



**30/31 December 2017**  
Vol. 39, No. 53

## **Begin and End Your Year With God**

*James 4:13-17*

### **Traditional Service** *(Saturday, 5:00 p.m.)*

Prelude  
Call to Worship  
Worship through Praise  
Worship through Giving  
Worship in Music  
Doxology  
Worship through Fellowship  
Scripture Reading  
Preparatory Hymn  
Worship in the Word  
*Pastor Emer Manaloto*  
Response Hymn  
Benediction

### **Sunday English Services** *(10:00 a.m. & 5:00 p.m.)*

Prelude  
Call to Worship  
Worship through Praise  
Worship through Fellowship  
Worship through Giving  
Worship in Music  
Scripture Reading  
Worship in the Word  
*Pastor Emer Manaloto*  
Benediction



# Begin and End Your Year With God

Today's Message (30/31 December 2017)  
*James 4:13-17*

As we look out into the fast approaching New Year, many of us may have already started to make plans of one sort or another—like plans for school, jobs, businesses, properties, health, marriage, family, vacation, migration or retirement, depending on our age or present situation. However, as we end one year and begin a new one, do we make God part of our future ventures? In making plans, it is essential to have a right view of life and God. We need to take into account the reality of our mortality and the importance of God's sovereignty over our lives and our future. God is never against planning our lives depending on how we approach it. So approaching life without God ends in foolishness; while approaching it with fear of Him is the beginning of wisdom (*Proverbs 1:7, 9:10*).

In his epistle, James addressed the ignorant and arrogant merchants in the assembly. They knew there was a God, but they lived their lives as if He did not exist (i.e., practical atheism) and even played God themselves (i.e., self-theism). Then the author showed them and all the readers how to become a God-reliant believer who knows God and obeys His will. There are three ways of approaching God's will in our lives. Of course, only one of them is the correct one, the one that every Christian ought to cultivate.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ GOD'S WILL OUT OF IGNORANCE OF HIM (VV. 13-14)
  - **Life's \_\_\_\_\_**: "Now listen, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money."
    - a. This is planning life with one's own *projection, place, period, purpose, and profit* but without God's *part* on it. The "Rich Fool," in one of the parables of Jesus, is an example of an ignorant wealthy merchant who lived his life as if there is no God (*Luke 12:16-21*).
    - b. It presents a wrong view of life and God. Life is not simple but rather complex. God should not be ignored since He is in control of one's life and future (*Proverbs 16:1, 9*).
  - **Life's \_\_\_\_\_**: "Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow."
    - a. No one has a guarantee of tomorrow. No one knows for certain what the next year or hour will bring. Only God can bring about what He wills for the future without fail. The unknown future is safe in the hands of the all-knowing God, and each day is a gift from Him (*Jeremiah 29:11*).
    - b. Life is not uncertain to God, but it is uncertain to man. Faith is not knowing what the future holds but knowing Who holds the future (*Psalms 39:4-7, 90:1-12*).
  - **Life's \_\_\_\_\_**: "What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes."
    - a. Life is brief like a mist that quickly evaporates. This is something Job observed (*Job 8:9, 9:25-26, 14:1-2*). How quickly anyone can succumb to sickness or meet an accident illustrates how frail man really is. Someone said that life is like a tissue paper: the closer you get to its end as you unroll it, the faster it goes.
    - b. Man counts his years according to his birth date, but God teaches him to number his days (*Psalms 90:12*), so that he will use them wisely by investing his life in those things



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that are eternal. Your life is a gift from God that must be lived according to His ways.

2. \_\_\_\_\_ GOD'S WILL OUT OF ARROGANCE BEFORE HIM (VV. 16-17)
  - **Life's \_\_\_\_\_**: "As it is, you boast and brag. All such boasting is evil. Anyone, then, who knows the good he ought to do and doesn't do it, sins."
    - a. King Nebuchadnezzar is an example of an arrogant monarch who lived his life as if he was God (*Daniel 4:30-32*). Man's boasting only covers up man's weakness. "Man proposes but God disposes," wrote Thomas à Kempis. Solomon said it first, "The lot is cast into the lap; but its every decision is from the Lord" (*Proverbs 16:33*).
    - b. Man is frail. He cannot control future events. He has neither the wisdom to *see* the future nor the power to *control* the future. To plan without taking into consideration God's will is to set oneself up above God Himself; it is making oneself God. It is sin to plan this way because Christians know better. It is one thing to know the right thing to do; it is another thing to start doing the right thing.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ GOD'S WILL OUT OF RELIANCE ON HIM (V. 15)
  - **Life's \_\_\_\_\_**: "Instead, you ought to say, 'If it is the Lord's will, we will live and do this or that.'
    - a. "If the Lord wills" is not just a statement on a believer's lips—it is the constant attitude of his heart. "My food," said Jesus, "is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to finish His work" (*John 4:34*). Likewise, Paul is an example of a God-reliant servant who lived his life with God as he referred to the will of God whenever he shared his plans with his friends (*Acts 18:21; Romans 1:10, 15:32; 1 Corinthians 4:19, 16:7*).
    - b. Here are the six clear declarations of God's will in your life: God wants you to be saved (*1 Timothy 2:4*), Spirit-filled (*Ephesians 5:17-18*), sanctified (*1 Thessalonians 4:3*), submissive (*1 Peter 2:13-14*), satisfied in Him (*1 Thessalonians 5:18*), and also to suffer for Him (*1 Peter 3:17, Philippians 1:29*). Since your lifespan and success are in God's hands, reliance on His sovereign will is a must.

