



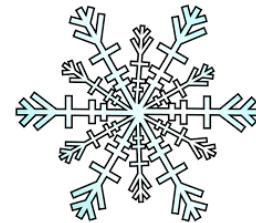
January, 2018

FROM PASTOR CHAMBERS: We had an incredible month of ministry at our church in December! We had several visitors who came for the children/teen Christmas play, the Christmas cantata, and the candlelight service. I want to thank each and every person who either organized, planned, and performed on various Sundays and in various roles throughout the Christmas season. The Lord was glorified and it was a wonderful season! As our focus turns to a new year, let us keep pressing forward reminding ourselves of those fundamentals of the faith being “servant hearted, kingdom minded, and Christ focused.” The Lord has been good to our church in 2017 as we have seen new members join as well as people be baptized. Let us now look toward 2018 with anticipation for what the Lord is going to do at Spring Hill. I appreciate and love you all.

A GOOD THOUGHT FOR A NEW YEAR: The following comes from the introduction of my message last Sunday morning as is recorded in my journal entry that day along with some added material to make it a “good thought for a new year...”

Today the door closes on 2017, and the door opens on 2018. In my life, 2017 had its negatives, and it had its positives; there have been bad days, and there have been good days. It had its uncertainties, and it had its stressful moments. I am another year older, I am another year wiser, I am another year experienced on this adventure called life. There has been growth, memories made, failures experienced, successes gained, and lessons learned. The journey keeps going, and while the road is uncertain, the adventure of it all is always certain. As I walk through the door of 2018, a page has turned, it is blank, and it is uncertain. I have goals, I have plans, I have resolutions, but I also will have adversity. I must continue to travel the road of uncertainty. I don't know what is going to happen, it scares me, but I must not let that fear overcome me. I must walk through that door. I am faced with two choices, the first of which I remain the same, frozen in fear, frozen in cynicism, frozen in negativity as I go through that door due to past experiences, past defeats, past regrets. The other choice is to press forward, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are before, facing the uncertainty that lies before me, knowing that retreating from doors drains my spirit far more than charging through them does. I pause and I remember an old rabbinic legend I recently read...

From the mint two bright, new pennies came,
The value and beauty of both the same;
One slipped from the hand and fell to the ground,
Then rolled out of sight and could not be found.
The other was passed by many a hand,
Through many a change in many a land;
For temple dues paid, now used in the mart,
Now bestowed on the poor by a pitying heart.
At length it so happened, as years went round,
That the long lost, unused coin was found.
Filthy and black, its inscription destroyed,
Through rusting peacefully unemployed.
While the well-worked coin was bright and clear,
Through active service year after year;
For the brightest are those who live for duty -
Rust, more than rubbing, will tarnish beauty.¹



I now think, which penny will I be? As a new page is turned in 2018, I do not want to shut my eyes to any door that God has opened for me at the beginning of each new day and each new year. I do not want to turn away from stepping through it because I am too fearful or too weary, or it is disguised as a problem or a fear, for there is still much to be done. I must continue to lead my family, raise my kids, shepherd the flock, listen, learn, and grow. The door of 2018 is open, the road is uncertain, how will I respond? I pause and remember another lesson I recently read...

A rabbi once asked his student. “What is a year?” “365 days,” the student answered. “But in the language of Scripture it's more than that. It's called the “shannah” . . . and it is linked to the number two.” “I don't get the connection.” “Shannah can mean the second, the duplicate, or the repeat. In the course of nature the year is the repeating of what has already been . . . the winter, the spring, the summer, and the fall, the blossoming of flowers and their withering away, the rebirth of nature and its dying, the same progression, the same replaying of what already was. So a year is a shannah, a repetition. **And now you have a new year before you. And what kind of year will it be?**” “What do you mean?” “The nature of nature is to repeat, just as we live, by nature, as creatures of habit. We gravitate toward doing that which we've done before, the same routines and courses, even when those routines and courses are harmful to us. So what will this new year, be for you?” “Well if the year means the repeat, I guess I don't have much of a choice. It will be mostly the same as the one before.” “But you do have a choice,” he said. “You see, shannah has a double meaning. It not only means the repeat . . . it also means the change.” “How can the same word mean the opposite?” “The same way the year ahead of you can be either. **The way of the world is to repeat—but the way of God is the way of newness and change.** You can't know God and not be changed by knowing Him. And His will is that the year ahead, be not a time of repetition but of change, of new beginnings, new steps, of breaking out of the old. And if you want to experience a year of new things, you must choose to live not in the repetition of the natural, but in the newness of the supernatural. Choose to walk not in your will but in the will of Him who is beyond the natural and beyond all that is old. **As it**

¹ Ortberg, John. *All the Places to Go...How Will You Know?* (2015 Tyndale House Publishers) p. 262-263.

is written, He makes all things new. Open up your life to the newness of His will, and you will walk in the newness of life and in the 'shannah' of change."²

As this new year begins we have two choices: keep doing the way of the world and how they react to the road of uncertainty, of the way of the Lord and how we should react to the road of uncertainty - putting Him first and allowing Him to lead our lives. It all goes back to this question - "DO YOU KNOW JESUS CHRIST AS YOUR PERSONAL SAVIOR and ARE YOU ALLOWING HIM TO LEAD AND DIRECT YOUR LIFE?"

