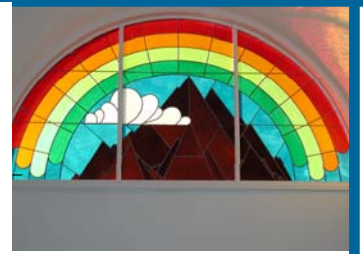


FOLLOW CHRIST  
INTO THE FUTURE

See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it  
Rev 3:8 (NKJV)



# Christian Church of God Newsletter



From the  
**PASTOR'S  
DESK**

**Volume 16, Issue 1  
January 2007**

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Hello My Brothers & Sisters & Christ,

What a nice ring that has.... we are the family of God and thus brothers and sisters in Christ. As we ring in the New Year as man marks time it is a good time for reflection and resolution... a good time to evaluate our lives, make resolutions and set goals.

This custom of examining ourselves and setting goals for improvement through resolutions was embraced and encouraged by the Apostle Paul. The Passover/Lord's Supper season, which marks the true beginning of the year as God marks time is a time of deep spiritual introspection and examination as illustrated by Paul's instructions to the Church at Corinth.

*1 Cor 11:28 A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup.*

*29 For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself. (NIV)*

Examining ourselves, setting goals and anchoring our resolve cannot be done too frequently, so let us look back at our 2006 resolutions and forward to our 2007 resolutions. For those of you brethren not in the Amarillo area, let me tell you about a custom we have on the first Sabbath of each year. We write down our resolutions for the

coming year and seal them up and keep them at the Church to be opened the following year. As we examine last year's resolutions during the sermon, I see a vast array of reactions in the faces of the congregation: joy, disappointment, humor, and sometimes even disgust. Only once did I see arrogance and pride (I wondered just how low this individual set his goals to seem so proud of achieving them). Too often we just take last year's resolutions, change the date & seal them up again for another year. The diet that never works, the budget that quickly folds, the patience that explodes in a burst of anger, the treadmill that becomes a clothes hanger, the prayers that fade and the Bible that gathers dust... these are typical resolutions that last a few months and then go on next year's list again. How many of us become New Year's resolution drop-outs?

It's not that we aren't motivated. for we are. It's not that we don't want to change, for we do.

Our difficulty in keeping resolutions is less a matter of desire, discipline, or motivation, and more a matter of how to set goals effectively. New Year's resolutions are nothing more than goals in disguise. Our problem is we often treat resolutions as desires (I want to get in shape) or promises (I will be a bet-

*(Continued on page 6)*



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Praise the Lord.  
Praise God in his sanctuary;  
praise him in his mighty heavens.  
—Psalm 150:1

"The Sabbath was made to benefit people, and not people to benefit the Sabbath. And I, the Son of Man, am master even of the Sabbath!"  
~Jesus/ Mark 2:27-28 (NLT)

YOU ARE WEL- COME TO MEET WITH  
US EACH SATURDAY:  
11 A.M. Christian Education / 11:45 A.M. Worship Service  
801 QUAIL CREEK DRIVE



**Inside this issue:**

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**Special points of interest:**

- *His Powerful Word*
  - *An Open Door to the Future*
  - *Yesterday, Tomorrow and Today*
  - *Our sermons broadcast on KGRO Radio 9:05 AM Sunday. [www.pan-tex.net](http://www.pan-tex.net)*
- Visit our Home Page: [www.christianchurchofgod.org](http://www.christianchurchofgod.org)

# His Powerful Word

God means what He says. What He says goes. His powerful Word is sharp as a surgeon's scalpel, cutting through everything, whether doubt or defense, laying us open to listen and obey.  
~ Hebrews 4:12, The Message

{ Reprinted from Inspirational Writers Alive! Houston Newsletter }

IT IS WRITTEN  
By Jerry McClenagan

A few weeks ago a Bible was found in the alley trash receptacle in our city of Amarillo, Texas. The Bible was published in 1818! It was in four parts and inside was a family tree which enabled the finder to locate a local family who was part of that lineage.

What a discovery, I thought.  
Then the sadness of it swept over me. Not only because of the disregard for a virtual treasure, but for the blatant disrespect for Holy Writ.

Anciently, the Hebrews were given a charge to verbally pass on their heritage to their children. This command from the Almighty was respected and obeyed much of the time. It began verbally: "God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways" (Hebrews 1:1). And they passed it on verbally: ". . . men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit" (2 Peter 1:19-21).