## FINAL THOUGHTS

What now are your plans for 2018? Have you set dates? Are you planning the right way? Have you marked your calendar without considering what God thought? Does God have any say in your schedule? Do you make God your lesser partner, or your greatest partner? Proverbs 16:3 says "Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and your plans will succeed." Commit now to God in prayer all of your plans for the future including His will for your life, because He knows what is best for you.

Finally, someone said that no one can go back and start a new beginning, but anyone can start today and make a new ending. The point is you can't start over this 2017. But you can begin again right in 2018, making things better in your life. Do you want a new ending this New Year? Then begin it with God by doing His will so you will end 2017 with Him. Now that you know this truth which you ought to do; do it. If you don't, you sin. Choose wisely! ■

## SOME WELL-DESERVED APPRECIATION OF VERY SPECIAL PEOPLE

We note with gratitude the faithful service of our Ministry Programs Director, Mrs. Chette J. King, who retires at the end of this month after 17 years of fruitful ministry. She will return to college to take up Masters in Human Resource Management, and she endeavors to return six months from now to take on a new role as HR Consultant for GCF.

Chette started out leading the Youth Ministry, was promoted to handle the Growth Group Ministry, and was promoted again to head the Discipleship Ministry before heading the Ministry Programs of GCF, her last assignment. With a solid track record of good performance behind her, we praise God that we will continue to be blessed with her gifts as she returns to serve with us once more in the near future.

We also take this opportunity to thank and praise God for the faithful service of our outgoing Chairmen, Elder Marc Sosmeña for the Board of Elders and Deacon June Acebedo for the Council of Deacons. Together with them, we praise the Lord for the elders and deacons cycling out this year even as we welcome the new ones for 2018.

Last but not least, we thank you all for bearing up with the difficulties in parking and sometimes seating in our church recently. I truly apologize for that, even as we appreciate your patience and forbearance. I realize that both for the Cantata two weekends ago, and again last weekend, some of you sat in Auditorium A for the overflow. Thank you for bearing up with these inconveniences, and we pray that you continue to extend your patience as we pray for long-term solutions to our

parking concerns and occasional seating struggles.

## LOBBY GIFTS

Just in case you missed it, we have unclaimed gifts accumulating in the lobby. Kindly double check if your names are there, and make sure you get your gift promptly. Our lobby guards are doing their best to guard them but you never know how fast hands can move, so please claim your gifts as soon as possible.

## PRAYER JOURNAL

As we move closer to celebrating GCF's 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, I would like to invite you to honor God for His faithfulness this past four decades by praying as one church family for 40 days. We prepared a Prayer Journal that features short devotions and prayer themes close to our church's heart, and I encourage you to join and get a free copy at the booth at the lobby.

## VISITING GOOD NEWS CLINIC AND HOSPITAL

I am honoring a long-time invitation from our Missionary-Doctor Dr. Tony Ligot to visit our supported ministry there at Banaue, Ifugao, the appropriately named Good News Clinic and Hospital (GNCH). While there, I will be preaching at the Sunday Worship with a New Year Message. I will be seeing for myself how God has been at work to build and support this ministry, blessing so many lives not just physically but also spiritually. Please cover me and my family with your prayers so that we safely traverse the 10-hour trip to and from the hospital. And while we're away, Pastor Emer Manaloto will be blessing our congregation with the New Year message today.

**A blessed and joyful new year to all of you! ■**

# Ablaze Devotional

**But this I call to mind,  
and therefore I have hope:  
The steadfast love of the  
Lord never ceases;  
his mercies never come to  
an end.**

- Lamentations 3:21-22 (ESV)

## GCF PRAYER GATHERINGS AT THE CHAPEL:

**The GCF Hour of Prayer**  
*Tuesdays, 6-7 a.m.*

**Midweek Prayer Service**  
*Wednesdays, 7-8:30 p.m.*

As the year comes to an end, there is a reality that invites us to reflect about the days that passed. There may have been times of tragedy, trial, and struggle. There may have been times of joy, peace, and rest. But in all these, the presence of God is still alive, and heaven is alive in our lives. This truth of God's presence should move us to hope.

Oftentimes we think of hope is similar to optimism, having a positive outlook of the future. But hope is never about thinking positively, of having an outlook that is solely dependent on one's control. Optimism focuses on circumstances, while hope, in the biblical sense, waits in expectation for God to come again, with His faithfulness in the past as the basis. Hope places its trust on the power beyond its control.