LOOKING FOR A GOOD DEVOTIONAL BOOK?: In November I recommended some books that I had recently read. In December I shared with you some books that have impacted my life over the years. This month I want to recommend my favorite devotional books if you are still looking for the right book to help with your devotions in 2018...

- **Uncommon Life: Daily Challenge, by Tony Dungy** - Former NFL Coach Tony Dungy comprised this devotional book in 2011 while he was still coach of the Indianapolis Colts. The book focuses on 7 themes that are rotated every seven days: core, family, friends, potential, mission, influence, and faith. He uses analogies from football and other areas of life to help with the scripture for the day. This devotional is one of my personal favorites because I have met Coach Dungy and I appreciate his testimony and influence for the Lord Jesus Christ.
- **The One Year Through the Bible Devotional, by David R. Veerman** - If you are looking for a way to read your Bible through in a year with application, then this is the perfect devotional for you. I have read my Bible through several times in my life, but to be honest, many times I would get bogged down and it could become more of a "checklist" than meditation and application. This devotional helps with that problem, it is paced just perfectly and after the year you will not only have read your Bible through but you will have had application as well. (One note of caution, I do not know this author's particular stance on an prophetic timeline as it concerns the Lord's coming pre-tribulation or post-tribulation but he does emphasize application and gives good application on the prophetic texts)
- **Mornings with Tozer, by A.W. Tozer** - I am currently reading this devotional and what I have read so I have liked, for I love everything A.W. Tozer has written, especially *The Pursuit of God*
- **Evenings with Tozer, by A.W. Tozer** - A companion book to Mornings with Tozer if you want to read one book in the morning and the other in the evenings, for there are some incredible thoughts on scripture.
- **Magnificent Prayer, by Nick Harrison** - One of the best devotional books I have ever read on prayer recommended to me by Pastor Charles Hornick. It gives quotes on prayer, a text, and the application. This devotional has been really effective on improving my prayer life and I highly recommended it
- **My Utmost for his Highest, by Oswald Chambers** - This is a classic devotional that gives incredible thoughts on scripture. Rest assured that I also like it because there is something about the author's last name I like as well...
- **Dwell, by Partners in Ministry** - We have 30 copies of this devotional on the information table each month and it is also one of the best devotionals I have ever read.

There are several other good devotionals out there that you can use, and I want to encourage you to use what works for you and is effective in your life. I want to also encourage you that if you don't have a time set aside to read scripture and pray every day, please make time to do so for it effects your day and your spiritual life.

CHURCH EVENTS FOR JANUARY: The official "church calendar" is located in the church office and on www.shbcwv.com If you lead a ministry and desire to plan an activity not yet on the calendar and need it announced for Sunday, please let us know by **Friday morning** so that it can be announced in the bulletin each week.

Wednesday, January 3 - GNC/AWANA/CURE Youth Group resumes; Shut in committee 8 pm

Sunday, January 7 - Lord's Supper - pm service

Monday, January 8 - Trustees Meeting - 6:30 pm/ Advisory Council Meeting - 7 pm

Thursday, January 11 - Sunshine Seniors go to Jolly Seniors at Cross Lanes - 10 am/ Fellowship Hall Reserved

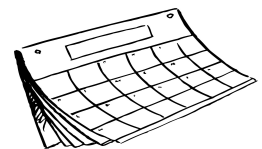
Sunday, January 14 - Baptism am service, Teen Snack in Yak pm

Thursday, January 18 - Sunshine Seniors 2018 planning Luncheon - Fellowship Hall - 12 pm

Sunday, January 21 - Youth/Children's Safety Class - 5 pm; Annual Business Meeting Reports - 6 pm

Sunday, January 28 - Missionary Gary Layne (to the deaf in Mexico) - give update in pm service

Tuesday, January 30 - Deacon's Meeting - 7 pm



*Handbell Practice - every Monday evening @ 5:45 pm

*Choir Practice - every Sunday evening @ 4:30 pm

*Good News Club - every Wednesday afternoon @ 3:00 pm - Bridgeview Elementary

*CURE Youth Group/AWANA - every Wednesday evening @ 7:00 pm

NOTABLE AND QUOTABLE:

"When we depend upon organization, we get what organization can do; when we depend upon education, we get what education can do; when we depend upon man, we get what man can do; but, when we depend upon prayer, we get what God can do!" - A.C. Dixon

"There is nothing too great for God's power, and nothing too small for His love." - Corrie Ten Boom

² Cahn, Jonathan. *The Book of Mysteries* (2016, Charisma House Book Group) p. 2.