

1-1-2017
CHALLENGE FOR THE NEW YEAR
HAVING HEAVENLY MINDED AFFECTIONS...

Intro: ***This is the first SUNDAY AND THE FIRST DAY of the year....***

I remember it like it was only yesterday when my wife and I first came to this church. We moved here around Christmas of 1983, and that year Christmas was on a Sunday and New Years was also on a Sunday.

I remember thinking as a kid, what would the year 2000 would be like? I'd be 47! Boy, that sounded old to me. How could I imagine what the year 2017 would be like? Imagine this year I will be 64 years old. Back when I was a kid, I couldn't imagine being this old.

By the way, what a wonderful children's program that was last night! The Kids did a great job. How important it is that Children learn to love the Lord and to learn to love going to church!

Now as we consider a message for the New Year, I want to talk to you about having a godly mindset for the new year.

Here is our text for the New Year:

HEAVENLY MINDED AFFECTIONS IN 2017

Colossians 3:1 If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

Colossians 3:2 Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.

Colossians 3:3 For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

Colossians 3:4 When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

When we think of the New Year we often think about setting goals, etc.

I got an email from Donald Trump. He asked for continued support as he makes over 4000 appointments for his administrative staff for the white house.

I am glad I don't face that kind of problem this year.

For the Christian, this life should be a bit simpler.

We need to look up, for our redemption draweth nigh.

Jesus is coming soon.

As I read last night, Jesus said, BEHOLD I COME QUICKLY.
DO WE REALLY BELIEVE THIS?

I think for some people, if Jesus came this next year they would be disappointed because they have things they want to do in 2017.

The question we need to ask ourselves is what are we seeking in 2017?
Are we seeking things that are above or below?

Colossians 3:2 Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.

The more we can view things from God's perspective the better our lives will be.

WHAT ARE THE THINGS WE CAN SEEK THAT ARE BELOW?

1. **Finances**
2. **Health**
3. **People problems**
4. **etc...**

What is God's perspective on these problems?

LESSON ON SEEKING THINGS THAT ARE ABOVE:

***I. GOD SEES THAT WE ARE TOO TROUBLED BY THINGS WHICH ARE BELOW!
THIS IS EVIDENCE THAT WE ARE NOT SEEKING THOSE THINGS WHICH
ARE ABOVE!***

Luke 10:38 Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house.

Luke 10:39 And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word.

Luke 10:40 But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me.

Luke 10:41 And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things:

Luke 10:42 But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.

1. When we seek things that are temporal or below, we often choose to frustrate our schedules and lives with meaningless activities and concerns.

Who is going to remember what was served at that meal?

What will matter in eternity?

Why do we get all frustrated about things that will not last?

Temporal things.

Earthly things.

Curtis Hutson used to tell a Story in one of his messages about a fellow in his church that on Sunday morning there was a leaky pipe in his kitchen under the sink. He was a Sunday School teacher and needed to make a choice skip church and fix the pipe or go to church anyway.. so he just drilled a hole under the sink and let it drain into the basement.. he turned to his wife and kids.. and said, ok, it will be there when we get back from church, let's go to church. **HERE IS A MAN THAT WAS SEEKING THINGS THAT WERE ABOVE.**

Now most of you would think he was crazy, but the story is so old that probably the fellow today is in heaven. Curtis Hutson died and today is in Heaven, they both are now above in Heaven. and I wonder now whether the lesson he shared in that sermon was more valuable, or fixing the sink and missing church was more valuable?

I think of another Christian that washed out in his christian life. He, too, was a Sunday School teacher and had a ministry in the church at one time. He woke up and couldn't find his keys to his business on a Sunday morning, so he decided it was so important to find those keys. He skipped church, stayed home, looked everywhere, and couldn't find them. He fretted all Sunday morning even into the evening, worrying and fretting. In the morning when his wife took the wash out lo and behold there were the keys in the washing machine with the clothes. If he had prayed about it and trusted God he could have just as easily gone to church and left everything in God's hands, been a testimony for Christ, and taught his Sunday School class like he should have. And in morning everything would have worked out for him. By the way, that morning not only did his keys wash out but he washed out for Christ and today he is not in church at all! You see one earthly care after another became more important than serving the Lord until the things on earth consumed all his time.

Martha was skipping church to make a great dinner that morning. Mary was busy sitting at the feet of Jesus and Martha complained to Jesus about what she considered to be a lazy sister. Lazy Mary she called her!

Martha thought that she was being the more spiritual one.

I wonder how many people are going to be shocked when they stand before the Lord and find out they really were the ones who were lacking in this life.