Hope teaches us to wait for the Lord despite the tensions in our circumstances. It turns our eyes toward heaven. Hope also invites us to remember God's faithfulness yesterday, and to join in reliving that same faithfulness in our lives today. Hope makes us experience the reality of heaven, of God's presence here and now. As we join in that hope, it makes us more expectant that God's goodness and steadfast love will shower over all. Truly, then, God's presence—heaven—comes to earth.

Let this year end in gratitude. Thank the Lord for how He has shown His steadfast love and mercy in your life. Acknowledge His presence in your family, community, His church, and even in our nation ■

## Ministry Opportunities + Other Announcements



### ELECTION RESULTS

*We praise our Lord Jesus Christ for these newly-elected church officers who will start their term of service in January 2018:*

**ELDERS:** Ed Dames, Bong Durana, Dan Guina, Aris Lumague, Marlon Roldan, Ed Trono, *and* Eugene Villanueva

**DEACONS:** June Acebedo, Norman Armonio, Levi Fabellar, Nemy Miguel, Arnel Nuñez, Jeff Tan, *and* RJ Yu

*Pray for God's wisdom, love and grace to fill the minds and hearts of our leaders.*



### 2018 PRAYER JOURNAL

*A 40-day prayer journey to GCF's 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary*  
All GCFers are invited to join in this journey of prayer (and fasting), as we move closer to our church's 40th Anniversary. Please visit the booth at the lobby to get your **free** copy of the journal.

### STEWARDSHIP REPORT

*December 2017*

	December Budget	Received, Dec. 1-26
General	8,126,504	8,255,822
Missions	825,500	1,432,510

  

	Jan. - Dec. Budget	Received, Jan. to Dec.
General	99,974,570	82,562,115
Missions	9,906,000	10,880,303

### Flower Ministry

*The flowers this week are given with praise and thanksgiving to God for His love and blessings from an anonymous donor, the Basilad family, and the Messiah College.*

Please call 632 1354 to 56 for inquiries on how to participate in this ministry.

*Erratum: In our previous week's bulletin (Vol. 39, No. 52), we indicated that 543 people want to be GCF members after our Special Christmas Services. That is a wrong figure; the correct is 174.*



## Love God, love others.

THE GREATEST COMMANDMENT



For Simonette Ocampo, it's exciting to serve in the ministry. Service entails a stretch in one's character and room for one to grow.

The love found in serving in the ministry is similar to the love

found in raising children. There is a desire that they too may serve God. Simonette says that she and her family don't just learn from each other when they serve, but most especially when they are at home.

Simonette encourages her kids to forgive those who misunderstand them, and to continue serving because this is the best way to understand His love. It is when one gives one's best, holds on to His promises, and perseveres in the midst of challenges that one can better understand His love. Simonette says that the best part of serving is discovering the beauty in diverse thinking, found as His people learn to love each other as He commanded ■

*You may also bless others by sharing your own shepherding or discipleship journey in loving God and in loving others. You may e-mail your story to [lifejourney@gcf.org.ph](mailto:lifejourney@gcf.org.ph).*

**ON THE COVER:** Morning mist hovers over the town of Bled and the Lake Bled in the Balkan country of Slovenia ([pixabay.com](http://pixabay.com)). Majority of Slovenians are Christians, but the people group Bosniak, who live primarily in the capital city of Ljubljana, are 99% Muslims. *Consider praying for:* The evangelization of the Bosniaks, and that their Christian neighbors would be the light shining forth the truth and hope that can be found in the gospel of Jesus Christ to them.

# Join a GROWTH GROUP

## HIGH SCHOOL & COLLEGE Y-GROUP

Sundays, 9:30-10:30 a.m., and 4:30-5:30 p.m.

At GCF (Youth Center, 6th flr.)

## ICU (Intimacy Care Unit) GG

*for Couples aged 30 up*

Saturdays, 4-6 p.m. at GCF (Rm. A109)

## GREEN MEADOWS GG

*for Couples aged 40 up*

Every other Thursday, 8-10 p.m.

at Green Meadows Subdivision

## NEW GG (GATHERING CONTACTS)

*for Single Men and Women aged 21-30*

Tentatively scheduled on Sundays, 3-5 p.m. at GCF

## YACIES TUESDAY GG

*for Single Men and Women aged 30 up*

Tuesdays, 7-10 p.m. at GCF (Rm. BM07)

## SPORTS GGs (THREE GROUPS)

*for Boys aged 11 to 18*

Saturdays, 12 nn.-3 p.m. at GCF Multi-purpose Gym (6th flr.)

## Pass by the GGEX (Growth Group Express)!

Sundays, 9:30-10:30 a.m., Room B123

Get a feel of what a Growth Group is like before you participate in one. Come and join us!

*If you are interested in joining any of the small groups above, fill out the tear-off form inside this bulletin, drop it in the offering bag or submit it to the Growth Group booth at the lobby. For more information, you can text or call us at 0917 532 7740.*



# Greenhills Christian Fellowship

Know Christ and Make Him Known

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Tel. Nos. 632 1354 to 56, 635 0078 to 80, 635 0082 to 83 | Fax No. 632 1357

Mobile No. 0920 961 2964, Mon.-Fri., 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m.

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