

## CCC A NEW YOU FOR A NEW YEAR 2008

We all have attitudes and habits and thoughts and ways of reacting and responding that are out of date. They were habits and attitudes that were appropriate in the past but they will be inappropriate in the new coming 2008. Your happiness in this New Year to come is determined to a large degree by number one, your willingness it change, and number two, your willingness to be changed by God.

If we don't change and if we don't grow we just tend to perpetuate the same old problems over and over, year after year. We go into each New Year with the same old hang ups, with the same old problems, the same old responses to life, making the same mistakes each year over and over and we never grow. God Word, the bible, says you don't put

new wine in old wineskins. *“And no one put new wine into old wineskins. The old skins would burst from the pressure, spilling the wine and ruining the skins. New wine must be stored in new wineskins. That way both the wine and the wineskins are preserved.”* Matthew 9:17

Now some people are constantly changing. There changing everything but what needs to be looked at for change. In other words they're changing their jobs, they're changing their homes, they're changing their friends, even changing their mates. But they never think of changing themselves. The New Year of 2008 will require a new you.

As you think about the New Year you'll be facing a lot of new situations. Specifically you'll face new problems, you'll face new pressures, and you'll face new possibilities. And each of these will require a new response from you, a

new attitude, a new adjustment, and a new action on your part. So this morning let's just look for a minute and think about what does the New Year require of me.

I hate to tell you this but you're going to have problems in 2008 and there not going to be the same old problems!"

You're going to have new ones. Some of them will be even bigger than you had in 2007. You know sometime I want to just get down on my knees and say, "Lord, If You don't mind, just let me coast this year. Let me just relax and enjoy life without any crises or without any problems or situations in my life. And this is what God response is to me, "He says Bill I never promise you a life without problems but this I do promise you, I will be with you as you're going through them... You can trust in Me in them all.

Friends you will face problems this New Year and it will require new attitudes from you. One thing you can be absolutely certain of is this. **God never puts more on you than He puts in you to bear it up.**

1 Corinthians 10:13 "*God never puts more on you than He puts in you to bear it up.*" And in Lamentations 3:20 He says, "*The mercies of God are new every morning.*" In other words the power you need for today will be here today for you and the power you need for tomorrow will be there tomorrow when you need it and it will always be there for those who have put their trust in Him.

You can't solve tomorrow's problems with today's solutions. New problems require new attitudes. How many times have you ever caught yourself saying, "But we've never done it that way before." Whenever I hear

that, do you know what I think? That's an old wineskin.

"We've never done it that way before."

Let me ask you. What old attitudes, what old values and old prejudices are you holding onto? Are you stuck in a rut? Have you got a mental wineskin? Maybe you've got a problem and you haven't been able to solve it. Maybe what God's saying is you need to look at it in a new way. You need to approach it from a new angle. You need to try it from a new point of view. New problems require new solutions. So new problems will require new attitudes.

Then second as I was thinking about the New Year, I was thinking we're going to have a lot of pressures, and new pressures require new adjustments.

The world is constantly changing that we live in today. Whether you like it or not it's going to keep on

changing. And happiness in your life is going to be based on your ability to adapt and to adjust. And if you're a normal human being you don't like change. None of us like change... We like the security of the familiar. We like the predictable. We don't like to change. But friends we can't grow without change.

That's one benefit of knowing Christ. **One benefit of knowing Christ is you know He is the solid rock which we stand on.** The Bible says, "*Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forever.*" Hebrews 13:8 KNJV

He's not going to change. While everything else is falling apart or in flux, or swirling around you and you wonder, "I don't know if I can adapt to what's happening. I don't know if I can cope because the world is changing too fast." You can know this... that you can hold onto Jesus Christ because He's not changing. He is the solid rock. He will

give you stability in the midst of all the changes you're going to experience this next year.

**If I were to sum up the key to successful marriage in one word it would be this word: adjustments.**

That's the key.

You're going to have to adjust in marriage to compensate for each other's quirks and whatever. But more than that, you're going to keep changing. I'm not married to the same girl I was married to years ago. It's still Edna-Wynne Hartge but she's a different person and I am too. I'm changing and she is too. You're always changing. And you're always growing. That means one of two things. You either have to grow together or you grow apart. There's no such thing as a static marriage. You're either growing together or you're growing apart because you're

both growing, you're both changing. But this I can assure you when you have both people drawing closer to God they are in actuality growing closed to each other. (A Triangle would be a great word picture here)

So often we get stuck in a rut. We become complacent about life. We become routine and everything just becomes habit. The way we habitually respond to our spouse, the way we habitually respond to work. Even going to church and serving the lord can lose its meaning and become a habit.

Your life is largely made up of habits. Most of everything you do is habitual. The way you get up in the morning, the way you shower, the way you eat. Even the types of food you eat are pretty much habitual. The way you dress. The way you go to work. Life is made up largely of habits. If you're going to change, you're going

to have to change some habits. Successful people are basically the sum total of good habits. They have developed good habits.

Let me ask you this morning. What old habits do you need to drop in 2008? Maybe it's some habitual ways of thinking. Some habitual ways of acting, responding. Some habitual ways of feeling or the way you talk. What do you need to change? When you change your habits then you can change yourself.

**New pressures require new adjustments.** What new habits do you need to develop this New Year? I don't know. Maybe it's a new habit of getting involved in a Bible study or a new habit of having a regular prayer time every day. Or a new habit of reading the Bible. Or a new

habit of tithing ten percent of your money. I don't know. But I can tell you this: if you're going to grow this next year, you're going to have to change some habits.

