

Meditation January 2022 New Year Resolutions - oh no, not again !

How many of us start each New Year making those resolutions which in my case usually only last a matter of weeks – if I'm lucky. Without boring you with all the details they usually involve chocolate, red wine and exercise in some form or another. Persistence doesn't pay off as my self control is severely lacking and they are always doomed to failure. This year I'm going down another route linking New Year goals with a broader look at life in general and God's plans for us as his children, as individuals He truly loves and wants to help in every way.

Much of this is to do with making commitments in life and commitments we can't make by ourselves. In the Bible James spoke of those who had great intentions but they were not part of God's plan

James 4 13 – 16

Come now , you who say," Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a town and spend a year there, doing business and making money." Yet you do not even know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. Instead you ought to say, " If the Lord wishes, we will live and do this or that "

The Bible reassures us constantly that God has our best interests at heart, we are engraved on the palms of his hands, He will never abandon us – He will always love us.

So if we are ready for new beginnings and a fresh start then it is to God we must first look for guidance , direction and the strength to do his will and allow him to work through us. With God directing us we can press forward into the New Year with hope and joy – not just for a few weeks but for every day that lies ahead in 2022 , living life to the full for every one of the precious 525,600 minutes in front of us. The year ahead is a wonderful gift from God and this is why I need to celebrate the New Year – never mind the chocolates and whatever else.

I have found the following Bible verses really encouraging

Jeremiah 29 v 11-14

For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope. Then when you call upon me and come and pray to me , I will hear you. When you search for me. You will find me , if you seek me with all your heart"

Lamentations 3 22 – 4

The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. The Lord is my portion, says my soul, therefore I will hope in him.

How marvellous that God offers us a new day and a new dawn no matter what has happened before , not just at the start of the year but all year long; all life long.

Proverbs 3 5-6

Trust in the Lord with all your heart ,and do not rely on your own insight. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.

Proverbs 16 v3

Commit your work to the Lord, and your plans will be established.

Ready for a fresh start ? Ready for new beginnings? The message comes over loud and clear – I need to turn to God.

I was reading about the Lutheran minister and hymnodist Paul Gerhardt (1607 – 1676) He lived in difficult times and had no easy life but his writings are beautiful

A quote from him “ Commit whatever grieves thee into the gracious hands of Him who never leaves thee, who heav’n and earth commands. Who points the clouds their courses. Whom winds and waves obey , He will direct thy footsteps and find for thee a way “

And a hymn he wrote to celebrate the New Year

Above all else , Lord, send us Thy Spirit to attend us,

Within our hearts abiding,

To heaven our footsteps guiding.

All this Thy hand bestoweth,

Thou Life ,whence our life floweth

To all Thy name confessing

Grant, Lord, Thy New Year’s blessing.

For the year in front of you , a traditional and very much loved Celtic prayer about God’s blessing for your journey ahead. Celtic literature often used images of nature and everyday life to show how God interacted with people. The wind can be likened to the Spirit of God who came as a “mighty wind “ at Pentecost. The sun’s warmth tells of the tender mercies of God. The rain tells of God’s provision and sustenance.

We are held safe in God’s hands on our journey through life

May The Road Rise Up To Meet you

May the road rise up to meet you.

May the wind be always at your back,

May the sun shine warm upon your face;

The rains fall soft upon your fields

And until we meet again,

May God hold you in the palm of His hand.

Wishing you all a very, very Happy New Year