Happy New Year

Intro: As we go through our lives and journey toward eternity, we say goodbye to one year and enter into the next with the phrase, “Happy New Year.” As we enter this New Year, let us use this phrase to learn some lessons we can apply to this coming year.

I. Hold Fast To Your Faith
   A. Many Christians lose faith and fall away.
      1. Heb. 3:12 “12 Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.”
      2. The possibility is real.
   B. We need to choose to remain faithful.
      1. Jos. 24:15 “15 And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.”
      2. Heb. 10:22-23 “22 Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. 23 Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)"

II. Assemble With The Saints
   A. Worship services are an opportunity to worship, thank, and praise God.
   B. Worshiping with the saints is an encouragement to all.
   C. John 4:23-24 “23 But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. 24 God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.”

III. Pray Earnestly
   A. Jesus prayed regularly and taught His disciples to pray.
   B. Prayer is encouraged:
      1. 1 Th. 5:17 “17 Pray without ceasing.”
      2. Col. 4:2 “2 Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving;”
      3. Prayer accomplishes much.
         a. Jam. 5:16 “16 Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.”
         b. 1 John 3:22 “22 And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.”
         c. 1 John 5:14-15 “14 And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: 15 And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.”

IV. Prepare Your Heart
   A. For great blessings from God
      1. Pro. 3:9-10 “9 Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase: 10 So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.”
2. Eph. 1:3 “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:"

**B. To always be prepared to teach others.**

1. 1 Pet. 3:15 “But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:"

2. The great commission.

**V. YIELD NOT TO TEMPTATION**

**A. Song by Horatio R. Palmer, “Yield Not To Temptation.”**

Yield not to temptation, for yielding is sin;
Each victory will help you some other to win;
Fight manfully onward, dark passions subdue;
Look ever to Jesus, He'll carry you through.

Shun evil companions, bad language disdain,
God's name hold in reverence, nor take it in vain;
Be thoughtful and earnest, kindhearted and true;
Look ever to Jesus, He'll carry you through.

To him that o'ercometh, God giveth a crown,
Through faith we will conquer, though often cast down;
He who is our Savior, our strength will renew;
Look ever to Jesus, He'll carry you through.

Refrain:

Ask the Savior to help you,
Comfort, strengthen, and keep you;
He is willing to aid you,
He will carry you through.

**B. We need to fight off temptation.**

1. Jam. 4:7-8 “Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.”

2. God always makes a way of escape; 1 Cor. 10:13 “There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.”

**VI. NEGLECT NOT**

**A. Your talents**

1. Strive to be like the 5 and 2 talent servants in the Parable of the talents (Mat. 25:14-30).

2. Rom. 12:6-8 “Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, [let us use them—NKJV] whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching: or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.”

**B. Your opportunities**

1. Gal. 6:10 “As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.”
2. Tit. 2:14 “14 Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.”

VII. EXAMINE YOURSELF
A. Self-examination helps us to grow: realize our strengths and weaknesses.
B. It is thus needed:
   1. 2 Cor. 13:5 “5 Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?”
   2. Gal. 6:4 “4 But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.”
C. It must be based upon God’s Word; Jam. 1:23-25 “23 For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: 24 For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. 25 But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.”

VIII. WORK DILIGENTLY FOR THE LORD
A. We are to work
   1. Jesus worked: John 9:4 “4 I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.”
   2. We are created to work: Eph. 2:10 “10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”
   3. We must continue to work: 1 Cor. 15:58 “58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.”
B. We are to work with God and one another
   1. 1 Cor. 3:9 “9 For we are labourers together with God: ye are God’s husbandry, ye are God’s building.”
   2. 2 Cor. 6:1 “1 We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain.”

IX. YIELD YOURSELF UNTO RIGHTEOUSNESS
A. When we obey the Gospel, we are dying to self.
   1. Gal. 2:20 “20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.”
   2. Gal. 5:24 “24 And they that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.”
B. Having died to self, we are to live unto righteousness.
   1. Rom. 6:11-13 “11 Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. 12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. 13 Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.”
   2. Eph. 4:22-24 “22 That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; 23 And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; 24 And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.”
X. EXERCISE YOURSELF IN GODLINESS

A. Train ourselves in godly devotion and piety toward God.

1. 1 Tim. 4:7 “But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself rather unto godliness.”

2. Adding the Christian graces; 2 Pet. 1:3-7 “According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: 4 Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. 5 And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; 6 And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; 7 And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity.”

B. When we exercise ourselves in godliness we grow in grace and truth.

1. 2 Pet. 3:18 “But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.”

2. Heb. 5:12-14 “For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. 13 For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. 14 But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.”

XI. AIM FOR SINLESSNESS

A. We will never be sinless, but we should try.

B. Try to be more like Christ:

1. Phi. 2:5-8 “5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: 6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: 7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: 8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”

2. Phi. 3:8, 13-14 “Ye doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ,… 13 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, 14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”

XII. REDEEM THE TIME

A. Benjamin Franklin said, “Do not squander time, for that is the stuff life is made of.”

B. Time is important:

1. Eph. 5:15-16 “See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil.”

2. Paul considered each day the day of salvation; 2 Cor. 6:2 “(For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.)”

Conclusion: As we begin the New Year, let’s all have a happy new year and make sure we make the year for God.