



Here we are on the threshold of 2012! For most people a New Year is a time to reflect, recall and remember. It is good to take a look back, remembering where we've been, yet more importantly, it is vital that we look forward to where we are going.

A new year is a great time to reset your internal clocks, re-calibrate your settings, and re-chart your course. There's something encouraging about using a fresh calendar page to make new goals in your life, which is why New Year's resolutions are so popular. A New Year represents new possibilities for all. For Christians it is a great time to emphasize greater spirituality by a **renewed commitment** to Christ.

Christianity is about new beginnings. We believe that when a person gives their life to Christ, we get a new lease on life. Consider the words in Romans 6:4: *"For we died and were buried with Christ by baptism. And just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glorious power of the Father, now we also may live **new lives.**"*

As the old year is left behind, we can look forward to fresh opportunities to experience a greater level of spirituality by leaving behind negative behaviors and habits. Consider the words in 2 Corinthians 5:17, *"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a **new creation**; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.*

The Bible speaks encouraging words to those who struggle to put their past sinful life behind them. Paul wrote to the Roman Christians in Romans 6:6, *"For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin".*

As we reflect upon doing away with negative and damaging choices we should consider replacing them with good and constructive ones; choices that bring purpose, peace and a sense of accomplishment. A Christian's greatest sense of fulfillment may be realized when he or she is enlisted in the service of God, as 2 Timothy 2:21 says, *"If you keep yourself pure, you will be a special utensil for honorable use. Your life will be clean, and you will be ready for the Master to use you for every good work."*

In Christ, we are called to begin fresh each day, turning from a life that serves only ourselves to a life serving God and people. The New Year is a time to remember the blessings of the past year and a reminder that in Christ all things have become new. In this way, the New Year can mark the beginning of renewed commitment to Christ.

This year I want us search, explore and discover "open doors;" the opportunities that GOD places before us, so that we can go forward! Jesus said in Rev 3:8, *"I know all the things you do, and I have opened a door for you that no one can close."* What a thought! We will explore this concept more fully in 2012. There is no middle ground for the Christian. We are going forward, or we are going backwards!

*"But one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind
and reaching forward to those things which are ahead,
I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."
(Philippians 3:13b-14)*

Pastor Mike

The response to the appeal for toothbrushes and toothpaste for Odyssey Hospice has been wonderful. The Outreach Committee will be delivering fifty (50) packets to Odyssey for use by family members spending long hours with their loved ones.

The Outreach boxes will remain in the vestibule and fellowship hall through January to collect new winter wear items; such as, socks, hats, scarves and gloves. We will also be collecting 3" x 6" candles for the homeless people who have no electricity.



Corrections:

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Recipe for a Happy New Year

Take twelve fine, full-grown months; see that these are thoroughly free from old memories of bitterness, spite and hate, cleanse them completely from every clinging spite; pick off all specks of pettiness and littleness; in short, see that these months are freed from all the past—have them fresh and clean as when they first came from the great storehouse of Time. Cut these months into thirty or thirty-one equal parts. Do not attempt to make up the whole batch at one time (so many persons spoil the entire lot this way) but prepare one day at a time.

Into each day put equal parts of faith, patience, courage, work (some people omit this ingredient and so spoil the flavor of the rest), hope, fidelity, liberality, kindness, rest (leaving this out is like leaving the oil out of the salad dressing— don't do it), prayer, meditation, and one well-selected resolution. Put in about one teaspoonful of good spirits, a dash of fun, a pinch of folly, a sprinkling of play, and a heaping cupful of good humor.

Anonymous