

Grace Bible Church
Pastor Teacher
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New Years Special: Human nature loves that which is new.

In Rev 21:5 we read, **And He who sits on the throne said, “Behold, I am making all things new.” And He said, “Write, for these words are faithful and true.”**

Most of us love and enjoy things that are new. Remember how our children’s eyes sparkle when we talk of giving them something NEW at Christmas time. Why? Human nature loves that which is new. And the newness which the Lord brings to us is normally bright and clear, heavenly and enduring. James put it like this in **Jam 1:17, Every good thing bestowed and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation, or shifting shadow.**

Notice that it says “every perfect gift” comes from above. Now, at this time, specifically, are you ready for *a New Year*. Most people have grown weary with the old and the difficult times we all had to face especially this past year. The majority of us are glad to escape from what has been for the last twelve-months a time of chaos and uncertainty. I personally believe that the last year was a year where Mat 24 was not literally fulfilled, but a time when Mat 24 was introduced to us. As one translation says “a time of “birth pangs” or “labor” that a woman goes through in her time of pregnancy.

It was the introduction of that time when there will be wars and rumors of wars as well as other warnings that are given in Mat 24. There have been some manifestations of Mat 24:4 where our Lord warned us to “See to it that no one misleads you.” And that is happening today in many different areas.

In Mat 24:5, our Lord says, **“For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and will mislead many.”** And in **Mat 24:6-7, “And you will be hearing of wars and rumors of wars; [and we have seen this today in a phenomenal way] see that you are not frightened, for those things must take place, but that is not yet the end. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and in various places there will be famines and earthquakes.”**

We have seen a glimpse of that as well as a glimpse of Mat 24:10, **“many falling away.”** Then in 24:11, **“many false prophets will arise, and will mislead many.”** There doesn’t seem to be a day that goes by where we don’t hear in some way that many individuals have fallen away or given up as well as those claiming to be prophets, which has not literally happened ever since the second century. Then in 24:12, **“lawlessness is increased, most people’s love seems to have grow cold.”**

We can only hope and pray that this newborn year will not be worse but that it may be a great deal better. However, a great deal better may not be what some of you consider better. It may even be the fact that overtly things will get worse. However, for those of us who believe in eschatology and dispensationalism that means that we are getting closer to our Lord coming back.

For remember what our Lord said in **Joh 14:1-3, “Let not your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. JOH 14:2 “In My Father’s house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.**

So most people have grown weary with this past year with all of the chaos, the wars, the rumors of wars, the economy, the increase of terrorism, the lies from the media, and from our government.

So we welcome the promise of a new year. Sometimes things that are new excite us, other times they cause fear of the unknown. But basically, things that are new exciting and fulfilling, at first anyway. The word of God has much to say about things that are new. For example, what a blessing it is to know **2Co 5:17, That if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.** Being a new creature gives us the confidence that we all desire as we are delivered from the old sin nature and our position in Adam.

The apostle Paul tells us that the new creation is the thing that matters in **Gal 6:15, For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation.** Then there's the unity of the Jews with the Gentiles being made into one new spiritual entity or man in **Eph 2:15, by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace,**

There is also the blessing of being able to live in that new man in passages like **Eph 4:24, and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.** That "new self" is that which we are to "put on" which comes by means of living in the righteousness of God which was given to us as a gift at the moment of salvation and by being holy or literally the word holy means by being devoted to the truth or devotion to doctrine.

It is a new nature that is renewed by means of metabolizing Bible doctrine in **Col 3:10, and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him.** Something new-something very exciting.

In fact, it is looking forward to those things that are new that keep us motivated in the spiritual life **2Pe 3:13, But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells.** This is why John tells us in **Rev 21:1, And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away.** Rev 2:17 tells us about a new name or new rank or title that we can receive if we desire to by becoming a winner believer.

Rev 2:17, "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, to him I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and a new name written on the stone which no one knows but he who receives it."

Paul tells us about walking in this newness in **Rom 6:4, Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, in order that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.** This newness is also related to living the spiritual life for the N.T. believer, **ROM 7:6** But now we have been released from the Law, having died to that by which we were bound, so that we serve in newness of the Spirit and not in oldness of the letter. So things that are new can be very exciting and what better time to consider these new things than the beginning of the New Year.

