WINNETKA
CHURCH OF CHRIST
NEW TESTAMENT CHRISTIANITY

November 22, 2026

SET 'EM UP, THEN KNOCK 'EM DOWN

Bowling. Pay for the privilege of lacing up rented shoes to wear while rolling weighted ball down an "alley" to knock down as many as possible of the ten "pins" that have been set up. This is done for ten "frames" and along the way score is kept. Ideally when completed the tally is 300 which is the perfect score, but who among us is perfect. Last time I bowled (many, many years ago) I believe I rolled a whopping 170 something. So, what got me thinking about bowling? Ralph and Judy Griffin, they are to blame. They recently regaled me with their trip to the bowling alley a couple of weeks back. It sounded like fun and a promise was made to get several together and go blow off some steam rolling bowling balls down the alley.



As my mind is wont to do, I began thinking of the futility of it all; setting the pins up, only to knock them down. Repeat. Then something else dawned on me, in the recesses of my mind I recalled a song, "Setting Up the Pins". The song tries to stimulate its listeners to embrace the repetitive. Accept the challenge of finding a level of joy in the mundane. Notice some of the lyrics found in the song. "You can find joy in the fertile ground setting up the pins and knocking 'em down you can try to fight it till you're anger drowned setting up the pins. everyone everywhere some way some how are setting up the pins for knocking 'em down it can feel simple but it's really profound setting up the pins."

As Solomon opens his thoughts in the book of Ecclesiastes, he addresses this dynamic of how in life it seems that once we do a task, it needs to be done again, and again… Laundry, cooking, the "nine to five" grind and so on, the first eleven verses are caught up in complaining about the seemingly endless cycles of human life. *"That which has been is what will be, that which is done is what will be done. There is nothing new under*

Have you accepted the challenge of finding the joy in doing the "same old, same old"? It goes to the point of what Paul was discussing in Philippians, chapter four and verses eleven through twelve. *"Not that I speak from want; for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am. I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need."* He learned the secret, to be content. So, what's the secret? A matter of perspective with respect to being thankful.

"This is the day which the Lord has made; Let us rejoice and be glad in it." (Psalms 118:24) Consider what as well Paul wrote to the brethren in Thessalonica, *"in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."* (1Thessalonians 5:18) A dear sister in Christ some years back shared with me her perspective on doing the same thing repeatedly. She said she gladly undertook those tasks as it meant she had a husband whom she loved and children with which she was blessed. Washing clothes became a labor of love, as did cleaning the house and the other domestic chores she did day by day. She rejoiced in them all, for she saw her life as full and blessed. Her husband, who is also a child of God, chimed in that he was ever so thankful to have a job to provide for a growing and supportive family (see Ecclesiastes 9:9). He even found a way to make the traffic snarl beneficial.

Throughout the book of Ecclesiastes Solomon appeals for each one of us to open our eyes and see the beauty and preciousness of the tasks in which we have been

entrusted. Sure, there will be times when we question, why, but those should be short lived as we remember that there's comfort in knowing that God values even the ordinary components of everyday life. *"Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might…"* (Ecclesiastes 9:10) (wbe)