

A SPIRITUAL REVIVAL - A NEW YEAR'S SERMON
Habakkuk 3:2, 17-19

INTRODUCTION:

1. Everyone of us needs to be revived from time to time - Psalm 85:6; Habakkuk 3:2, 17-19.
 - A. The early Christians were happy and zealous - Acts 2:46, 47.
2. As we begin another new year, let us, with anticipation and zeal, talk about what we can do in the future.
 - A. It is good to make new beginnings.
 - B. I want to suggest some "different things", and not the usual "read your Bible this year, study more, visit more, teach more, pray more," kind of things we usually discuss at this time of the year.
 1. I am not saying all of those "usual" things are not good and should not be done, but let's suggest some additional things.

BODY:

1. PURITY OF LIFE

- A. Let us strive to put away all sinful things.
 1. Perhaps there is some questionable thing that you would like to overcome, but haven't had much success in the past.
 - A. Why not resolve to make a new beginning?
 1. Consider Mary Magdalene and her new beginning - Luke 8:1-3.
 2. I'm sure the sinful woman of Luke 7:37-50 made a new beginning.
 3. The same could be said of the woman in John 4:7-30.
 4. What of the woman taken in adultery in John 8:3-11?
- B. Purity of life begins with a pure heart - Matthew 5:8.
 1. Our hearts are purified by our faith - Acts 15:9.
 2. Purity of heart is manifested in the way we think - Titus 1:15, 16; Philippians 4:8.
 3. Purity of heart is manifested in how we live - 1 Peter 1:14-16.

2. BE A LEADER

- A. From the youngest to the oldest, we all can be spiritual leaders as we associate with people from day to day.
- B. We can be leaders by setting the proper example - 1 Timothy 4:12.
 1. We need the word of God as our guide and the hope of heaven as our goal - 2 Timothy 3:15; 1 Peter 1:13.
 2. We don't want to be like other people, whose primary goals are a good job, a fine home, a new car, a bountiful retirement or, other things of this world.
 3. We are not of those who love the world - 1 John 2:15-17.

3. BE A FIGHTER

- A. There are many paradoxes in Christianity; e.g., you become victorious by surrendering; you win by giving up; you live by dying; you lose your life by finding it.
 1. We must give up personal pride, prejudice, selfishness, and surrender our hearts, minds, and souls to the Lord.

- B. Many people are pessimists; they have the fear of defeat.
 - 1. Consider the one-talent man - Matthew 25:24-30.
- C. We as Christians are not defeatists, but victorious warriors.
 - 1. During the early days of the Civil War a Union soldier was arrested on charges of desertion. Unable to prove his innocence, he was condemned and sentenced to die A deserter's death. His appeal found its way to the desk of Abraham Lincoln. The president felt mercy for the soldier and signed a pardon. The soldier returned to service, fought the entirety of the war, and was killed in the last battle. Found within his breast pocket was the signed letter of the president. Close to the heart of the soldier were his leader's words of pardon. He found courage in grace.

4. ACCEPT THE CHALLENGE

- A. God has placed before us the greatest challenge we will ever have, and let us accept the challenge.
 - 1. We are not of those who draw back to perdition; but of those who believe to the saving of the soul - Hebrews 10:38, 39.
 - 2. It won't matter if we fail in various worldly endeavors, but if we miss heaven, we have utterly failed.
 - A. Without heaven, we have lost all.
 - 3. Let us rise up to the challenge that God has placed before us.

5. USE KINDNESS AS A MEANS TO HAPPINESS

- A. There are bumper stickers which say, "Don't tell me what kind of day to have!"
 - 1. This, no doubt, was written in opposition to those who say, "Have a good day."
 - A. Anyone with the "don't tell me" attitude probably won't have a good day.
 - 2. Nevertheless, if we truly want to have a good day, a day filled with joy and happiness, let us try kindness.
- B. Most people are selfish, critical, unfriendly and cold; and, because they are that, doesn't mean we have to be, especially when being like them is what tends to make us unhappy.
- C. Consider the words of Paul to the church at Ephesus – Ephesians 4:32.
 - 1. If we follow this advice, we'll find that kindness gives birth to kindness.
 - A. For us to be kind doesn't mean that we need to have a lot of money, or do great deeds.
 - B. Anyone can express concern and care for the feelings of others - Romans 12:15.
 - C. Also, anyone can speak in a kind tone to others.
 - 2. If we desire to be happy and wish to contribute to the happiness of others, let us try kindness.
 - A. Kindness will work wonders for us as well as others.

6. BE LOVING

- A. We all know that a basic, fundamental principle of Christianity is love - John 13:34, 35.
- B. If we see any of our fellow Christians in need, by all means, let us help them.
 - 1. Ability plus opportunity equals responsibility - 1 John 3:17, 18.
 - 2. We are to "visit" the orphans and widows - James 1:27.

- A. "Visit" literally involves "going to see and looking upon with the view of aiding" (Thayer, p. 242; Vine, p. 190).
- B. One has not visited unless he has personally gone to see them and ministered to their needs if they have any.
- C. We need to help one another spiritually.
 - 1. We all need, as God's people, to help one another and work together in unity and love toward the goal of eternal life.
 - 2. Even though we may be Christians, we are weak human beings trying to do the will of God and need all the help we can get.

7. TRUST GOD MORE

- A. A man got into a streetcar and noticed a little girl in the car, sitting alone. Radiantly happy and humming a little tune to herself, she was a picture of joy. The gentleman leaned forward and asked her, "Little girl, aren't you afraid of riding all alone in this car?" "Oh no!" she replied, "no one can hurt me on this car; my father's the conductor."
- B. We're thundering through the universe at inconceivable speed, swept through joy and grief, sickness and health, life and death, all the while our heavenly Father is the conductor.
- C. If we trusted God more, there would be abundant songs of joy and praise on our lips.
 - 1. Let me ask you a personal question: "Is the Lord your shepherd?"
 - A. If He is your shepherd, you will never lack anything - Psalm 23:1.
 - 2. The Lord is our good Shepherd - Ezekiel 34:23; John 10:11; 1 Peter 2:25.

CONCLUSION:

- 1. Let us have a spiritual revival in these things:
 - A. Purity of life.
 - B. Being a leader.
 - C. Being a fighter.
 - D. Accepting the challenge.
 - E. Being happy through kindness.
 - F. Loving one another.
 - G. Trusting God more.
- 2. The following, entitled "I will do more," was published on the Internet:
 - A. I will do more than belong - I will participate.
 - B. I will do more than care - I will help.
 - C. I will do more than believe - I will practice.
 - D. I will do more than be fair - I will be kind.
 - E. I will do more than forgive - I will encourage.
 - F. I will do more than earn - I will enrich.
 - G. I will do more than teach - I will inspire.
 - H. I will do more than give - I will serve.
 - I. I will do more than live - I will grow.
 - J. I will do more than be friendly - I will be a friend.
- 3. Let us endeavor to have a spiritual revival.
 - A. Let us make our future the very best it can be.