Then the ancient ones, like Job, would declare, "Oh that my words were now written! oh that they were printed in a book! That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever!" (Job 19:23-24). "My tongue is the pen of a ready writer," the psalmist wrote (Psalm 45:1).

Fortunately, specially appointed scribes recorded the history entwined with a special message for future generations: "Then the LORD said to Moses, "Write this on a scroll as something to be remembered. . ." (Exodus 17:14); "Moreover the LORD said unto me, Take thee a great roll, and write in it with a man's pen" (Isa. 8:1). "Go now, write it on a tablet for them, inscribe it on a scroll, that for the days to come it may be an everlasting witness" (Isaiah 30:8). Israel's kings were to copy it and read it: "When he takes the throne of his kingdom, he is to write for himself on a scroll a copy of this law, taken from that of the priests, who are Levites" (Deuteronomy 17:18).

"'Yes,' Baruch replied, 'he (Jeremiah) dictated all these words to me, and I wrote them in ink on the scroll. . .'" (Jeremiah 36:18). Yet, oftentimes inspired writings are denigrated and disregarded: ". . . the pen of the scribes is in vain" (Jeremiah 8:8)—as is illustrated by the king's reaction to it in the 36<sup>th</sup> chapter of Jeremiah.

So you and I continue to write words of inspiration and hope, words of grace and beauty, words of life. We may not fit into the special category of the prophets and apostles, but we can certainly give our words credibility by writing in concert with their writings. Our words may not be preserved for future generations, but we can write from the heart and learn to do it well.

Is your writing prompted by an undeniable urge, a fiery passion? Jeremiah's was: "His word is in my heart like a fire, a fire shut up in my bones. I am weary of holding it in; indeed, I cannot" (Jeremiah 20:9b).

And write we must!

## J. Oswald Chambers

### YESTERDAY, TOMORROW, & TODAY

"The God of Israel will be your reward" ([Isa. 52:12](#)).

**Security from Yesterday.** "God requireth that which is past." At the end of the year we turn with eagerness to all that God has for the future, and yet anxiety is apt to arise from remembering the yesterdays. Our present enjoyment of God's grace is apt to be checked by the memory of yesterday's sins and blunders. But God is the God of our yesterdays, and He allows the memory of them in order to turn the past into a ministry of spiritual culture for the future. God reminds us of the past lest we get into a shallow security in the present.

**Security for Tomorrow.** "For the Lord will go before you." This is a gracious revelation, that God will garrison where we have failed to. He will watch lest things trip us up again into like failure, as they assuredly would do if He were not our reward. God's hand reaches back to the past and makes a clearing-house for conscience.

**Security for Today.** "For ye shall not go out with haste." As we go forth into the coming year, let it not be in the haste of impetuous, unremembering delight, nor with

the flight of impulsive thoughtlessness, but with the patient power of knowing that the God of Israel will go before us. Our yesterdays present irreparable things to us; it is true that we have lost opportunities which will never return, but God can transform this destructive anxiety into a constructive thoughtfulness for the future. Let the past sleep, but let it sleep on the bosom of Christ.

Leave the Irreparable Past in His hands, and step out into the Irresistible Future with Him.

—My Utmost For His Highest

I KNOW  
NOT WHAT  
THE FU-



### PRAYER REQUESTS

" . . . The prayer of faith shall save the sick and the Lord shall raise him up; . . . Pray for one another that you may be healed." — James 5:15-16.

**Sheri Bartlett:** Serious health problems. Julie McKinney's daughter. **Sandy Booth:** Ovarian cancer. Jeff Booth's sister-in-law.

**Amber and Dylan Clark:** Cerebral Palsy. Betty Clark's grandchildren.

**Vickie Crevoi:** Chronic Progressive MS. Linda Booth's sister.

**DeAnne DeLuna:** Breast Cancer. Not responding to current meds. To undergo heart cath to check for heart damage. Larry Lyles' stepdaughter.

