

The Christian Arsenal

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A NEW YOU FOR A NEW YEAR BACK TO THE FUTURE

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Part 1 of 2

Luke 5:36-38 *“Then He spoke to them: No one puts a piece from a new garment on an old one; otherwise the new makes a tear, and also the piece that was taken out of the new does not match the old.*

And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; or else the new wine will burst the wineskins and be spilled, and the wineskins will be ruined.

But new wine must be put into new wineskins, and both are preserved.”

WHAT CAN I EXPECT IN 2003?

1. NEW PROBLEMS WILL REQUIRE CREATIVITY

The bad news: You will have more problems in 2003.

The good news: They won't be the same old ones.

New problems require new solutions.

“The intelligent man is always open to new ideas – in fact he looks for them.”

Proverbs 18:15 (LB)

EXCUSES FOR A CLOSED MIND

- “We tried that before ...”
- “Our place is different ...”
- “It costs too much ...”
- “We don't have enough time ...”
- “We've never done it before ...”
- “It's against company policy ...”
- “That's not our problem ...”
- “You're right, but ...”
- “We're not ready for that ...”
- “It isn't in the budget ...”
- “You can't teach an old dog new tricks ...”
- “Let's form a committee ...”
- “Let's sleep on it ...”
- “It's too much trouble to change ...”
- “It's impossible ...”
- “We've always done it this way ...”

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Most people spend more time and energy trying to get around problems than they do solving them.

“Your attitudes and thoughts, must be constatnly changing for the better. You must be a new and different person, holy and good.” Eph 4:23-24 (LB)

In 2003 you cannot have hardening of the attitudes. Attitudes are like diapers: every once in a while they need to be changed or the place starts stinking.

Have you noticed that easy tasks become more difficult when you have a bad attitude?

“What good did it do to be grouchy today?
Did your surliness drive any trouble away?
Did you cover more ground than you usually do
Because of the grouch you carried with you?
If not, what’s the use of a grouch or a frown
If it won’t smooth your path or bring trouble down?
If it doesn’t assist you, it isn’t worthwhile.
Your work may be hard, but just do it with a smile!

2. NEW PRESSURES WILL REQUIRE CONVICTION.

Conviction is a willingness to stand up for what you believe.

“Don’t let the world squeeze you in its mold, but let God remake you so your whole attitude of mind is changed.” Romans 12:2 (Ph)

If you don’t stand for something you will fall for anything.
Popular song in 1980’s: boy George’s *Karma Cameleon*
“I’m a man without conviction.”

WHERE DOES THE STRENGTH COME FROM FOR THIS CONVICTION?

- **GOD’S PRESENCE**
- **GOD’S WORD**

“Those who trust in the Lord for help will find their strength renewed...” Isaiah 40:31 (LB)

“God’s word gives new strength.” Ps 19:7 (GN)

“We were under great pressure, far beyond our ability to endure, so that we despaired even of life ... But this happened so we might not rely on ourselves but on God.” 2 Cor. 1:8,9

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What is the difference between a conviction and an opinion?

- An opinion is something you'll argue about.
- A conviction is something you'll die for.

3. NEW POSSIBILITIES WILL REQUIRE COURAGE.

There is an element of risk when you step out in faith.

"Plow new ground for yourselves, plant righteousness, and reap the blessing your devotion to me will produce! It's time for you to turn to me, your Lord, and I will come and pour out a blessing on you." Hosea 10:12 (GN)

If you want 2003 to count in your life you've got to do some cultivating.

You must: plant
 plow
 reap

If you plan to have differences in your life a year from now you've got to start cultivating now.

- You need to cultivate some new habits.
- You need to cultivate some new relationships.
- You need to cultivate some new activities.

WHATEVER YOU SOW YOU WILL REAP.

"Don't be misled, Remember that you can't ignore God and get away with it. You will always reap what you sow! Those who live only to satisfy their own sinful desires will harvest the consequences of decay and death, but those who live to please the Spirit will harvest everlasting life from the Spirit. So don't get tired of doing what is good. Don't get discouraged and give up for we will reap a harvest of blessing at the appropriate time. Whenever we have the opportunity, we should do good to everyone, especially to our Christian brothers and sisters." Galatians 6:7-10 (NLT)

Notice Hosea 10:12 says: "Plow NEW GROUND..."

That involves courage.

I dare you to do something with your life in 2003. Get off the bench and get in the game. Make your life count in 2003.

WHAT COULD HOLD YOU BACK?

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- Your past

“Don’t cling to the events of the past or dwell on what happened long ago. Watch for the new thing I [God] am going to do!” Isaiah 43:18-19 (GN)

- My blessings

“...it’s nothing compared to what I’m going to do!” Isaiah 43:19 (LB)

The good news is that the best is yet to come!

HOW DO YOU HAVE MORE CREATIVITY?

HOW DO YOU HAVE MORE COURAGE?

HOW DO YOU HAVE MORE CONVICTION?

YOU GET IT FROM GOD! He is the specialist in character change.

“When someone becomes a Christian, he becomes a brand new person inside. He is not the same anymore. A new life has begun!” 2 Cor. 5:17 (LB)

When you open your life to God it’s like starting over.

The happiness that you’re looking for is not found in the New Age movement.

It is found in the New Life movement!

One of the biggest mistakes that Christians make is they think they can live their life off of a single commitment they made back years ago.

I finally discovered that the Christian life is a continual renewal and a deepening of the commitment, not just a once-for-all decision, but an ongoing commitment and daily renewal. Each day you go deeper.

HOW DO YOU KNOW WHEN YOU NEED TO MAKE A FRESH COMMITMENT?

- When you know the joy has drained out of your life.

“Now you can really serve God; not in the old way, mechanically obeying a set of rules, but in a new way.” Romans 7:6b (LB)

- When you’re trying to live your new life in the old lifestyle.

You’re trying to be a Christian, yet hang on to all the old ways and values and you’re sucked up in the culture.