

Andrès Scheffer: New Beginnings (9/12/18)

Where has 2018 gone?

With its many laughs, smiles, tears and losses. It's successes, failures, growth and sickness. Death, birth, spiritual growth and spiritual backsliding. Our church has had its challenges, it has had its problems and pain, but we have also grown and moved forward.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

We have all had something to praise the Lord for from this year.

Michael's Testimony: Psalm

- Michael praises the Lord for His hand in getting a new job. Because of this new job he has had opportunities to share his faith that he would not otherwise have had.

Winston Yettie: Psalm 4:8

- This year has been a really tough year for Winston and his family. After his stroke Winston spent many months in hospital. During this time of trial Winston was able to be a witness for the Lord. The Doctors and Nurses were all blessed because of the peace that Winston had in spite of the fact that he lost motion in one side of his body and most of his speech. This peace was due to the fact that Winston has hope in His God.

Ecclesiastes 5:4,5

It is better not to make a promise to God based on our faithfulness.

A better idea would be to make a deal with God, saying: "I am a sinner, but by your grace I would love to enter into a partnership with you to do whatever is your will for me this new year.

We can trust His will:

- Jeremiah 29:11 - His will for us is always to bring us peace.
- 1 Timothy 2:3,4 - He loves you and wants your best.
- *"In His loving care and interest for us, often He who understands us better than we understand ourselves refuses to permit us selfishly to seek the gratification of our own ambition. He does not permit us to pass by the homely but sacred duties that lie next us. Often these duties afford the very training essential to prepare us for a higher work. Often our plans fail that God's plans for us may succeed. We are never called upon to make a real sacrifice for God. Many things He asks us to yield to Him, but in doing this we are but giving up that which hinders us in the heavenward way. Even when called upon to surrender those things which in themselves are good, we may be sure that God is thus working out for us some higher good. In the future life the mysteries that here have annoyed and disappointed us will be made plain. We shall see that our seemingly unanswered prayers and disappointed hopes have been among our greatest blessings. We are to look upon every duty, however humble, as sacred because it is a part of God's service. Our daily prayer should be, "Lord, help me to do my best. Teach me how to do better work. Give me energy and cheerfulness. Help me to bring into my service the loving ministry of the Saviour." Ellen White, The Ministry of Healing pg 473,474*

Resolve Moving into 2019:

Regardless of what comes in 2019, let us remember that God's will for our lives is best - even any pain that He allows will eventually work out for good.

2 Kings 18:1-3 - Hezekiah was one of the few good Kings. "He did what was right in the sight of the Lord."

2 Kings 20:1 - Hezekiah was told that he was going to die soon. Hezekiah was not happy with this and prayed that God would extend his life.

2 Kings 20:4 - God answered Hezekiah's prayer and healed him. Unfortunately Hezekiah forgot to attribute the praise and glory to the Lord. During this time a son was born (Manasseh see vs 21) and he became the worst of the Kings of Israel.

2 Kings 21:1-7 - Manasseh's reign was full of terrible evils. There is a sense in which it could be said 'if only King Hezekiah had accepted God's will for his life and died.'

Conclusion:

Matthew 28:20 - God promises to be "with us" through whatever comes. Let us partner with Him and be "with Him."