**Randy Gnessett:** Lung transplant. Still in critical condition. Friend of Candace Sellers.

**Velvet Green:** Schizophrenia. Not doing well. Gary's wife.

**Jeffrey Hertz:** Bladder cancer. Hospitalized. Brother of Ruth Wertz..

**Glenn Kirkpatrick:** Growing weak and severely frail. Joe's father.

**Donna Larkin:** Critical after aneurism. Robert Clark's mother-in-law.

**Anna Law:** Lupus and kidney failure.

**C. D. McKinney:** Heart arrhythmia. Julia's husband.

**Dollie Meil:** Cerebral Palsy. Growing weak.

**Glenda Rankin:** Hodgkins Lymphoma. Rudolph Rankin's niece.

**Ted Rankin:** Back surgery, now in therapy, but ongoing vision problems. Rudolph's son.

**Kathryn Scott:** MS, critical stage. Friend of the Baileys.

**Emma Searl** (less than one year old): Spina Befida, staph infection

**Jacee Sellers:** Released from NETH, ICU following lung surgery. Daughter of Candace.

**Wilson Stewart:** Prostate cancer. Difficulty swallowing.

IF YOU HAVE UPDATES OR NEW REQUESTS PLEASE INFORM THE EDITOR, PREFERABLY AT [jerrydalemc@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jerrydalemc@sbcglobal.net)

# I hear by the Grapevine

It seems that the eulogies of the deceased often overly complimentary in the interest of decorum and politeness. But the outstanding talks at President Gerald Ford's funeral were inspiring.

Former President George Bush gave a talk that was a balance of humor and pathos . . . with a thought-provoking statement about the Providence of God. He didn't call it that, but it was poignant and applicable to these times. I wondered how many examples of history could have been named. He said:

"History has a way of matching men and moments. And just as President Lincoln's stubborn devotion to our constitution kept the Union together during the Civil War, and just as FDR's optimism was the perfect anecdote to the Great Depression, so too can we say that Gerry Ford's decency was the ideal remedy for the deception of Watergate."

BY AN ACT OF FAITH, ABRAHAM SAID YES TO GOD'S CALL TO TRAVEL TO AN UNKNOWN PLACE. ~ HEBREWS 11:8 (MSG)  
 WE HUMANS KEEP BRAINSTORMING OPTIONS AND PLANS, BUT GOD'S PURPOSE PREVAILS. ~ PROVERBS 19:21 (MSG)

## CELEBRATIONS

**Birthdays:**

Helen Kennedy 01/01  
 Virginia Sellers 01/02  
 Francis Carlson 01/04  
 Rudolph Rankin 01/15  
 Norma Hamilton 01/25  
 Roy Carlson 01/31

**Anniversaries:**

Linda & Darrell Sehorn 01/06



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"All things are yours, whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future—all are yours, and you are of Christ, and Christ is of God" (1 Cor 3:21-23, NIV).

This passage would make good sense to ancient readers. Even Paul and Apollos are given to them by God; why follow just Paul or Apollos, when they should follow the God who gives everything? God's people would take possession of the world to come (Zech. 8:12; Romans 4:13); at present they are heirs of the world and children of the God who rules it. Stoic and Cynic philosophers often praised "having nothing."

Purposeful living is illusive to millions of people in the world. The dual clouds of skepticism and cynicism hang over their heads — much like Solomon of old: "Again I observed all the oppression that takes place in our world. I saw the tears of the oppressed, with no one to comfort them. The oppressors have great power, and the victims are helpless. So I concluded that the dead are better off than the living. And most fortunate of all are those who were never born. For they have never seen all the evil that is done in our world" (Eccl 4:1-3, NLT).

But God's revelation to man is that He has a plan that is eternal: "For his Holy Spirit speaks to us deep in our hearts and tells us that we are God's children. And since we are his children, we will share his treasures—for everything God gives to his Son, Christ, is ours, too. But if we are to share his glory, we must also share his suffering. Yet what we suffer now is nothing compared to the glory he will give us later. For all creation is waiting eagerly for **that future day** when God will reveal who his children really are" (Romans 8:16-19, NLT).  
 ~ JDM



# Acknowledgement <sup>8</sup>

MANY OF THE GRAPHICS USED IN OUR NEWSLETTER, SUCH AS THE ONE TO THE RIGHT, ARE GRACIOUSLY FURNISHED BY MOON AND BACK GRAPHICS.



LORD AND MASTER, I WILL TAKE TIME THIS MONTH TO LOOK AT MY HEART MIRROR AND EXAMINE MYSELF IN RESPECT TO . . .

- GREED. Are my goals for the year based solely on money? On getting ahead financially? Luke 12:15; 1 Timothy 6:6-8.
- LOVE. Do I really love as I should? 1 Corinthians 13.
- DRIVE. Am I really motivated to serve God? including my service to Him by serving others? Galatians 6:9-10.



For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does. ~James 1:23-25 (NKJV)

# The Future Belongs to You

5

**“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”**

**~ Jeremiah 29:11, NIV**



For surely

**you have a future**

ahead of you; your hope will not be disappointed.