If you are not excited about all the new things God has graciously bestowed upon us life can become very boring and dull. No one knew this better in the Bible than a man called Solomon, that is of course, King Solomon, the son of David. So Solomon was the wisest of men because he had a wisdom that was God-given. And, he tried every field of endeavor and pleasure that was known to man and even invented a few, and his conclusion was that all is vanity and emptiness! In fact, he made a great statement about the principle of the new when he said in **Ecc 1:8-11, All things are wearisome; Man is not able to tell it. The eye is not satisfied with seeing, Nor is the ear filled with hearing. That which has been is that which will be, And that which has been done is that which will be done. So, there is nothing new under the sun. Is there anything of which one might say, "See this, it is new"? Already it has existed for ages Which were before us. There is no remembrance of earlier things; And also of the later things which will occur, There will be for them no remembrance Among those who will come later still.**

In reality, there is nothing new under the sun but there sure is something new “above” or “beyond the sun”...and those are the things of God. This is why the apostle Paul said in **Col 3:1-2**, **“If then you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.”**

It is discovering the new things that God has done for us that will make the new year worthwhile. Nothing under the sun, of this earth, will ever last forever. In fact, the apostle Peter tells us that in 2Pe 3:10-12 where he writes, **But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up. Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness or in or lifestyle and living the spiritual life, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, on account of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat!**

The point is: Whatever happened to Heaven?

In 2PE 3:13-14, But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells. Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless. Back in the book of Ecclesiastes, Solomon tells us about that frantic search for happiness that he went on searching for something new, something that would entertain him, or stimulate him, or keep him going. And sought of like Dorothy in the Wizard of Oz, Solomon found out that what he was searching for God had placed inside of him which was a desire to know God. Solomon learned the principle of doctrine that “There is no place like home.” Solomon got a glimpse of what our Lord meant when He said in

Joh 3:31, **“He who comes from above is above all, he who is of the earth is from the earth and speaks of the earth. He who comes from heaven is above all.**

Joh 8:23, **And He was saying to them, “You are from below, I am from above; you are of this world, I am not of this world.**

Solomon said in that very popular verse I have quoted many times in **Ecc 3:11**, **He has made everything appropriate in its time. He has also set eternity in their heart, yet so that man will not find out the work which God has done from the beginning even to the end.**

Notice God has set the desire for eternity or the eternal things of God inside of man because man cannot, that is, on his own, he cannot find out the work which God has done from the beginning to the end. In other words God has placed a consciousness in all mankind to search for Him if mankind is willing to do so. **Joh 7:17**, **“If any man is willing to do His will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it is of God, or whether I speak from Myself.”**

Jer 29:13, **“And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart.”**

It is when we discover the things that God has done for us that the new life becomes the blessing of the New Year. Solomon recognized this after much experiences that led him to vanity. In fact, when we studied the book of Job, God showed Job, a righteous man, that he was a **sinner** in God’s sight. But in the book of Ecclesiastes, God showed Solomon, the wisest man who ever lived outside of TLJC, that he was a **fool** in God’s sight. But Solomon eventually learned the lesson that there is nothing new under the sun but beyond the sun all things are new.

And therefore in Ecc 3:10-11 Solomon says, **I have seen or researched the task which God has given the sons of men with which to occupy themselves. He has made everything appropriate or literally beautiful in its time.**

The word appropriate is the Hebrew verb *japheh* which means meaningful or beautiful. You remember the song, in His time he makes all things beautiful! Now, that's our problem! Our problem is not so much what happens, our problem is our perspective of it after it happens. We like things to end like the fairy tales....you know "***and they lived happily ever after***". But when something occurs that we don't like and is not a happy conclusion, we begin to question the giver of that particular thing. And when we push it all the way to the margin, we go back to God and think "***What kind of God is it that would allow this to happen resulting in this tragic set of affairs?***" And if you don't know about the angelic conflict, you'll miss the whole point! What you miss is God's timing!

