

Faith Alive Church

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In my FCF Leadership Lines for January, V. P. Lonnie Hilton shared some words titled: **New Beginnings, Fresh Start, and Open to Change**. He says; our attitude as we enter the *new year* of 2018 will have a *great impact* on the days to come. Dragging the past with all its baggage into the future *will only hinder* what God desires to accomplish in your life and ministry going forward.

He says, my prayer is that we will ALL be open to hear God and obey His instructions as we live in *the freshness* of His Spirit. So, let's be a *part of* what God is doing in 2018 as we listen, hear and obey.

God wants us to walk in this newness of life and we *should* desire it. *We cannot expect new life unless we are willing to do *new things*. *We cannot expect a new future if we are being drawn back to our old ways. **+Likewise, we cannot expect new or different results by doing things, the same old ways - that were not working before.** In Romans 6, the apostle Paul says this about our *New Life in Christ*. 6 What should we say then? Should we continue in sin so that grace may multiply? ²Absolutely not! How can we who died to sin still live in it? ³Or are you unaware that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? ⁴Therefore we were buried with Him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, **so we too - may walk in a new way of life.** **+ I HAVE HEARD IT SAID; THAT THE GREATEST CHALLENGE facing the American Church today IS: un-renewed minds, un-controlled flesh, & un-developed spirits! IF WE REALLY EXPECT TO WALK IN God's will** for our lives, and experience the blessing of the Lord - **WE MUST ALLOW** the Word of God to govern our minds, our thoughts, our feelings, our faith and our actions.

AND ONCE again, the new person reference does not refer to a split in one's personality; instead, to be a new creation means to have a new: desire, direction, attitude, and mind-set that is *away from* self and *toward* God and His will. In 1 Peter 1:13-14 The Apostle Peter says; 13 So think clearly and *exercise* self-control. Look forward to the *special blessings* that will come to you at the return of Jesus Christ. 14 Obey God because you are his children. Don't *slip back* into your old ways of doing evil; when you *didn't know* any better.

We know there will be pressure to conform and to continue living according to the script written by the world - but believers don't have to give in to that pressure. WE are able to resist the pressures & temptations of our culture. Remember that Romans 12:1-2 NLT says; 1 And so, dear brothers and sisters,* I plead with you to give your bodies to God. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will accept. When you think of what he has done for you, is this too much to ask? 2 Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a *new person* by changing the way you think. Then you *will know* what God wants you to do and you will know how good and pleasing and perfect his will really is. **So, we resist the worlds pressures by meditating on God's truth and letting the Holy Spirit 'guide and shape' our 'thoughts and behaviors'.**

Our thinking determines whether we will respond to situations with: Faith or doubt, belief or unbelief, hope or despair, cooperation or resistance, encouragement or discouragement, blessing or cursing, courage or fear, boldness or timidity, strength or weakness, winning or whining, and Love or hate. **As we memorize, think about, pray out and obey GOD'S WORD, our way of 'thinking, believing and responding' changes** - Our minds become *informed* and *conformed* to the heart of God, for which we were originally created.

AND WHEN WE keep our attention focused on HIS 'thoughts and plans' they become a part of us. **WHEN WE** permit them to override the ideas and values of the world's our fellowship with the Father gets closer and stronger. **AND THEN** we discover the *new power* and *character* that is on the inside of us, just *waiting* to be released, Amen!