

Prayer – January 05, 2021

Praying for a New Year

1. A Prayer to Focus on Christ in the New Year

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. ² Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. (Hebrews 12:1,2).

Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. ² Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. (Col 3:1-2)

Let's face it, every day we are faced with a myriad of distractions. What keeps you from focusing on Christ? Take a minute and ask God to show you those distractions and how you can avoid them.

All of the distractions are designed to get you to take your eyes off Jesus and what matters most. Let this new year be the year you lock in on what matters to God and his heart. After all that is what matters most.

Prayer:

Lord, help me to fix my eyes on you. There are so many distracting voices that clamor for my attention. Help me to shut those out to focus on your voice. Help me to make room for you and to make time with you a top priority in my life.

2. A New Year's Prayer for Hope

²³ Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. ²⁴ And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. ²⁵ Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching. (Heb 10:23–25)

¹⁸ I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, ¹⁹ and his incomparably great power for us who believe. (Eph 1:18–19)

The modern idea of hope is “to wish for, to expect, but without certainty of the fulfillment; to desire very much, but with no real assurance of getting your desire.” Biblical hope is much more. It is the confident expectation, the sure certainty that what God has promised in the Word is true, has occurred, and or will in accordance with

God's sure Word. What promises are you holding onto today? What promises are you struggling with today?

Prayer:

Lord, in this new year help me to remember your promises and who you are. It is because of you that I can have hope because you are faithful. Let your faithfulness be the thing I remember and rely on. Let that be the source of my hope and joy.

3. A New Year's Prayer for Peace

²⁶ But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. ²⁷ Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. (Jn 14:26–27)

¹⁵ Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. ¹⁶ Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. (Col 3:15–16)

God has offered us his peace. The reality of peace is that it is not the absence of chaos but the presence of calm within the chaos. In what specific areas of your life are you struggling with peace? Take a moment and ask God to show you those places, and ask Him to help you.

As you face the new year, remember God has promised you his peace. When you pray as Philippians 4 instructs you to do, then God promises his peace will guard your heart and mind.

Prayer:

Lord, in spite of what I see and everything happening, I pray for your complete peace. In my circumstances don't let me be anxious or troubled. Help me to pray about everything, leaving it all in your hands. As I do let your peace rest in my heart as I trust in you.

4. A Prayer for New Beginnings

¹⁸ "Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. ¹⁹ See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland" (Isaiah 43:18-19).

Let's face it, we all have probably done some things that we wish we could do over. As we face a new year and review, let it be a time of learning. Take a minute and jot down the "big" mistakes for you in 2020. Which ones do you need to confess and repent of

today? Which do you need grace to move forward from? Ask for God to help you to live without repeating the errors of yesterday.

Prayer:

Lord it is so hard to pick up the pieces and keep moving forward. Help me to see that your plan is still in effect. Give me faith to know that regardless of what this past year has looked like I can start over. Help me not to run with my head looking backwards. Help me to run forward into the plan and purpose you have set before me.

5. A Prayer for Reconciliation

“If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone” (Rom 12:18).

³¹ Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. ³² Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. (Eph 4:31–32)

This past year has felt like it has been more divisive than ever. The divisions have spilled over from the world into the church. Who are you struggling to get along with today? Who do you desire to seek reconciliation with? Ask God to point out any you may need to be reconciled with.

We need to heal those divides because the message of the Gospel is at stake. If this year was a year of division, we need to make the next year of reconciliation.

Prayer:

Lord, this has been a year with many questions and very deep emotional feelings coming to the surface. Help me and the body of Christ to push past every divisive thing and move to a place of reconciliation. Let the fruit of the Spirit be evident in my life as I seek to be a healer of broken and angry hearts.

6. A Prayer of Blessing

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, (Eph. 1:3)

²⁴ The Lord bless you and keep you; ²⁵ the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; ²⁶ the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace. (Num. 6:24-26)

It is good to know that there is a God in heaven who delights and enjoys blessing his people. The blessings are not just for physical things but go way beyond that. What specific blessings do you desire this year? What specific blessings will you be praying for this year?

More than the blessings we should be pursuing the blesser. Let this be the year you run after God, not for anything he can give you, but because you want him more than anything else.

Prayer:

Lord, in the midst of chaos, sometimes it's hard to see your blessing. Help me to seek your face in this new year. Help me to desire you more than anything you could ever do for me. Let Jesus be the object of my affection and the prize of my heart.

7. A Prayer for God to Use you This Year

¹¹ For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. ¹² Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. ¹³ You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. (Jer 29:11–13)

¹⁶ This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. ¹⁷ If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him?

¹⁸ Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth. (1 John 3:16–18)

As we begin a new year, take a moment and ask God to bring specific people into your life that you can bless, encourage, and help this year. Ask that God might give you the privilege of sharing His love with those who don't Him, and hope with those who do, but are hurting. Who do you believe God is leading you to help this year?