If you look at life as it is laid out before you and dealt out to you and do not see it ***through the eyes of faith*** or the hand of God, you will not understand why certain things happen. You will not understand why the tiny crib is empty and the baby is gone! You won't understand the reason for the young widow! Or the reason why doctrinal homes are being broken! You won't understand the reason for the cancer patient dying when God **could** heal him and has the power to cure him! Or the reason for the orphan and the problems that an orphan would face. However, when you things through God's eyes or perspective and recognize divine timing and the fact that in His time, he makes all things beautiful and meaningful, then you give Him praise.

So easy to teach, so easy to say, but so many times-so hard to do! And so the first conclusion that he reaches in Ecc 3:11 is that God has made everything appropriate or beautiful in its time. And then the second conclusion has to do with life and the future, the new year! Now think of this word eternity and it applies to the new year? First of all, the new year was actually just like eternity to us a couple of days ago because the new year was future. Now, a couple of days ago I'm sure most of you had faith that you were going to make it to 2016, right? Well it was future a few days ago but now the future has become a reality. The point is that you believed or had faith that you were going to be here when the new year was the future to you but now it has become a reality.

Now, the same thing is true about eternity-most of us have faith that we are going to be around in eternity. In fact, if we were to be totally honest and accurate we are actually living in eternity right now because time is a part of eternity whether it is the past or future. This is why the day that believed in TLJC the reality of living in eternity began which is why you were given eternal life for eternal life is needed to live in eternity. This is why our Lord said in **Joh 5:24, "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life."**

Speaking of our Lord in Mic 5:2 we read "**But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Too little to be among the clans of Judah, From you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from long ago, From the days of eternity.**" In other words He existed in eternity past and to God the past and the future are alike! Now, the apostle John had a lot to say about possessing eternal life so let's look at some of the passages that he wrote. For example, he assures us that if we believe in TLJC we possess eternal life or the life we need to live in the future at this time.

Joh 3:15-16, that whoever believes may in Him have [not will have - but haves eternal life.- now "**For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.**" In Joh 3:36, "**He who believes in the Son has eternal life;**"

So eternal life is something we possess right now! In fact, our Lord says it will even have an emotional affect on us at times called a "well of water springing up within us"; **Joh 4:14, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life.** "

Joh 5:24, "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has [right now] passed out of death into life."

He also tells us that this experience of having eternal life comes from knowing Him; Joh 17:3.

Joh 17:3, “And this is eternal life, that they may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent.”

Paul tells us that we can take hold of eternal life right now, in this life; **1Ti 6:12, Fight the good fight of faith; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called, and you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.** The apostle John goes on to say that we can live in this eternal life right now in our lifetime; **1Jo 3:15, Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer; and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.**

He tells us that this eternal life comes from abiding in our Lord in **1Jo 5:11, And the witness is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.** And then it is through doctrine that we can know we have and are living in this eternal life; **1Jo 5:13, These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, in order that you may know that you have eternal life.**

Solomon again says in **Ecc 3:11...He has also set eternity in their heart, yet so that man will not find out the work which God has done from the beginning even to the end.** And so since the new year has begun which was the future to us last year and we need eternal life to live with Him now, let's look therefore at the subject of eternal life. However, let's not think of it like we always do. You know, something that's *incomprehensible*, something that is *inscrutable*, something that sounds far beyond our ability to really understand!

Let's look at eternity from the viewpoint of curiosity about our future! God has not only put things in perspective by having a time table in which events run their course but He also has put within every human being's heart a curiosity about tomorrow...and about life...and about life beyond!

Now, as much as you love your dog or cat, they will never be concerned about their eternity! They may worry about a meal or some water, or protecting their young ones, or maybe even finding another one of their species in heat, but they will not be concerned about tomorrow!

Do you know why? Because God has **not** placed eternity in their hearts! And since that is true and since we will not find out about tomorrow or the beginning from the end without God, our pursuit must be toward Him. Meaning that you are not really ready to handle life until you are ready to handle death and eternity! And when you have eternity squared away, it's remarkable what it will do with time. And that's what's going to happen to Solomon after his eight experiments!