



How do we hold the year that is passing and the year that is on its way? This month can serve as an in-between time of reflection. I pray we use this time as a moment when we bring awareness to what has passed and what is to come.

2020 was rough! I don't have to list the storms we encountered and the shipwrecks we have endured. The waters have been choppy and the waves of this waning year have been hard. Many find the unknown nature of the next 12 months daunting. How do we hold this past year and the one yet to come?

Scripture suggests that we perceive our past as a teacher and our coming year with hope. As we exit the storms of 2020, what would it look like for you to hold 2021 as an opportunity? Opportunity to take what we've learned from the year we

are leaving and apply those lessons to next year's march toward greater purpose, service, and leadership.

Opportunity is a good nautical term. The word comes from a Latin phrase "oportum veniens," which literally means coming toward a port. A word that suggests that the sea, winds, and shore have become favorable to make it to port. A deep dive into scripture suggests that with God, every year can be held as an opportunity. The Apostle Paul would agree: Acts 27 sees Paul and 250 passengers enduring devastating storms and a destructive shipwreck. After their experience, they find themselves limping into new possibilities. The text lets us know these passengers were ...commanded that those who could swim should cast themselves first into the sea and get to land, and the rest, some on boards and some on broken pieces of the ship. And so it came to pass that they all escaped safely to land.

Sometimes life forces us to make our way to new realities on boards and broken pieces. On the remnants of our shattered hopes and the pieces of our grit, determination, and faith. But with God, the boards and broken pieces become our means of making it to port. Remember, God never promised smooth sailing, but safe landing.

Matthew 19:26: "...but with God all things are possible."

Grace and Peace,

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