

The 1st Sunday after Christmas ~ Sunday, January 1, 2017
"From Heaven Above ~ The Gift of a Fresh Start"
Isaiah 43:18-21

"...the spirit is indeed willing, but the flesh is weak." (Matthew 26:41)

"Do not remember the former things, or consider the things of old. I am about to do a new thing; do you not perceive it?" (Isaiah 43:18)

THE ABC'S OF A FRESH START

A: _____.

This is something that many people find _____ to do. Sometimes it's easier to blame _____ else for the problems and difficulties in our lives.

"For we are each responsible for our own conduct." (Galatians 6:5)

I'm _____ for my own life—the words I say, the things I do or don't do, the choices I make.

Much of what happens in life is beyond our _____. However, we can control over how we _____ to them and what we do with them

As you anticipate the new thing that God want's to do in and through you, I challenge you to take responsibility for your own life

B: _____.

This challenges us to stop thinking; "I can't" and start thinking; "_____."

"Nothing is impossible for God." (Luke 1:37)

_____ is possible—and the person who _____ that they can change with _____ help—will change.

"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." (Philippians 4:13)

It's not about what _____ can or can't do; it's not about our strengths or weaknesses—it's all about _____ and what He can and will do, if we let Him.

Many people _____ through life because they think they can't change. As a result, they face every new year with _____, rather than the joy of knowing that with God all things are possible!

They _____ God and put Him in a little box—and faith becomes nothing more than _____ words.

We serve a God of _____, and with His help, we can overcome the past and face the future with _____ and _____.

We can change—not with our own strength and power, but with the strength and power of the _____!

"That's why I take pleasure in my weaknesses, and in the insults, hardships, persecutions, and troubles that I suffer for Christ. For when I am weak, then I am strong." (2 Corinthians 2:10)

As you anticipate the new thing that God want's to do in and through you, I challenge you to believe that change is possible!

C: _____.

This challenges us to live our lives _____, instead of just coasting from one day to the next.

There are 3 kinds of people in the world: Those who _____ things happen; those who _____ things happen and those who have no _____ what's happening.

One of the most important factors in life is to have a sense of _____ God is calling us and where we're going—we need to know our _____.

"Without vision, the people perish." (Proverbs 29:18)

It's important then, that we take time to discern what's _____ and what's not important.

As you anticipate the new thing that God want's to do in and through you, I challenge you to clarify your priorities.

D: _____.

This last point challenges us to not _____, but to start now!

“If you wait for perfect conditions, you will never get anything done.”
(Ecclesiastes 11:4)

There’s a lot of people who’ve _____ on life—waiting for the right set of _____ or for things to get _____.

Don’t try to go it _____. Find an _____ partner—someone who can help you stick to your goals and challenge you to keep going. Someone who will _____ you when you’re down and _____ with you when your up.

As you anticipate the new thing that God want’s to do in and through you, I challenge you to not wait to begin—Do it now!



**Do you want this New Year to be better than the last?
Do you want to get the most out of 2017?**

“And the one who was seated on the throne said, ‘See, I am making all things new...I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life.’”
(Revelation 21:5)



20 Questions For Reflection & Prayer in 2017

The beginning of a new year is an ideal time to stop, look up to God, and get our bearings. To that end, here are some questions to ask prayerfully in the presence of God, as you seek to discern His will for you in this New Year.

1. What is one thing you could do this year to increase your enjoyment of God?
2. What is the most humanly impossible thing you will ask God to do this year?
3. What is the single most important thing you could do to improve the quality of your family life this year?
4. In which spiritual discipline (prayer, Scripture study, fasting, worship, etc.) do you most want to make progress this year, and what will you do to make room for God in that area?
5. What is currently the single biggest time-waster in your life, and what

will you do about it this year?

6. What is the most helpful new way you could help strengthen your church family in this new year?
7. For whose salvation will you pray most fervently this year?
8. What's the most important way you will, by God's grace, try to make this year different from last year?
9. What one thing could you do to make yourself more available to God and improve your prayer life this year?
10. What area of your life most needs simplifying, and what's a first step?
11. What's the most important need you feel burdened to meet this year?
12. What bad habit would you like God to deal with in you this year? What new (healthy) habit would you most like to establish this year?
13. Who is the person you most want to encourage this year? Why? How will you do this?
14. What is your most important financial goal this year, and what is the most important step you can take toward achieving it?
15. What is one thing you could do this year to enrich the spiritual legacy you will leave to your children and grandchildren?
16. What one thing do you most regret about last year, and what will you do about it this year?
17. What single blessing from God do you want to seek most earnestly this year?
18. In what area of your life do you most need growth, and what will you do about it this year?
19. What skill do you most want to learn or improve this year?
20. To what need or ministry will you try to give an unprecedented amount this year?