

NEW YEAR'S MESSAGE 2024

Happy New Year! Why do we say that to people? We say it because it is a way of expressing our desire for them to have a pleasant and enjoyable new year. It is an uplifting way to show that we care about them.

It's similar to saying "Merry Christmas" which demonstrates our desire for someone to have a cheerful and joyful Christmas. Do these expressions have any effect on whether a person will be merry during Christmas or whether they will be happy in the coming new year?

No, that depends completely on the person who receives such greetings. Is he an unbeliever or a believer? Is he a baby believer, an adolescent believer, or a mature believer? The chances of a baby believer having a merry Christmas or a happy new year are much lower than a mature believer who is steeped in Bible doctrine which he applies to his circumstances.

There is also a trend when a new year rolls around for people to make "New Year Resolutions." They want to do better in the new year than they did in the previous year so they try to break their bad habits and form new good habits. They go on diets, try to stop smoking, watch less TV... they try to read more, go to church more, be more tolerant and less argumentative. They have good intentions but their hard work to become a better person nearly always fails.

Do you know why? Because New Year Resolutions rely on our puny, pathetic power rather than God's unlimited omnipotent power.

James 4:13 Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow, we shall go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit."

14 Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away.

15 Instead, you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we shall live and also do this or that."

16 But as it is, you boast in your arrogance; all such boasting is evil.

17 Therefore, to one who knows the right thing to do, and does not do it, to him it is sin.

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He develops a habit of trying to solve his own problems which have disastrous results because he lacks the power to succeed. However, if he humbled himself and relied on the Lord's promises, the constant pressure that one suffers while trying to manage one's own life would

be relieved immediately. His new job would be to trust the Lord and wait for His perfect plan to unfold in his life.

James 4:10 Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you.

John 10:10 ...I came that they might have life, and might have it abundantly.

He would see the faithfulness of the Lord working on his behalf. He would access the power and guidance of the Holy Spirit which would help him trust/wait on the Lord and to help him make good decisions.

But if he stubbornly refuses to rely on the Lord, he will doom himself to a life of confusion, fear, anger, and misery. He has never known the peace of God that surpasses all understanding because he is afraid to trust God with his problems or with his life.

Even if he humbled himself and was depending on the Lord, sometimes he may feel helpless and afraid and might fall back into his old wheel-ruts of doubting the Lord, so it is imperative for him to consistently ask the Lord for help, even for help to trust Him.

We all must consistently ask the Lord for help for the big things in our life and the small things as well.

James 4:2 ...You do not have because you do not ask.

John 16:24 Until now you have asked for nothing in My name; ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be made full.

James 1:6 But let him ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea driven and tossed by the wind

14 Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away.

Most people live their lives as if there is no end to it, but we have no control over the time we are born or the time God has given us until He calls us home. Our time on earth is governed by God.

Psalm 31:15 (a psalm of David) **My times are in Thy hand.**

James 4:15 **Instead, you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we shall live and also do this or that."**

We should be making the most of our time on earth because life is short and can end any moment. We should thank the Lord for every day that He graciously give us and we should honor Him with the that time.

James 4:16 **But as it is, you boast in your arrogance; all such boasting is evil.**

Self-centered bragging must be replaced by God-honoring trust. People who are big blowhards who brag about themselves dishonor God. They were boasting in their arrogant presumptions that the future was certain to them. The cure for such pomposity is to find out what reality is by finding out what the Bible says about such people.

When Christians make plans, they should acknowledge their dependence upon God and their submission to his will.

James 4:17 **Therefore, to one who knows the right thing to do, and does not do it, to him it is sin.**

James had taught his congregation what the right thing to do was (trust and obey the Lord), but some of them ignored his teaching and lived life apart from God and the Holy Spirit which is a sin against God.

This verse could be reduced for believers to say:

“If You Aren’t Trusting Him, You’re Sinning Against Him.”

We live at a unique time of history. The entire world has turned upside down and is at war against Israel, against believers, and against God.

Many people wish that they were born at another time so that they won’t have to face what lies ahead, but God specifically brought us into this world at this time for a purpose.

We have the greatest opportunity to be good and faithful servants to God than ever before. In order to accomplish this we must be spiritually strong by being diligent to study God’s Word. This will transform us by the renewing of our mind so that we can live the life that God calls us to live. This is the spiritual life which is so much higher and superior to living by the energy of the flesh and human viewpoint.

The spiritual life makes you fearless, which enables one to rejoice in all things and to have the peace of God. It is about being closer to God which enables you to love Him more and more than anyone or anything else in the world.

We will certainly fail if we try to be victorious by our own efforts.

The time is short, so don’t waste it! So, if you are fearful and your relationship with God is not what it should be, ask Him to help you to trust, obey, and love Him.

This will prepare you to fulfil the plan that He has designed for you specifically for this time.

There will be times when you will have doubts and be afraid. When these things occur, acknowledge your sins to GF and He will forgive you and cleans you from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9).

Ask Him to put in you a urgency to take in your word and to forget about your old ways. You will experience the phenomenal love and power in your life that you never knew existed.