



## **New Year, New YOU!**

*'Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. ' II Corinthians 5:17 NKJV*

While this is designed as a message for the new year, its application is definitely not limited to this time of year. In fact, I believe that it is something that we need a reminder of on a regular basis.

As is the custom of so many, as the final days of the year approach, especially that weird week that falls between Christmas and New Years, we find ourselves reminiscing on the victories and celebrations of the past year, but also the failures and disappointments. We then turn our focus to setting goals, making plans and declaring “resolutions” that we believe will help us to repeat the victories and avoid the disappointments of the previous year. While I acknowledge that there is some practical and beneficial value to this. So much in fact that I recently shared my [“End of Year Challenge”](#) (Click Link for pdf version) with you all encouraging you to do this exact thing. I also believe that there is even greater value and power in recognizing our identity in Christ and the real spiritual impact that has on our lives, which in turn should impact every other area of our lives. When we then truly grab a hold of this it changes who we are and how we interact with the world around us. Instead, of living a life as dead men walking. In other words, I am alive, saved and eventually going to heaven, but I am still enslaved by this carnal sinful nature that wants to do what it wants even if it is contrary to what God says. Thus, we find ourselves in a constant battle between the “flesh” and the “Spirit.” In reality, as this verse and others remind us that IN CHRIST, we are a NEW creature, the old sin nature is DEAD and we are “Born Again” by the Spirit.

While we do not always walk it out in practice, many of those who have been baptized with water will remember these words as the minister was bringing us under and then back up out of the water, "buried with Christ in baptism, raised to walk in newness of life." Thus, declaring that baptism is a symbolic representation of this very idea. Take a quick look at one of my other favorite verses -

*'I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. ' Galatians 2:20*

When we are IN Him, He is IN us. It is His Spirit that is now our source of Life. Faith is greater than flesh.

So, what does this have to do with the beginning of a new year? Well, like I said initially, EVERYTHING, but at the same time, NOTHING.

EVERYTHING - It has everything to do with the new year, because the new year is time we are already setting “our lives in order” in some way or another. If we are doing so, where is the best place to start? The spiritual level which should be the foundation on which everything else in our lives is

built. The new year is an opportunity to lay aside all of the things that are in our lives that weigh us down and prevent us from being all that we can be in our relationship with Him and realizing all that He desires to do through us for His Kingdom.

*Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, **Hebrews 12:1***

NOTHING - Again, as I said in the beginning, while the "New Year" is a good time to pause and refocus. EVERYDAY is a NEW DAY in which we can apply this principle and begin walking in it.

Finally, believe me, I don't want you to get the idea that I believe that I have "It all figured out." I DON'T! My only hope and prayer is that these messages that I am blessed to have the opportunity to share with you will draw you deeper and closer in your relationship with the Lord. I pray they encourage and strengthen you in your faith. Finally, that you will know that you are not on this journey alone and you have a Heavenly Father who loves you more than you can imagine!

*Brothers and sisters, I do not regard myself as having taken hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. **Philippians 3:13-14***

Until next time!

In His service,

*G David Tidwell*