~ Proverbs 23:18 (NLT)

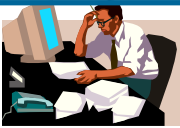
**“Notice the innocent person, and look at the decent person, because the peacemaker has a future.”**

**~ Psalms 37:37 (GW)**

**“. . . Everything belongs to you: . . . the whole world and life and death; the present and the future. Everything belongs to you, and you belong to Christ, and Christ belongs to God.”**

**~1 Corinthians 3:21-23 (NLT)**

**{ See page 9 }**



From the  
PASTOR'S DESK

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ter friend), whereas goals give us a plan.

I read an interesting article by Joan Esherrick reinforcing the importance of realistic goal setting. It's not some magical formula, but rather a logical approach that I imagine matches advice you've heard before, maybe from Mom or Dad.

1) **Be specific.** You can't just say, "I want to grow in Bible knowledge", you have to have a plan. It may be dedicating a specific length of time daily devoted to reading and studying scripture. It may be enrolling in some Bible study course. It may be attending and participating in the Church's weekly Bible class. It may be in dedicating time with family or friends for Biblical discussion and introspection.

2) **Be realistic.** The greatest enemy of resolutions is unrealistic goals. If our goals and resolutions overwhelm us, then we are not living within the limits and boundaries God has created for us. We are mortal, human beings. We need to eat, exercise, get sufficient sleep and yes, relax.



When we push ourselves and ignore these realities, we can't dot it, so we give up. Instead, when this happens, we should reassess our goal. Perhaps it was unrealistic. We all want to be perfect, but we must remember that excellence does not require perfection. We are works in progress and perfection can only come through Christ, not our own efforts.

3) **Include a way to measure your success.** A good goal will answer the questions of what, how, and when; it's measurable.

4) **Think short-term and long-term.** Short-term goals (cleaning one closet a week) allow us to experience success at smaller intervals while working toward long-term goals (de-cluttering an entire house).

5) **Be flexible.** Sometimes there are setbacks, such as an personal illness or in the family, lost job, devastating accident. So many things can derail the best laid plans. Life can, indeed, get in the way of our ideals.

6) **Review periodically.** Regular review allows us to stay on course, track our progress, and adjust course as necessary. You might wish to record your goals in a date book/planner; you can list specific objectives by category: personal/spiritual; marriage/family; professional; ministry; house/projects. Businesses routinely look at monthly financial statements, to determine whether or not the business is showing a profit or a loss, whether or not it is succeeding or failing in its goals. In our personal lives, our statements of goal profit or loss might involve some questions you can use as a tool for review:

How am I doing? Am I still on course? Which goals am I encouraged about?

Which are frustrating me?  
Can I be more flexible?  
Have circumstances changed since I set this goal?  
Is my goal realistic? Specific? Measurable?  
If not, what could I change to make it more so?

Is this the right season of life to work on this? Have I prayed about this goal?

If you're a resolution dropout, take heart! Goal setting's a liberating alternative. It helps you realize objectives are simply tools, not promises or laws, and tools are something we can implement anytime. As counselor Leslie Vernick says, "Don't let falling off track keep you from your goals. Dust yourself off and get right back on track." Leave yesterday's failures behind, and treat today as a brand-new beginning.

I once heard that "The mark of a person's greatness is how much it takes to discourage him." So we should all take heart and make the resolution to end all resolutions: to live in the light of divine intentions, not human inventions; making it your business to be about His business. You'll be glad you did.

May The Lord Be With You This Year!

Jeff Booth

# chuckles

7

A cheerful disposition is good for your health;  
gloom and doom leave you bone-tired.



## THE LAST WILL OF A FARMER

I leave

- To my wife: my overdraft at the bank. Maybe she can explain it.
- To my banker: my soul; he has a mortgage on it.
- To my neighbor: my clown suit. He'll need it if he continues to farm as he has in the past.
- To the Grain Association: my grain bin. I was planning to let them take it back next year anyway.
- To the farm adviser: 50 bushels of corn to see if he can hit the market. I never did.
- To the junk man: all my machinery. He's had his eye on it for years.
- To my undertaker: a special request. I want six implement and fertilizer dealers as my pallbearers. They're used to carrying me.
- To the weatherman: rain, sleet and snow for my funeral please. No sense in having good weather now.
- To the gravedigger: don't bother; the hole I'm in now is big enough.
- To the monument maker: set up a jig for the epitaph: "Here lies a farmer who has properly assumed all his obligations."

~ The Gallatin Democrat

