

1-6-19 Message

ADVICE FOR THE NEW YEAR

Intro: This is the first Sunday of the year. Each of us are a year older and hopefully a year wiser. Often, I wish I could go back and relive certain portions of my life knowing what I know today. I would do things differently. You probably could think the same, yet we can do nothing about the past. It is gone, but all we have is the present. One of the reasons we are going through the Kings is because we should learn from the mistakes that others have made in their past and not repeat them. Each of us have one life to live and that life is too short to waste with mistakes.

As we start this new year, I want to give some spiritual advice. If you want legal advice you would go to a lawyer. If you want medical advice you would go to a doctor. If you want financial advice you would go to a financial advisor.

The most important advice you can receive is spiritual.

The Spirit will direct you in all things.

I Timothy 4:8 For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.

SOME SPIRITUAL ADVICE FOR THE NEW YEAR

As I look back through the years I remember my father giving me some advice about living. I was not saved in those days, and my dad was not a Christian. My Dad knew that I liked music and wanted to play out professionally. One day he sat me down and told me someday when I had a family I would find that living the life that I was living would not be good. He said, you are going to want another way to make a living. I thought he was crazy. I loved what I was doing and didn't see any reason that I couldn't do it for the rest of my life. My dad struck a bargain with me. He said I could keep playing the night club circuit if I went to college for music. I agreed and followed his advice. Not because I wanted to but because I wanted to keep playing in the band and night club circuit. The older I got the more I discovered my dad was right. I didn't know one of my musician friends who had a happy, healthy marriage. I realized if I kept going the way I was going I would have to resolve to never get married.

Then in 1974, when I got saved, I understood that I could not serve the Lord and continue in the the bar scene and the circuits I traveled. The best thing I ever did was follow my dad's advice and go to college. About the same time my Dad had that conversation with me about going to college for music. All those credits later transferred to Bible college and to this day one of the reasons I am able to write the church music that I write is because I followed the advice of my father.

My dad also wanted me to go to barber school and learn a trade. This was in the 60's during the hippie days. Less and less people were getting hair cuts. I really didn't think his advice was good. I didn't want to go to barber school. I was 15 year old and my dad prepaid for a train ticket for me to go to Philadelphia and go to barber school that summer. I didn't go. I refused to go.

Years later, after I got saved and went to Bible college, I remember standing in line to register and the dean of students came up to me while I was standing in line and said to me, Son you need to get a hair cut. Get a hair cut before the first day of school. Do you realize there were 1000 students who needed haircuts. Instead of working superior generator to make a living in those days, I could have been making money cutting students hair. I would have had a captive cliental. I suffered because I did not take the good advice of my father.

Life is all about making decisions. Sometimes we make good decisions, sometimes we make bad decisions. Most of the time the decisions we make come from the advice we receive.

Bear with this morning as I seek to give you some good spiritual advice for the New Year.

SOME GOOD SPIRITUAL ADVICE FOR A NEW YEAR

What is the most important advice I could give you for the new year? I mean this would be #1 on the list. Everywhere you look people are looking back to 2018 and giving advice for the new year 2019. but on youtube, on TV, and in the world, you are not going to get the advice that you will get here because the advice I am going to give is strictly spiritual.

MY GREATEST ADVICE FOR 2019:

I. KEEP GOD'S GREATEST COMMANDMENT

Matthew 22:35 Then one of them, which was a lawyer, asked him a question, tempting him, and saying,

Matthew 22:36 Master, which is the great commandment in the law?

Matthew 22:37 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

Matthew 22:38 This is the first and great commandment.

If you succeed at nothing else you can succeed at this. There is not a person in this room who cannot go out of here and this year resolve to love God with all their heart.

When my kids were young we used to have family devotions. We would sit around in the living room and I would tell them Bible stories, we would sing, pray and I would always ask them who was number one in their lives. I would expect to hear them say Jesus. And who is second they would say Mommy and Daddy.

You don't want to be the most loved person in anyones life.

I don't expect my wife to love me more than Jesus.

My wife should not expect me to love her more than God.

When you wake up in the morning tell the Lord you love Him with all your heart and you want to please Him.

When you go to bed in the evening tell the Lord that you love Him with all your heart and want to live for Him!

My advice for you this year is to love the Lord with all your heart!!

1. TO LOVE THE LORD YOU HAVE TO KNOW THE LORD.

Most people know of the Lord, but they do not know the Lord!

When the Bible talks about knowing the Lord it uses the same word when it talks about a man knowing his wife and a wife knowing her husband.

I know my wife because we live together. My wife knows me because we live together.

To love the Lord you need to know Him like that not just know about Him.

When you come to know the Lord you invite Him into your life and heart. He makes his abode with you.

John 14:23 Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.

By way of the Holy Spirit Jesus will come and dwell in your heart and you will be born anew. His spirit will come and live in your spirit and that spirit will give you new life.

Now you will be able to love the Lord because He will make His abode with you. He will be with you and in you.

