

Renewal

Since this will be the last NEWSLETTER of 2014, let me take this opportunity to thank you for allowing me to serve this congregation as your minister. I believe a great deal has been accomplished this year, but there are many more things we as a congregation of the Lord's people need to do. It is at a time like this we should think about renewing our efforts to be more devoted to God and His work in 2015 than we were in 2014.

We need to look at our relationship to God as if it were fresh and new—not just another moment or hour or day or year just like the rest. Looking at our relationship to God as just a continuation of our past relationship breeds complacency—it lacks the excitement and enthusiasm it should have. We are children of God! John was blown away by the thought of that in **I John 3**. We are heirs and co-heirs with Christ. Paul couldn't comprehend the kind of grace that would allow him (and us) to share in the rewards of heaven. James tells us in **James 1:17** that God is the source of all of the good and perfect gifts that He showers upon us. God will not change, although we must continually change and improve our relationship with Him. We must be introspective, reflecting a renewal mode every minute of our life. We must constantly improve, moving toward the perfection that God requires of us.

Our attitude should be the same as David's in **Psalms 51:10** when he said:

“Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Restore me to the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit to sustain me. “

Paul told the Romans in **Romans 12:1-2** that we must, because of God's mercy, be living sacrifices to God and cannot conform to the world. Each of us must **“be transformed by the renewing of (our) mind.”** It is, Paul surmises, the only way we can show the world what God's will for each of us is. Because God has been so good to us (loving, forgiving, never changing), it is our obligation to renew the spirit within all of us to be more like Him. We must be reflective, replacing our flaws with His characteristics.

It is that self-examination that caused Paul to tell the Corinthians in **II Corinthians 4:16**: **“Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day.”**

He told the Colossians in **Colossians 3:10** that his new self was being **“renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.”** In **Ephesians 4:23-24**, he tells each of us that we should **“put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its evil desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.”**

God doesn't need renewing, we do. The good news is that He allows renewal on a daily basis. The sins of the past are gone; the promise of the future is ours. We need to make the most of it.