

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday after Epiphany ~ Sunday, January 19, 2020

“2020 Vision: The ABC’S of a Fresh Start”

Isaiah 43:15-21

“...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)

- “He put a **new song** in my mouth, a song of praise to our God.” (Psalm 40:3)
- “And you will be given a **new name** by the Lord’s own mouth.” (Isaiah 62:2)
- “I will give them one heart, and put a **new spirit** within them; I will remove the heart of stone and give them a heart of flesh...” (Ezekiel 11:19)
- “Drink this all of you; for this is my blood of the **new covenant**, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.” (Matthew 26:28)
- “I give you a **new commandment**, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another.” (John 13:34)
- “So if anyone is in Christ, there is a **new creation**: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!” (2 Corinthians 5:17)

GETTING OUT OF GOD’S WAY

**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)

2 kinds of circumstances in life

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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)

“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”

“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.

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

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)

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!

“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)

A new you for a new year–the question is, whose ‘you’ is it going to be–your’s or God’s?



## 20 Questions For 2020

Once, when the people of God had become careless in their relationship with Him, the Lord rebuked them through the prophet Haggai. **“Consider your ways!”** (Haggai 1:5) God urged them to reflect on some of the things that were happening to them, and to evaluate their slipshod spirituality in light of what God had told them.

Even those most faithful to God occasionally need to pause and think about the direction of their lives. It's so easy to bump along from one busy week to another without ever stopping to ponder where we're going and where we should be going. The beginning of a new year (and decade!) 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 for this new 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 to grow, 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?

**The value of many of these questions is not in their profundity, but in the simple fact that they bring an issue or commitment into focus. For example, just by articulating which person you most want to encourage this year, is more likely to help you remember to encourage that person than if you hadn't considered the question.**