

KISSINGER'S CALLER NEWSLETTER

Calling all people to Jesus Christ

Kissinger's Church "Where the Bible Comes Alive"

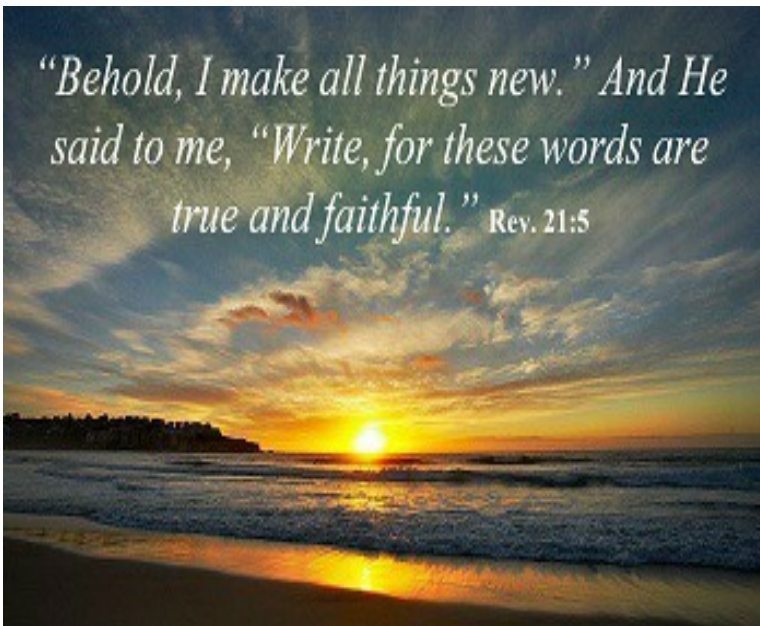
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4 Ways to Approach the New Year with Jesus



"Behold, I make all things new." And He said to me, "Write, for these words are true and faithful." Rev. 21:5

Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland. Isaiah 43:18-19

For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Jeremiah 29:11

In his heart a man plans his course, but the Lord determines his steps. Proverbs 16:9

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! 2 Corinthians 5:17

And so it is that the calendar has (finally!) flipped and we have begun a brand new year. Last year, 2018—with its mix of joys and sorrows, goals met and goals missed, friendships gained and friendships lost—is behind us.

For many, New Year's is just another holiday. For others, it's a time of deep reflection, both on the past year and on the one ahead. For followers of Jesus, New Year's has no unique significance. There's no central biblical narrative informing our celebrations.

But this doesn't mean Christians shouldn't pause and reflect on the turning of the calendar. Moses asked of the Lord, "Teach us to number our days, so we may get a heart of wisdom" (Ps. 90:12). Time—seconds, minutes, hours, days, weeks, months, years—is a gift to us from a good God. To wisely follow him, then, is to redeem our time (Eph. 5:16).

New Year's can also remind us of the new birth. In a sense, each day with Jesus is a chance to turn the page on an old way of life and embrace a new one. We are, after all, new creation people, and we serve a King who renews us daily by the Holy Spirit.

Setting goals for a new year are an important sign that we're intentional about glorifying God in our callings—work and business, home and church, private and public witness. When we work and plan, even in seemingly insignificant endeavors, we're fulfilling the cultural mandate (Gen. 1:28). In this age, we're blessed with an abundance of resources to help us to maximize our time: digital tools, productivity experts, and inspirational blogs.

JANUARY 2019

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But before we write out our goals, we should begin in the heart. The temptation for Christians is to make our plans and add a dollop of Jesus on top, rather than allowing him to form in us the desires and motivations to do his work.

So whether or not we're making concrete goals or more abstract ones, whether we're writing down resolutions or foregoing them altogether, here are four important steps we can take, as we peer into 2019, to draw closer to Christ.

1. Remember

The wise man of Ecclesiastes said, "Remember also your Creator in the days of your youth, before the evil days come and the years draw near of which you will say, 'I have no pleasure in them'" (Eccl. 12:1). In January, the year is young and the opportunities seem fresh. So many productivity gurus preach a gospel of self-empowerment, but as gospel people, we know the fragility of human life. We know every breath is a miracle, a gift given to us by our Creator.

I love the words of hymn writer Thomas Obediah Chisholm (1866-1960):

Summer and winter, and springtime and harvest, Sun, moon, and stars in their courses above,

Join with all nature in manifold witness To Thy great faithfulness, mercy, and love.

In a cursed and tumultuous world, creation itself reminds of God's great faithfulness. Every new season is a testimony, a signpost, to grace. So the proper response to the past year, whether good or bad, is not "I made it through" or "Look what I achieved." It is "Thank you, Lord."

2. Repent

Our worship of God for his faithfulness and majesty, evidenced by the changing of seasons, should then lead us to repentance. His goodness breaks us in fresh ways as our sin is exposed by the light of his glory. But this isn't a morbidly introspective, navel-gazing exercise. To repent is to rejoice. We claim the promise of 1 John 1:9 because we know our forgiveness has already been purchased at the cross.

Beginning the new year with repentance is to draw closer to Jesus, to appropriate the fresh grace that is ours in him. This is why confession always brings relief and joy. It is the gateway to greater intimacy with God.

