

FRESH START

JANUARY 2, 2022

PRECEPT

JUDGES 6:12

¹²When the angel of the Lord appeared to Gideon, he said, "The Lord is with you, mighty warrior."

MATTHEW 9:29

²⁹Then He touched their eyes and said, "Because of your faith, it will happen."

PROMISE

Praise God for the wonderful and blessed year that just passed! As we reflect and look back on the past 365 days, let us remember how God has brought us through all the challenges that came our way. Starting this new series, let us look ahead with excitement of what could be while seeking God's guiding hand. Follow along and together, let us have a fresh start as we pursue God with a renewed passion and seek His wisdom in facing this new year.

The Apostle Paul said in 2 Corinthians 5:17 that the old has passed away and the new has come! Isn't that a refreshing assurance from the Lord? In Christ, we are a new creation. His faithfulness in the past year remains as we head to this brand new year.

For some people, new year typically comes with new year resolutions, but as we are all aware, most, if not all of these resolutions fail. It all starts in the way we think and the way we reason, when we forget our "why," that's when it starts to spiral downward. A right mindset will lead to right actions. Here are some practical ways we can incorporate as we start afresh this year.

STOP MAKING EXCUSES. The big barrier to your success this year is your own excuses. Some people say, "I don't have what it takes to chase my dreams." There are many great men in the Bible with this same excuse. Jeremiah who thought to himself "I do not know how to speak; I am too young" became one of the greatest prophets in Israel and also became bold in preaching the Word of God, even condemned all kinds of evil practices. Moses also had a number of excuses but ended up leading over two million Israelites out of Egypt and performed many miracles in the name of God. Jim Rohn said that excuses are the nails used to build a house of failure. If we want to be successful this coming year, we have to stop making excuses.

TRACK DOWN YOUR PROGRESS. Ask yourself what are your gifts, abilities, and skills that you can use to achieve your goals this year. Also ask yourself what you have learned in the past and who are the people that can help you achieve your dreams.

ACT IN FAITH. Whatever our plans, goals, and desires this year, it will happen according to our faith and His will. Goal-setting and vision-casting are acts of faith. If we doubt it in the first place, chances are they will not come true. Believe in faith and it will be done for you through Christ our Lord.

REFOCUS YOUR MIND. Proverbs 4:23 reminds us, "Be careful how you think; your life is shaped by your thoughts." The way we think has a huge impact to our life. Do we set our thoughts in the things of this world instead of the things above? The way to have a fresh start in fulfilling God's dream for you is by listening and reading His Word. Start spending time listening to God by having a solid intimate time with Him in reading the Bible.

TRUST GOD FOR THIS YEAR. Often-times, we cannot see what God is doing in our lives. Our plans may not be aligned to His plans for us. Despite this, we know that God is at work behind the scenes. Even though we do not understand what is going on, we can trust His heart and be confident in His good and perfect will for us. Let us allow Him to take control of our lives and always be grateful for His love that never ends.

PRACTICE

1. Goal-setting. What goals have you/will you set in faith this year 2022? (For God, family, career, ministry, and others.)

2. Application. Learning about the ways we can start fresh this year, what are some of the ways you can materialize your goals this year? Share some practical steps to the group.

2. Bible-reading Plan. How do you plan on reading the Bible this year? What are your practical steps in doing so?

PRAYER

WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

I. Church

- Pray for guidance and blessing for our church's mission and vision.

II. Members

- Pray that we will all share Jesus to others & continue to grow in His likeness.

III. Leaders

- Pray that God will empower our leaders to influence His people in God's ways.

IV. Small Groups

- Pray that we will all have one heart; to inspire and lead people to know Jesus.

V. Families

- Pray that all families will be centred in Christ; loving and serving one another.

VI. Worship Services

- Pray that we will find a location more suitable for us to worship God together.

VII. Covid

Pray for healing and strength for all of those afflicted with the virus.