

This is the last NEWSLETTER article for the year 2017 since we don't publish one for either of the last two weeks of the year. This allows Kathy Norton the opportunity to rest up—she has done an excellent job for a number of years putting the Newsletter together and getting it out to all of the members. It's a pretty thankless job, so if you have the opportunity, thank her! While I'm at it, I want you to urge you to thank all those “behind the scenes” people who work tirelessly to see to it that all things “church” get done. I am so afraid I'll miss some, but you know the people I'm talking about. Just a few off the top of my head: thanks to Don Walden who puts together the communion each and every week as well as does the church's “accounting” work. Thanks to Jesus Rivera for all of the landscaping, to the ladies (you know who all of you are) for seeing to it that our fellowship meals go off without a hitch, and to anyone else (I know there are others) who have worked hard to make Columbus Avenue function.

As the new year approaches, we often look ahead at new opportunities to serve God. The past is just that, the past, and it should have no real impact on our life going forward. Learn from mistakes and press on. Remember all of the “new” things we've been taught that describe who we are. Learn to appreciate them and grasp hold of them as if they were new again.

1. We participate in a **NEW** birth (1 Peter 1:3) ***“God ...has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead...”***
2. We rise from baptism to live a **NEW** life. (Romans 6:4)
“We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.”
3. We are a **NEW** creature. (Galatians 6:15, 2 Corinthians 5:17)
“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!”
4. We have a **NEW** attitude toward life. (Ephesians 4:22-23)
“...put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds...”
5. As compared to who we were, we are a **NEW** self. (Ephesians 4:24, Colossians 3:9-10) ***“...you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.”***
6. We have entered into a **NEW** covenant with God, sealed with Christ's blood, guaranteeing our inheritance. (Hebrews 8)
7. We look forward to a **NEW** heaven and a **NEW** earth, where righteousness dwells. (2 Peter 3:13, Revelation 21:1) ***“But in keeping with his promise we are***

looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells.”

8. When the guarantees of our **NEW** covenant are realized, and we inherit our **NEW** heaven and **NEW** earth, we will be given a **NEW** name and sing a **NEW** song. **(Revelation 2:17, 3:12, 5:9, 14:3)**

In the coming year, it is important for everyone to determine the value of all of the “new” gifts we have been given by God. We can no longer live our lives as we did when we were following our old ways. Our new birth, and the new attitude that comes with becoming a new creation, will cause us to keep the requirements of our new covenant with God, being obedient to Him, loving Him and loving others. To put it simply, we will, in the coming year, become more devoted to Him.