very different people—Moses, in the Old Testament, and the musical legend, Neil Young!

I imagine you've never compared these two. But both men were engaged in the very same pursuit . . . mining for the treasures of the heart to produce worthwhile results during their time on earth.

Amazingly, both men were motivated by the unstoppable march of time. Neil Young was 26 years old when he wrote his classic, "Heart of Gold"—Moses was over 80 when he wrote his beloved psalm (Psalm 90). Moses seems to sigh about the fleeting nature of time, while Neil Young—as young as he was—has a haunting awareness that he is "getting old":

I want to live, I want to give.
I've been a miner for a heart of gold.
It's these expressions I never give
That keep me searching for a heart of gold.
And I'm getting old.
Keep me searching for a heart of gold
And I'm getting old.
I've been to Hollywood, I've been to Redwood

I crossed the ocean for a heart of gold.
I've been in my mind. It's such a fine line
That keeps me searching for a heart of gold.
And I'm getting old.
Keeps me searching for a heart of gold
And I'm getting old. . . .



Many have tried to interpret Young's lyric. Even Young himself says he has tried to figure out what he was thinking when he wrote this song! I've read a lot about him and his song, about his Canadian birth and upbringing, his long years in America. I haven't seen anything about a Christian background. . . .

It seems his mining for a heart of gold, his searching, had gone empty in all of his 26 years. Something was driving him; it kept him searching for a heart of gold. He felt he wasn't making progress. The quest was enough. The result was emptiness and a deep frustration. "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity" (Ecclesiastes 1:2 NKJV).

One of the more widely accepted interpretations of Young's song suggests Young is saying "I am depressed, and I am searching for meaning to my life; I find it hard to connect with people. I've been to many places seeking inspiration, but have found none. There's a 'fine line' between 'existing' and 'living with a purpose.' And I'm getting old; I feel that my life is wasting away!"

After Neil Young wrote his song in 1971, his life took a turn for the worse. His son was born with cerebral palsy. His best friend died. He and his wife divorced. Life without God's agenda in the equation is vanity, the frustration of our deepest yearnings.

In the empty pursuit of life, without God in
the equation, one finds that tragedy may find
the searcher before he finds what he's
searching for.

King Solomon, in his research into life and fulfillment, discovers the key to the empty pursuit—and the key to the resulting success. The key to the deepest frustration of life is to live it only on a horizontal plane, to only focus "under the sun." *This phrase is the key to understanding the entire book of Ecclesiastes. **The vanity of vanities occurs because one has only an earthly focus.***

If our lives, and the resolutions we make, are basically focused on ourselves, and on what we will experience here on earth, we will find the same emptiness, the same frustration.

It is only when we focus *beyond* the sun, when we focus on *eternity*, on that which *transcends* our lives, that we find fulfillment and discover what we are meant to enjoy. It's the eternal perspective that gives meaning to what we live here day to day.



“He has made everything beautiful in its time,” Ecclesiastes 3:11 declares. “He has also **set eternity in their heart**, yet no man can find out what God has done from eternity onto eternity” (Ecclesiastes 3:11).

So *the key to the “here and now” is to have an eternal perspective from God’s vantage point*. We need to set our clock with God’s clock, the Bible. We need to set our agenda according to His agenda. In this way, we can know what time it is, we can know what His agenda calls for, at any given time. We can move from one meaningful moment to the next.

Neil Young was searching, mining for a heart of gold. He was wrestling with looming despair, feeling that time is getting away, the sand in the hourglass is in free fall.

Moses, on the other hand, had a heart-to-heart talk with his Maker along very different lines:

Lord, you have been God from eternity past, and you will continue to be God in eternity future.

We are transitory dust on this planet. On average we’re here for 70 or 80 years. Then we’re gone. Then we must give an account of what we did in our stewardship of time.

So teach us to make the most of our days for eternal gain—so we may present to you a heart that wisely followed your times and your agenda. Establish the work of our hands so that we will achieve eternal purposes.

My friend, 2016 is before us. We have turned the page to January and to the rest of our lives. Are we “mining” according to the prevailing wisdom of our society? Or are we seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness? Are we seeking merely our own personal peace and affluence?

Neil Young says: “I want to live, I want to give.” He has entered into an introspective search for compassion, but he doesn’t know how, so he turns to “good works.” He has participated in classes about cerebral palsy and epilepsy; he has participated in projects to protect the environment, and animals, and more. . . .

But in the light of eternity, it’s like putting a Band-Aid on a major wound.

We have “a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path.” The Lord has clearly



stated His aim in compassion. He has told us, not once but five times, to engage in His compassionate search for the lost. Jesus came to seek and to save “that which was lost.”

His agenda calls for us to adopt the same kind of attitude we would express if we had lost the family pet—desperately looking for it. Then He takes this concept to an even higher level—the highest level—as if frantically looking for our own missing child! We are to pay full attention and to not casually search for “a heart of gold.” He wants us to search for lost children—these are His words!

Moses’s heart of wisdom translates into an eternal spiritual legacy. God will be totally involved in this search until the very end! He wants us to join Him in His work (John 5:17).

In this New Year of 2016, we are involved in exciting activities that will make for **eternal gold!**

- We want to establish a permanent, powerful, physical presence in Spain with church-planting seminary, which is the root of all that God has shown us to do around the world.
- We are engaged in the mighty soul harvest currently exploding in Cuba.
- We have a wonderful *salvation train* making great progress in Ukraine and in the Far East.
- We are under way in needy and challenging contexts like Liberia.
- We have an exciting opening in what promises to be the biggest replica of our Cuba work on the entire planet—in the nation of India.

God wants you to be part of this! He is calling you to engage with an attitude like someone searching for lost children! Rev up your heart of compassion! Follow the year of 2015 just past with a heart of wisdom and compassion in 2016.

Please join us as we join Him. Please make a life investment. May the Spirit of God lead your life-momentum. Please let us hear from you today, in the first days of this new year, with a heartfelt commitment to make a difference in the various fields where God has called us.

Do you “want to live?”
Do you “want to give?”
Are you still “searching for a heart of gold”?



World Link Ministries

Linking the World to a New Life in Christ



Are you growing *wiser*, not jut “getting old”?

Aim so high that eternity will be in your sights!

Passionately in His service,

[signature]

Manny Fernandez

P.S. Eternal gold! Let’s spend every possible resource, every ounce of available energy, every dollar, every moment, in pursuit of that which is eternal. Nothing wasted! I look forward to your generous gift. Thank you! God bless you!