

What Does The New Year Hold?

Intro: Last year is gone forever. Some may be wondering just what the New Year holds. Will there be changes? Births, deaths, weddings, good times, bad times, good changes, bad changes, et al. For man the future is unpredictable, as we do not know what will take place. Thus, Jesus gives us an important principle as recorded in Mat. 6:34 “Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day *is* the evil thereof.” We, as Christians, do not need to worry about tomorrow. We know we have a heavenly Father to take care of us. Regarding tomorrow, James teaches us to live with the attitude of “if the Lord will”; Jam. 4:13-17 “Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: ¹⁴Whereas ye know not what *shall be* on the morrow. For what *is* your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. ¹⁵For that ye *ought* to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that. ¹⁶But now ye rejoice in your boastings: all such rejoicing is evil. ¹⁷Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth *it* not, to him it is sin.” Thus, let us consider some of the things the New Year holds.

I. THE NEW YEAR HOLDS TIME

A. A year consists of:

1. 12 months
2. 52.1775 weeks
3. 365.2425 days (366 for leap years)
4. 8,765.8 hours (8784 for leap years)
5. 525,949.2 minutes (527,040 for leap years)
6. 31,556,952 seconds (31,622,400 for leap years)

B. We have time given to us:

1. We can only live in the moment.
2. That also makes each moment precious.
3. Each moment is filled with potential.
 - a. We can do that which is right, pure, and holy.
 - b. We can also waste it by doing evil and wickedness.
 - c. Potential never accomplishes anything, thus how will we use our time.

C. We need to redeem the time:

1. Eph. 5:16 “Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.”
2. We redeem time by using it to do what God desires of us.

D. Ecc. 3:1-8 “To every *thing there is* a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: ²A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up *that which is* planted; ³A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; ⁴A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; ⁵A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; ⁶A time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away; ⁷A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; ⁸A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace.”

II. THE NEW YEAR HOLDS OPPORTUNITY

A. We should pray for opportunities.

1. Gal. 6:10 “As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all *men*, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.”

2. We also need to pray for the resources to be able to take advantage of the opportunities God presents us.
 - a. There are many things we need to make the most of our opportunities.
 - b. Health, family, friends, fellow Christians, financial means, abilities are a few.
3. We need to pray that we will recognize the opportunities that are presented to us.

B. Opportunity to follow in Christ's steps:

1. 1 Pet. 2:21 "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:"
2. 1 John 2:6 "He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked."
3. Phi. 1:20-21 "According to my earnest expectation and *my* hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but *that* with all boldness, as always, *so* now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether *it be* by life, or by death. ²¹For to me to live *is* Christ, and to die *is* gain."

C. Opportunity to teach others:

1. Great Commission:
 - a. Mat. 28:19-20 "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: ²⁰Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen."
 - b. Mark 16:15-16 "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. ¹⁶He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."
2. Proper preparation needs to be made; 1 Pet. 3:15 "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and *be* ready always to *give* an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:"

D. It is up to us as to whether we take advantage of the opportunities or neglect them.

III. THE NEW YEAR HOLDS OPTIMISM

A. As we look into the New Year, we look forward and not back.

1. It is a time for us to think optimistically.
2. The Christian has the wherewithal to be optimistic.
 - a. We know Jesus was raised from the dead.
 - b. We know that we have the continued forgiveness of our sins; 1 John 1:7 "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."
 - c. We know the Christian life is the best life one can live.
 - d. We know we are blessed by God; Eph. 1:3 "Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ:"
 - e. We are blessed even in death; Rev. 14:13 "And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed *are* the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them."
 - f. We know we have a home with God in heaven; John 14:2-3 "In my Father's house are many mansions: if *it were* not *so*, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, *there* ye may be also."

B. The faithful child of God has ever reason to rejoice and nothing over which to brood;

Phi. 4:4 "Rejoice in the Lord alway: *and* again I say, Rejoice."

IV. THE NEW YEAR HOLDS WORK

A. God created man to work:

1. Gen. 2:15 “And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.”
2. After the fall; Gen. 3:19 “In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou *art*, and unto dust shalt thou return.”
3. 2 The. 3:10 “For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.”

B. There is a work relating to our salvation.

1. Acts 10:34-35 “Then Peter opened *his* mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: ³⁵But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.”
2. Phi. 2:12 “Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.”
3. 1 Pet. 1:22-23 “Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, *see that ye* love one another with a pure heart fervently: ²³Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.”

C. We have a God-given work of teaching others.

1. Jesus engaged in the work of saving the lost.
 - a. Luke 19:10 “For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.”
 - b. Mat. 9:35-38 “And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people. ³⁶But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. ³⁷Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly *is* plenteous, but the labourers *are* few; ³⁸Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.”
2. We need to follow Jesus in this work:
 - a. We are commanded to go; Mark 16:15 “And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.”
 - b. Acts 8:4 “Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word.”
3. When we do our part, God will do His:
 - a. Isa. 55:11 “So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper *in the thing* whereto I sent it.”
 - b. 1 Cor. 3:6 “I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.”
4. The teaching of others includes edifying the saved and benevolence to save souls.

Conclusion: These are simply starting points of what the New Year holds. Let us begin this year with an optimistic attitude serving the Lord and looking for opportunities presented to us. Let us remember Paul’s words as we look to this New Year; Phi. 3:13-14 “Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but *this* one thing *I do*, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, ¹⁴ I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”