



GROW, PRAY, STUDY:

This tool is provided to assist you in individual or small group discussion. We pray that whatever pattern of study you choose, the Holy Spirit will weave God's Word into the life and heart of each, whether individually or in your study group

January 13, 2019

NEW—Finding God in Everyday Places

NEW—Chances and Changes

2 Corinthians 5:16-17

NEW is one of the great words of the English language. It connotes something existing or appearing for the first time. So, at the beginning of a new year we make resolutions to experience a new beginning. It is the witness of the Christian faith that NEW can be experienced not just on January 1 but in every day of every year.

GROW: Did You Know. . . .

- There is a cultural tradition of making a New Year's resolution to improve the quality of life. Resolution setting is not a Christian discipline activity per se, though the Scriptures teach that all in Christ are new creatures.
- **The tradition of New Year's resolutions** dates to 153 B.C. (the pre-Christian Era). January is named after Janus, a mythical God of early Rome. Janus had two faces — one looking forward, one looking backward. This allowed him to look back on the past and forward toward the future. Roman mythology believed that January was a time for new purpose.
- **"IN CHRIST"** is the single most repeated phrase in the New Testament letters authored by the Apostle Paul (Romans-Philemon). For the Apostle, it is the whole of the Christian life. The death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is the foundation of human existence. Faith in God through Jesus Christ brings one "into" the presence of God, in essence this person is "In Christ."
- **IN CHRIST** the old self of the person dies. The person no longer is judged through the standards of the world but is found to be a new creation before God.
- **IN CHRIST WE ARE A NEW CREATION.** In Christ one acquires a new identity, a child of God, a friend of God, one who has access to God by the grace and mercy of Jesus as the propitiation for human sin.
- **CHRISTIAN**—a term developed in 1st and 2nd century by the Roman Empire to describe the followers of Jesus, or "Partisans of Christ"; A Christ-Partisan is a Christian. It was a slang term originally meant to denigrate a person of Faith.
- **2 Corinthians 5:16-17** is a preeminent passage of the Bible which declares that by faith in Jesus Christ, God makes people new. Through Christ there is given the chance to make an everlasting change in how one sees and lives this life on earth, with a view to life that will be eternal.

Pray: Here is a prayer for the week: *Create in me a clean heart o God and renew a steadfast spirit within me. In Jesus' name, Amen. (Psalm 51:10)*

Study: *My Notes from the Sermon*

STUDY FOR THE WEEK

Scripture citations are from the New American Standard Version of the Bible (NASV)

Monday, Galatians 2:19-21

Christian faith is not a dead faith but a living faith. Trust in God means that the Holy Spirit enters the human being, making him at one with God in and through Jesus Christ. Jesus makes atonement (At-One-Ment) for human sin. It then stands to reason that the life one lives by faith is not our own possession but Christ who lives in us. How do others see Christ in you?

Tuesday, Ephesians 1:2-5

One of the great theological debates of the millennium has been the concept of predestination. Central to the discussion is: how is it that one comes to faith in God? Jacobus Arminius was the first Christian philosopher to articulate that which is predestined in the work of Jesus Christ in God's Salvation Plan. Jesus is the Word and the Word was in the beginning. How have you experienced God's predestined love in Jesus?

Wednesday, Philippians 1:1-6

There is no "I" in team; this is a familiar colloquialism. It speaks to the power of community which is common-unity, of being and working together. When a person is In Christ, he becomes a part of the Body of Christ. The work and activity of the new believer becomes a part of the unfolding of God in this world. How has God begun a new project or ministry in you?

Thursday, Philippians 4:6-8

Peace is not the absence of problems but the presence of God. A person who is IN CHRIST is inside the life and presence of God, made manifest by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. This indwelling of Christ brings the promise of peace. In what way have you experienced the "peace which surpasses all understanding"?

Friday, Colossians 1:26-28

There are at times God's mysterious ways-- almost supernatural ways in which God is experienced. It is hard to describe. Of faith, it has been said, those on the outside of faith cannot understand and those on the inside of faith cannot describe. How have you experienced God's mysterious ways?

Saturday, 1 Timothy 1:13-15

The phrase IN CHRIST appears 124 times in the 13 Books of the New Testament known as the Letters of the Apostle Paul. Notice in this passage Paul sees himself as a man, chief among sinners. God never calls perfect people into faith. He calls people to be faithful by being in Christ. When did you know that you were loved and forgiven by God IN CHRIST?