

Happy New Year! Out with the old and in with the new. The changing of the calendar year tends to bring along new ideas, new resolutions, and new hope – at least for the first few weeks in January. The spin usually begins positive as we turn the page and face new challenges. But somehow, along the way of life, negativity creeps in and we blame others, or even in other moments of weakness, we question God. As we consider resolutions or change within our own lives, let us also consider the LHS theme verse for this year. **“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!” 2nd Corinthians 5:17**

A new creation means we are free to be people of God. This mindset can only help us confront the endless sinful ways of mankind. The devil, the world, and our own sinful flesh continue to convince us to travel down the wrong path. But if we fix our eyes on Jesus, we can and will prevail and choose the correct path – the path of righteousness. God has given us a free will. We can play the blame game and reject the blessings of a risen Lord or we can follow Him. This New Year let us all focus on what Christ has done for us. He has freed us from the bondage of sin and allowed us to smile and even laugh at our world and ourselves as we wander through this veil of tears. Stay in the Word, love one another, and forgive one another. God is love. So let us reflect His love in our lives.

Be the **“chosen people, the royal priesthood, and the holy nation”** Paul describes in 1st Peter 2. Live lives worthy of our calling so others may see our lives and the glory we bring to our God. Happy New Year. Be happy new creations. Same God. Same promise. Same promise fulfilled. God is so good and His mercy endures forever. Man, . . . do His blessings ever end?