Now let me speak plainly!

If you are not saved you can not love the Lord. The reason why is you do not know the Lord. You know of the Lord but you do not know the Lord in a personal way.

It is like this: There are many people in the world that are sick and having trouble. We do not weep for them because we do not know them. We do not help them because we do not know them. Our dear Holly is going through some difficulties, so we are getting together a little gift basket to encourage her and for us to show our love to her. Why don't we do that for everyone in the county, or state, or world? The reason why is we don't know all the people that are going through difficulties.

So the truth is, you cannot really love the Lord till you know Him personally and not just know of Him.

2. HOW DO YOU SHOW THAT LORD THAT YOU LOVE HIM?

Now if you love the Lord you will want to show Him you love Him!

How do you show the Lord you love Him?

First of all I would say, do you love the Lord?

You can't show the Lord something that is not in your heart!

A. WORDS ARE CHEAP. Just saying it doesn't make it so.

I used to have a roadie that worked for us doing lights in our Rock and Roll band. He was wicked and immoral, and loved to entice young girls.

He used to make me sick. We would go into McDonalds and a young pretty girl would wait on us. He would look up at her over the counter and say, "I think I love you.. " What are you doing tonight? Sad, but many times I would see these silly girls fall for that garbage and go out with him.

The Bible calls young me like this CREEPS.

II Timothy 3:6 For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts,

Now there are a lot of people that say they love but they are liars.

DO YOU LOVE THE LORD?

How do you show it?

B. THE LORD TELLS US HOW TO SHOW WE LOVE HIM.

John 14:15 If ye love me, keep my commandments.

I John 5:3 For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.

The proof that we love the Lord is that we will want to please the Lord, and what pleases the Lord is when we do what He tells us to do.

We have a lot of creeps who tell the Lord they love Him but they don't do a thing He tells them to do. In fact, they are the very ones who say, the Lord doesn't care what they do as long as they love Him.

Think about this, these people say, the Lord loves them so much that He doesn't care about how they live or what they do.

I know the Lord loves them. The proof that the Lord loves us is that He sacrificed and went to the cross and paid for our sins.

Now what is the proof that you love the Lord?

What sacrifices are you making for the Lord?

What things are you doing that the Lord is telling you to do?

If you love me Jesus said, Keep my commandments.

My question you is., What commandments are you keeping?

You say I am keeping the command to love the Lord.

NO, HE SAID IF YOU LOVE ME KEEP MY COMMANDMENTS.

Can you list them? Let me suggest many of these contemporary not under the law but under grace Christians know of the Lord but they do not know the Lord so they know of His doctrine but they do not know His doctrine. So they become libertarians.

The reason they are libertarians is because the Lord never tells them anything to do or not to do because they do not hear His voice, because they are not of His sheep.

Jesus said,

John 10:27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

How do the sheep follow the Master? They go where He says to go. They do what He says to do. They follow Him.

NOW IF YOU SAY YOU ARE ONE OF HIS SHEEP BUT YOU ARE NOT FOLLOWING HIM YOU ARE A LIAR.

Those that are His obey His voice.

Oh, but you say, I am not under the law I don't have to keep the commandments.

I didn't say to keep the OT commandments, I said which of the commandments of Jesus are you keeping? You don't just do something because it is written on a tablet of stone, you do it because the Lord that you love has touched your heart and now you want to please Him. Now what? You will find that because you love the Lord you want to please Him by:

Not committing adultery.

Not stealing.

Not lying.

Not coveting.

When you hear His voice you will be amazed to find His voice is the voice of Scripture.

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

John 1:2 The same was in the beginning with God.

John 1:3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

John 1:14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

SO MY ADVICE FOR THE NEW YEAR IS TO LOVE GOD!!

Now I can't just have one point to a message, but why not? Truth is, everything in the Christian life is wrapped up in this command. LOVE GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART. This is my advice Seek to love God in 2019. Love him with all your heart.

But if you are not saved you cannot love God. So invite him into your heart and life and come to know Him. Then you will love Him in deed and truth!

Now my second word of advice is for you to get involved in doing something that will last.

The truth is each of us have gotten involved in things that we thought were right decisions only to find out later we made a mistake. Is there anything in this life that is going to last?

Is there anything that is not vanity and vexation of spirit?

What can you pursue in this life that will bring fulfillment and be something that is worthwhile?

***II. MY SECOND WORD OF ADVICE FOR THE NEW YEAR IS
LIVE YOUR LIFE IN SUCH A MANNER TO ENCOURAGE OTHERS TO LOVE GOD..***

If you love God you will want to introduce others to the God who you love and who loves you..

Truth be told..

I John 4:19 We love him, because he first loved us.

The reason we love God is because He loved us and we receive His love. If we have experienced this great love, if we have come to know Him, we will want to share this good news with others.

When you have something good you need to share it and show it.