How can we begin new plans and journeys in 2019 without first allowing his light to penetrate the darkness of our hearts and to reveal areas in need of growth? How can we start hustling and working and dreaming without first renewing our joy in the One who directs our steps?

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3. Renew

New Year's should also be a time of renewing old commitments, like marriage, family, and church. Before we begin grand plans to lose weight or develop a new skill—good creational goals—let's begin by renewing the core commitments we already have.

Our most vital work is what we do within the walls of our homes—loving our spouses and raising our children in an atmosphere of godliness and grace. We live out the gospel best when we live it out in the daily rhythms of repentance and forgiveness with loved ones. We must reject the lie that says success requires abandoning family commitments.

We should also renew ourselves to the faithful body life of our local Bible-treasuring, gospel-preaching church. The local church is the locus of God's mission in the world, where we gather in community to declare Christ's kingship each week, and where we work out our salvation in fear and trembling (Phil. 2:12) with brothers and sisters in Christ.

Commitments to marriage, family, and church don't always look or feel significant. But faithfulness in these core things over a long period is a radical, counter cultural life. They form the habits of a disciple and show the world what it looks like to be a Christian.

4. Rest

New Year's should be a time to rest. First, we rest in the reality of our identity in Christ. We may have failed to meet our heady goals in 2018 Jesus still loves us, despite our failures, unchecked boxes, and disappointment at the scale. The gospel tells us that he loves us in the midst of these.

It's not the voice of your Savior, but the whisper of the enemy that says you have less worth because you blew your resolutions. A "more successful 2019" will not make Jesus love you any more. He's the One, after all, who calls broken sinners and empowers them for his mission. Failed apostles, former persecutors, recovering Pharisees—his body is full of them.

Second, we should plan to physically rest. We don't often do this on New Year's. We plan to work and hustle. But do we schedule time to reflect and acknowledge our need for sleep and leisure? Rest isn't a sign of laziness or weakness; it's a sign of spiritual strength and confidence that when we close our eyes, our lives are in the grip of a sovereign God. To sleep is to say that we're not God and that the world can go on without us.

So as we make our plans for 2019, let's remember that even in our failures, we serve the One who remembers our frame and knows we are dust (Ps. 103:14). We make plans, but we hold them lightly. We entrust our future, not to Evernote or Google Calendar or a reading list, but to the King who holds the world in his hands.

2 large sweet onions, cut into 1/2-inch slices

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NEW MEMBERS



**Kenneth and
Sandra Fischer**

HEALTH NUGGET

Eating a healthy and balanced diet can make a person lose weight. Also having healthier eating habits has great health benefits for your body.

If you have any fitness

RECIPE OF THE MONTH

5-Ingredient Slow-Cooker Pulled Pork

2 large sweet onions, cut into 1/2-inch slices.

1 (5- to 6-lb.) boneless pork shoulder roast (Boston butt).

2 tablespoons garlic-oregano-red pepper seasoning blend .

1 teaspoon kosher salt .

1 (10 1/2-oz.) can condensed chicken broth.

Place onions in a lightly greased 6-qt. slow cooker. Rub roast with seasoning blend and salt; place roast on onions. Pour broth over roast. Cover and cook on LOW 8 to 10 hours or until meat shreds easily with a fork.

Transfer roast to a cutting board or serving platter; shred with 2 forks, removing any large pieces of fat. Remove onions with a slotted spoon, and serve with pork. (Reserve 4 cups shredded pork for Pork Noodle Bowls and Pulled Pork Nachos, if desired.)

Note: We tested with McCormick Grill Mates Backyard Brick Oven Seasoning.

EXCITING SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES at 9:00 AM

Dave Kauffman is teaching "STORIES FROM THE BIBLE"

Bryan Seyler is teaching a new Series on "GRACE"

Pauline Seyler & Barbara Adams will be teaching classes for children ages 5 thru 12

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FROM THE PASTOR

Ahh, New Year's resolutions. So many will be made, but how many will be kept? Perhaps we should look to the Bible for our resolutions this year?

Though many more could be added, here are 5 to consider: (Thanks to Pastor James Emery White for these excellent suggestions)

1. Pray more.

So he said to me, "This is the word of the Lord... 'Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,'" says the Lord Almighty. (Zechariah 4:6, NIV)

2. Confront debilitating patterns of sin.

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles.

And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. (Hebrews 12:1, NIV)

3. Prioritize your family.

A leader must be well-thought-of, committed to his wife... attentive to his own children and having their respect. For if someone is unable to handle his own affairs, how can he take care of God's church? (I Timothy 3:2-5, Msg)

4. Do the hard work needed to build church community.

If your brother or sister sins against you, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over. (Matthew 18:15, NIV)

5. Get more intentional about evangelism.

I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some. (I Corinthians 9:22, NIV)

And, remember, "with God all things are possible". (Matthew 19:26, ESV)

Blessings,

Pastor Dave

CHIPMUNK NEWS



I CAN'T WAIT FOR SPRING



The Kissinger's Church Safety team

is looking for volunteers from the congregation who would be willing to Help, in an emergency/medical situation, during Church on Sunday. We are looking for Doctors, nurses, EMT's or individuals trained in first aid. If you are interested please contact

Ronald Heilman C:484-529-1738 OR AT : tkdrondo@aol.com

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