We can admire the fellow who has the spotless house.
The spotless lawn.
The spotless.. home.
A successful business.
Everything in it's place, except their heart and spiritual priorities.

THEIR HEART IS ALL FOR EARTH AND NOTHING FOR HEAVEN..

2. Why do we choose the lessor things of earth and neglect the greater things which are above?

- A. It is because temporal things seem more pressing at the time.**
- B. It is because temporal things are easier to get consumed with.**
- C. It is because temporal things seem to press upon us.**
- D. It is because the devil is there to tempt us with temporal matters.**

3. HOW DO WE MAKE THE BETTER CHOICES CONCERNING THE ACTIVITIES OF THE DAY?

Luke 10:39 And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word.

Luke 10:41 And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things:

Luke 10:42 But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.

All proper and eternal choices must be based on the teaching of Jesus and prayer.

Mary put sitting at the feet of Jesus first.

3. WHAT WAS THE GREAT EVIDENCE THAT MARTHA HAD CHOSEN THE LESSOR THING?

We can apply this test to our lives to see if we have chosen a wrong thing in our lives:

A. Note she became critical of Mary.

When a person is doing right they are too busy to be critical of others.

When you become critical of others it is often because you are discontent with your own life.

When we are discontent with the way we our living or with the things that we have chosen to do, then we often look at others and become critical because we think it is their fault we are struggling.

Discontentment manifests itself in strange ways.

The reason we get pointing a finger at other people that don't do things the way that we think they should or the way we are is because we are not content doing or living the way we do.

WAS MARTHA HAPPY WORKING IN THE KITCHEN BY HERSELF? NO NO NO.

So she was not happy with her service for the Lord and got her eyes onto other people she could criticize.

IF SHE WAS HAPPY SERVING THE LORD, SHE WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN CRITICAL OF MARY!

B. She became frustrated and unfulfilled in her work.

She was cumbered about.

Matthew 11:28 Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Matthew 11:29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

Matthew 11:30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

II. GOD LOOKS AT THE END OF OUR LIVES AS BEING MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE BEGINNING.

Ezekiel 18:26 When a righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and dieth in them; for his iniquity that he hath done shall he die.

Ezekiel 18:27 Again, when the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive.

Ezekiel 18:28 Because he considereth, and turneth away from all his transgressions that he hath committed, he shall surely live, he shall not die.

Ezekiel 18:29 Yet saith the house of Israel, The way of the Lord is not equal. O house of Israel, are not my ways equal? are not your ways unequal?

Ezekiel 18:30 Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, saith the Lord GOD. Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin.

Ezekiel 18:31 Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel?

Ezekiel 18:32 For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord GOD: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye.

In God's thinking it is more important how we end than how we start or what we did in the middle.

The world doesn't look at the way a person ends their life as much as what they did in their prime. God sees that the way we leave this world is more important than the way we came into it!

ALL WE DID IN THIS WORLD IS GOING TO BURN UP ANYWAY.

GOD IS LOOKING TO SALVAGE SOME. WHEN WE REPENT AND GET SAVED THIS IS THE MOST IMPORTANT ACT OF OUR LIVES!

Luke 12:16 And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully:

Luke 12:17 And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits?

Luke 12:18 And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods.

Luke 12:19 And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.

Luke 12:20 But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?

Luke 12:21 So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.

Jesus said, Mary chose the better thing that would never be taken from her!

God has eternity in mind so should we.

We need to invest in those things that will last.

Matthew 6:19 Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal:

Matthew 6:20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:

Matthew 6:21 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

III. IT WOULD DO US GOOD TO TRY TO VIEW EVERY ACTIVITY OF THE DAY THROUGH THE EYES OF THE LORD AND SEEKING HIS WILL.

Colossians 3:1 If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

Colossians 3:2 Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.

Colossians 3:3 For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

Colossians 3:4 When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

James 4:13 Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain:

James 4:14 Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.

James 4:15 For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that.

James 4:16 But now ye rejoice in your boastings: all such rejoicing is evil.

James 4:17 Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.

My uncle got sick with cancer, 3 months later he died.

If this happened to you, how important would all your concerns and problems of the day be?

Do we really have problems?

If you knew the Lord were coming back soon, this year, this week, or this month What would you change?

THIS IS THE LESSON OF THE MAN WHO WANTED TO BUILD BIGGER BARNES.

Luke 12:16 And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully:

Luke 12:17 And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits?

Luke 12:18 And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods.

Luke 12:19 And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.

Luke 12:20 But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?

Luke 12:21 So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.

THE LORD CALLED THIS MAN A FOOL!

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THE CONCLUSION IS, THAT IN 2017 we need to set our affections on things above and not on things on the earth.