Around in the early 1970's, for the first time in my life, I heard the gospel message of how God loved us and sent His son to save us from our sins. I heard how simple it was. Jesus loved us, died for our sins, and is willing to receive any person who truly repents and comes to Him for salvation by simply humbling ourselves and asking Him into their lives. When this happens that person can be saved and receive new life. When I heard this for the first time, my exact words were this: "IT IS TOO EASY.." If this is true what kind of person would I be and not want to share this with anyone I can!

Now when I said this, I think Peter Accardi and Carl Shanosk thought I got it, and just because I could repeat what the gospel message was they thought I would want to get saved. Then Carl Shanosk and Peter Accardi fell down on their knees and prayed I would be saved. I felt a tremendous overwhelming spirit of conviction on my heart. I prayed, but not the sinners prayer. I prayed.. "OH GOD GET ME OUT OF HERE.. " That was probably the first time someone prayed not to get saved to God himself. And why did I say that in my heart? The reason why is that I was afraid of the logical conclusion and practical application of the gospel. If that message is true there is a moral obligation on the part of those who received that message to share it with others. It is absolutely true. The logical conclusion of having received the love of God is that we should want to share that message of love with others.

A person who loves God will want to share the message of the Love of God, which is the gospel.

II. MY SECOND ADVICE FOR THE NEW YEAR IS TO LIVE OUR LIFE TO SHARE THE LOVE OF GOD WITH OTHERS.

If you build a house someday that house will fall apart and burn.

If you build a business someday that business will go belly up.

If you achieve great things in this life, someday those great things will be forgotten.

THINK ABOUT ALL THE WORK WE DID TO PERFORM OUR LITTLE CHRISTMAS MUSICAL, but now it is over. The only thing that lives on is the message that we shared about Jesus and if someone receives that message!

So the greatest thing you can do in 2019 is to encourage other people to love God.

Now here is the thing, PEOPLE CANNOT SEE GOD. THEY DON'T KNOW GOD.

The only thing they can see is you and your life and the people that surround your life.

1. LIVE YOUR LIFE IN A WAY THAT PEOPLE CAN BE DRAWN TO CHRIST.

II Corinthians 3:2 Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men:

The only Bible unsaved people will read is you.

I was witnessing to a man for many years, and one day he said to me.. do you know _____ so and so? He says he is a Christian. Then my friend looked at me a bit puzzled and said, "IS HE?" In other words, he wasn't sure. And at that time, to be honest with you, I wasn't sure.

To be an effective witness for Christ. You need to exhibit the love of Christ to others. You need to be able to show the benefits you received from Christ. You need to be able to share what good things Christ has done for you!

2. THE GREATEST WAY THAT YOU CAN INTRODUCE PEOPLE TO CHRIST IS TO SHOW HOW CHRIST HAS AFFECTED THE HEARTS OF PEOPLE IN HIS CHURCH. TO LOVE ONE ANOTHER.

John 13:34 A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.

John 13:35 By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

What people need to see is a group of people who truly love and love one another, and give Christ the glory for it.

THE REASON WE LOVE EACH OTHER IS BECAUSE CHRIST HAS LOVED US.

What changed my life was when I saw a group of people in a church who all were testifying of how Christ changed their lives. They all shared the same message. What they were before Christ came into their lives. NOT GOOD. And how after they received Christ something good came of it.

Christ changes our lives for the better. If that is the case we need to show that to others.

If God is love, Christ is love. If people do not see that love of Christ in you, how will they be introduced to Christ?

3. PEOPLE CANNOT SEE GOD, ALL THEY CAN SEE IS HOW GOD HAS AFFECTED YOUR LIFE FOR THE BETTER.

John 1:18 No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.

I John 4:10 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

I John 4:11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.

I John 4:12 No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.

I John 4:19 We love him, because he first loved us.

I John 4:20 If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?

I John 4:21 And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.

How are we introduced to another person? Is it not a friend that introduces us to another friend?

How is a person introduced to Christ? They are introduced to Christ through us.

If Christ is not living in us and through us, how will they ever see Christ and want to ask Him into their hearts?

4. THE ONLY THING THAT WILL LAST FOR ETERNITY IS THE SOULS THAT ARE HARVESTED THROUGH OUR GROUP EFFORTS IN HIS CHURCH.

I Corinthians 3:9 For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.

I Corinthians 3:10 According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.

I Corinthians 3:11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

I Corinthians 3:12 Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;

I Corinthians 3:13 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

I Corinthians 3:14 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.

I Corinthians 3:15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

5. THE ONLY THING THAT WE CAN TAKE TO HEAVEN ARE THE GOOD WORKS WE HAVE DONE AND THE SOULS HARVESTED THROUGH OUR WORKS.

I Thessalonians 2:19 For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?

I Thessalonians 2:20 For ye are our glory and joy.

Think about this. It is possible that a person who was going to spend eternity apart from Christ would have the course of their life changed because of you. What greater thing could a man do in this life?

If you could just affect one person for eternity, that is a greater deed than winning a super bowl. Greater than winning an Olympic race. What greater thing could you do in this life?