

Php. 3:14 I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

Stay Focused!

Introduction

- 2016 as in previous years were full of tumultuous activity.
 - Feelings of entitlement grew to new levels.
 - Hostility towards fellow man increased.
 - Human reasoning is at an all time high.
 - Critical thinking is at an all time low.
 - Moral accountability is nearly non-existent.
- God and the Bible is being assaulted at every turn.
- Christian's are being attacked while Muslim's are being accommodated.
- Our children, through technology, have become mentally lazy.

What did I do for the Kingdom in 2016?

- Did I make a consistent effort to build on my faith and encourage the faith of others?
- Did I increase in prayers and supplications and study the Lord's Word more than in previous years?
- Did I visit the sick or others in need of a gentle word or prayer?
- Did I proclaim the gospel of Christ to lost souls?
- Did I ignore the Spirit when an opportunity arose to proclaim Christ?
- Did I ignore wrong for the purpose of being politically correct?
- Are you afraid of losing your job because of Christ?

The Times

- People aren't thinking critically but are busy being critical.
- Violence, sex and entertainment rule the airwaves.
- We are being attacked!
- 2Pe 3:3 knowing this first of all, that scoffers will come in the last days with scoffing, following their own sinful desires.
- 1Ti 4:1 Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons.
- Rom 1:18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth.

But There Is Hope!

- We need not despair but have hope and faith in Jesus!
- Rom. 12:12 Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer.
- Rom. 15:13 May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.
- 1Th. 5:8 But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation.
- We need to stay confident in our belief and in the HOPE of His calling!

Rest in God's Promise

- A promise assured by an oath given by God (Heb. 6:17-20).
- Proclaimed as a reminder at the beginning of the church (Acts 2:39).
- Gal. 3:29 And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.
- We would receive Eternal Life (1Jo. 2:25).
- Heb. 4:1 Therefore, while the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us fear lest any of you should seem to have failed to reach it.

Strength through Faith

- Jud 1:20 But you, beloved, building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit,
- Jud 1:21 keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life.
- Jud 1:22 And have mercy on those who doubt;
- 1Jn 4:6 We are from God. Whoever knows God listens to us; whoever is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

2017 Goals for the Christian

- Do not become weary. Grow in the faith!
 - Increase Prayer Life & Relationship with God
 - Study...not just read...and Understand
 - Reach out to those you see but really don't know (fellowship)
- Teach the gospel of Christ! Live It!
 - Seek out opportunities
 - Practice your skills (role play)
 - Teach your children the TRUTH! Their confidence comes from YOU!
- Be bold and wise in all interactions!
 - Don't hide behind 'policy' or 'political correctness'
 - If you see or hear something, say something
 - Be willing to intervene in situations for which you observe are wrong or unjust.

Summary

- No doubt about it, we are in “interesting” times.
- Maintain your hope in Christ and love for fellow man.
 - There is rest in Him!
 - Mat. 11:28 Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.
- Trust in God’s Promises...They are reliable!!
- Teach the Gospel!
- Whatever you did in 2016 for the kingdom, do better in 2017
- Continue in your walk with God with CONFIDENCE!

Invitation: Become a Christian Today

- Hear God's word
- Believe that Jesus is the Son of God
- Repent of your sins / Commit to change your life
- Confess that Jesus is the Son of God
- Be Baptized for Remission of Sins
- Remain Faithful until Death