Not only do new problems require new attitudes. But new pressures require new adjustments. In Ephesians 4:24 Jesus (God) says, "*Put on your new self, which is made in the image of Christ.*" Your new self means new thoughts, new attitudes, new habits. The whole Christian life is the business of character changing and becoming more and more like Jesus Christ in our lives.

Did you notice here what happens to the wineskin when it fails to adjust? It says, "*No one pours new wine into old wineskins. If it does the new wine will burst the skins and the new wine will run out and the wineskins will be*

*ruined.*” An old wineskin becomes rigid and tough and unbending and inflexible. A lot of people are like that. We get caught in our ways and our ruts and our traditions and our habits, our ways of thinking. We get prejudices. Then a new experience comes along and it just blows us apart.

Maybe you feel like that. Maybe you feel like right now you’re about to come apart at the seams. You’re about to explode inside. People who are inflexible have a hard time adjusting to a new situations.

You don’t put new wine in old wineskins. So you’re going to have to make some changes in your attitudes for the new problems. You’re going to have to make some changes, some adjustments for the new pressures.

But 2008 isn’t going to be all bad. Sure you’re going to have problems and sure you’re going to have pressures. But you’re also going to have some tremendous opportunities in this New Year – 365 days of boundless, unlimited possibilities. And new possibilities require new actions.

I can say without a shadow of a doubt that God has a lot of neat things in store for you this next year. God has a lot of things He wants to do in your life and with your life. But you’ll miss it if you just sit back and try to live on your past successes. If you just kind of sit back and say, “2007 was a okay year so I’m just going to kind of cruise along like I did last year.” New possibilities require new actions. We must act. We must move forward. As a church, as individuals, and as families.

It's so easy to become contented with the past. We just become obsessed with past memories. When we talk, we talk about *the things God use to do for us*. Fortunately our church isn't like this but I've been in a lot of churches where when you ask for people to give testimonies, somebody will stand up whose been a Christian 10, 15, 20 years and the testimony they give is what happened 10, 15 years ago when they first became a Christian and sometimes I wanted to stand up and say hey, "What's God done for you lately? And what have you done for God lately?"

God wants to work in our lives today. Like I said, His mercies are new every morning. God wants us to move forward, to act. Not rely on past successes. New possibilities require new actions.

**We certainly can be grateful for the past and for past successes and be happy about them. But we can never make them our security.** They are not to be our security.

Isaiah 43:18 God says, "*Forget the former things. Do not dwell on the past. But watch Me do a new thing.*" Every day we are to look to God for new direction from the Lord. Every day I look to the Lord for new direction and not depend on one experience I had six months or a year or ten years ago.

As a Christian, for you, the best is always yet to come. You can be sure of that. When you're committed to Christ it can only get better because He's working in your life. He's building you. He's helping you grow. That's part of the good news. All of your best days are ahead of you. They're not behind you. They're ahead of you. The

best is yet to come. And it's going to get better and better as you give more and more of your life to Christ. You grow deeper in faith and deeper in your understanding of what life is all about.

Don't make the mistake, the tragic mistake, of thinking that one decision you made for Christ is enough to carry you the rest of your life, the Christian life is a constant renewal.

God wants us to grow. New possibilities require new actions. The Christian life is one of constant renewal. Growth and development. Progress and a deeper faith and commitment. And the level of faith that you had last year was great for last year. But it isn't going to hack it in 2008. You need a deeper faith for a new situation. You need to grow. Don't try to live off a childish commitment of a year

ago when God's going to give you greater opportunities in this New Year.

God wants to do some exciting things in each of your lives this New Year. But He will not put new wine into old wineskins. You must be willing to change. As I looked through the Bible this week preparing for this message I began to make a list of all the new things that God gives us when we commit our lives to Jesus Christ. He gives a new birth, a new heart, a new spirit, a new life, a new song, a new name. It just goes on and on. He is a God of newness. Never stale, never old, always new things.

The good news is you don't have to stay stuck in a rut. God will help you to change.

Let me ask you this morning, what is that old attitude or old habit that you say, "I wish I could just get

rid of it.” Or that thing that you don’t like about yourself. Or that problem or that situation that just keeps hanging on and you say, “I wish I could get rid of that!” God can help you to change. But He’ll only do it if you give Him all the pieces. He can’t build a jigsaw puzzle if you only give Him half the pieces. He’s got to have all the pieces to make the picture.

**Read Matthew 9:16**

**You don’t put new into something old. You don’t put new wine into old wineskins. You don’t put new patch on an old shirt. And you don’t try to patch up an old way of life. God wants to give you a new life.** 2

Corinthians 5:17 *“Therefore if any man be in Christ he is a new creature, completely new. The old has passed away, the new has come.”*

Folks, that verse is not a one time experience. It is a constant experience. Yes, when I gave my life to Jesus Christ and those of you who have done this, you became a new person at that point. But God wants to keep renewing your life. The initial commitment is still there. You’re still a Christian. But He wants to completely give you a new life and change you and give you that renewal in your life. Growing from one stage of maturity to another. I thank the Lord that I don’t have to stay the way I am the rest of my life. I’m going to get better by God’s help. By God’s grace.

It’s not this patching up a little bit. It’s not this turning over a new leaf. You turn over a new leaf and you find the underside is just as rotten as the top was. But it’s not a new leaf. It’s a new life.

What are your wineskins this year? What are your old wineskins that are going to hinder your growth? They've got you boxed in and enclosed. A problem? An attitude? A habit? It's going to take new attitudes for your new problems. It's going to take new adjustments for your new pressures. And it's going to take new actions for your new possibilities. Let us prayer:

*Message Notes*

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