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HAPPY NEW YEAR!

[Below is an acrostic article where we take the letters in "Happy New Year" to remind us of spiritual truths we need to learn and apply in 2022! God bless you in the new year!]

H (Home) May our **homes** be filled with love (Col. 3:19; Titus 4), and may we guide our children in the path of righteousness in 2022. **A** (Always) God, through Peter, said, "**Be ready *always* to give an answer...**" (II Pet. 3:15). Let us be "***always* abounding in the work of the Lord**" as well (I Cor. 15:58). We have much to do for the Lord this year; let's get busy! **P** (Perseverance) **Pers**
everance is vital if we are to finish our race. Paul is a prime example of what it means to **persevere** (Phil. 4:11-13). May we have our eyes on the goal this year (Col. 3:1-3)! **P** (Persecution)

Face **persecution** the way godly men and women did in Bible days (Heb. 11:32-40).

The apostle said that all who will live godly in Christ

Jesus "***shall be persecuted***" (II Tim. 3:12).

Jesus said those who would suffer would be called "***blessed***" (Matt. 5:10-12).

Y (Youth) To those who can, give to God the strength of your **youth**.

One's **youth** is the time to remember God, rejoice in the Lord, and serve Him (Ecc. 11:9-12:1). Remember to "***let no one despise thy youth; but be thou an example to the believers ...***" (I Tim. 4:12).

N (Nothing) **Nothing** can separate us from the love of God (Rom. 8:35-39).

Throughout this year, when we fall, let us return to the Lord in repentance and ask Him for forgiveness (Acts

8:22; I Jn. 1:9). He will forgive our sins because He loves us and wants us to be with Him in Heaven. E (Example) Be a righteous **example** before others. Christians have this responsibility, whether young or old (I Tim. 4:12; Titus 2:2-8). Remember, our “works” will follow us (Rev. 14:13). W (Wisdom) **Wisdom** is an attribute we need to acquire at all costs (Prov. 23:23)! It can only be obtained by spending time in God’s word and then actively applying it! (Remember, wisdom is the *application* of knowledge!) Make 2022 the year that we heed the words of Solomon and “*get wisdom*” (Prov. 4:5, 7-13)! Y (Yearn) As we think about where we have been and where we are going, are we still **yearning** to go to Heaven? Let this drive and determination dwell within our hearts. This life is not the “be-all and end-all”! We are strangers and pilgrims in this world (I Pet. 2:9). Therefore, let us **yearn** and actively seek that eternal home in Heaven (Heb. 11:13-16)! E (Exalt) **Exalt** God and be faithful to Him this year! God wants those ready and willing to worship Him “*in spirit and in truth*” (Jn. 4:24). He wants folks whose

faithfulness is seen in their words and deeds when we are before men, or alone (Col. 3:17). Let us reverently **exalt** our King, worship Him faithfully, and bring others to Him in 2022! A (Active) A new year brings with it certain responsibilities. Among those that demand our highest priority is to be **active** in the Lord’s service. There is no room in God’s army for lazy folks! He needs **active** soldiers (II Tim. 2:3-4), “workmen” (II Tim. 2:15) who are ready to live for Him every day of this new year! R (Rejoice) The Christian can **rejoice** because his name is written in Heaven! In whatever state we may be, we ought to say as Paul, “**Rejoice in the Lord always: again I say, Rejoice**” (Phil. 4:4). No, circumstances in the coming year will not always be pleasant; but we can still have joy! This is a result of our relationship with Christ. We belong to Him! – Jarrod Jacobs **This New Year Cannot ...** Our country emphasizes the changes of a new year. Many Christians, including me, are caught up in the joy and anticipation of renewal in their lives. That is not at all “bad,” for such feelings may inspire one to

reform his attitude and revise his actions. However, this new year is only a calculation of time. It has no "magic formula" to transform us, either for good or ill. This new year cannot: ** Provide a plan of peace and pardon. God did that "*in Christ*" (2 Cor. 5:19). ** Offer a sacrifice for sin. Jesus did that on the cross (Heb. 10:1-18). ** Change and cleanse your heart. That is your duty (Prov. 4:23; Jas. 4:8).

** Make us happy. God has a plan for happiness (Phil. 4:4-8; 1 Pet. 3:10, 11).

** Cause one to be successful. Fortune is not always fair (Ecc. 7:15; 9:11).

** Promise a long life. We know not what tomorrow may bring (Jas. 4:15-17).

** Forgive last year's sins. But, God will when we repent (Lk. 15; Jas. 5:16).

** Destroy God's love for you. "*Keep yourselves in the love of God*" (Jude 21).

** Erase temptation. We must seek the way of escape (1 Cor. 10:13). ** Dry sorrow's tears. That is the hope of Heaven (Rev. 21:4). There is nothing a new calendar can do to mold and modify you, but you can resolve now to choose the focus and function of your life (Josh. 24:15; Lk. 15:17, 18). In the fullness of time God's

your sins and mine.

Therefore, regardless of what this new year may hold in store, let us resolve to walk wisely and

well, "*redeeming the*

time" (Eph. 5:15, 16). **The**

Influence Of A Godly

Family Many times the book

of Ruth is studied from the perspective of God providing

for Ruth and leading her to a blessed life in Israel. Have

we ever considered what motivated Ruth to follow her mother-in-law, Naomi, to

Israel? Obviously, Ruth cared about her mother-in-

law, but what made Israel such a great country to her? I

would suggest that the

influence of her husband and his family inspired Ruth to

follow Naomi (Ruth 1:1-5).

While living with these

Israelites, there is no doubt

that Ruth would have heard

about Israel and the

experiences that Naomi and

her children had there. Not

only could they have taught

her about Israel, but this

godly family also set the

foundation for Ruth to be a

part of Christ's lineage! She

is mentioned in Matthew 1

along with Abraham, David,

Solomon, and others. What a

blessing! Let us consider our

own lives. Do we have godly

influences in our lives?



MONTHLY CHALLENGE

DIRECTIONS: Each first Sunday of the month, we will have challenges that you should attempt to complete by the end of the month. If we all, as members, complete these challenges, our church will grow in spirit and in number.

1) Praying For Others Challenge

James 5:16 *"The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much."* Prayer can turn night into day, and can change the worst of circumstances into amazing blessings. There are so many areas where our prayers can make a difference. We can pray for one another. "Epaphras, who is one of your number, a bondsman of Jesus Christ, sends you his greetings, always laboring earnestly for you in his prayers, that you may stand perfect and fully assured in all the will of God," Col. 4:12. We can pray for our enemies. "But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you," Matt. 5:44. We can pray for those we wish to share the gospel with. "Praying at the same time for us as well, that God will open up to us a door for the word," Col. 4:3. There are so many areas where prayer is the difference maker. Devote this month to praying diligently in these specific areas and watch God clear pathways to make progress. "I will even make a roadway in the wilderness, rivers in the desert," Is. 43:19.

2) USING YOUR BIBLE IN THE WORLD

Share the following verses with someone who does not attend this congregation at least twice this month:

Titus 3:3-8

"For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another. But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by His grace we would be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. This is a trustworthy statement; and concerning these things I want you to speak confidently, so that those who have believed God will be careful to engage in good deeds. These things are good and profitable for men."