



CENTRAL
CHURCH

CONNECTIONS

PASTOR'S NOTE

How many of us really **wanted** 2021 to be different, better than, 2020? I saw so many posts on social media that were either overly positive (2021 **will** be better) or at least confidently hopeful that 2021 would be a better year than 2020. Now, eleven days into the year, I see so many people on social media bemoaning the beginning of the year and declaring that it is already worse than 2020. Sometimes, I

have to sit back and shake my head at my fellow humans. We're going to take an eleven-day snapshot at the beginning of a year following a year that was generally pretty rough, and declare the new year to be lost. Personally, I am looking for the Lord to make this year a much better year than last year. Oh, and I am generally not a "glass half-full" kind of person. I am usually the one who takes a negative view of things. I just have a sense that this year is going to be much different, and much better, than last year.

As we continue to *walk* through this new year, let's not lose sight of what we have been told. Paul, in Galatians 6:9, told the church there: "*And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.*" (ESV) There is no question that we've been through a rough year, and there is also no question that this new year has started pretty rough. However, don't give up! Don't quit doing what the Lord has called you to do. Don't allow our enemy to claim a victory by allowing yourself to grow weary. Thomas Fuller, a 17th century English theologian wrote in one of his works, "*It is always darkest before the dawn.*" While this is not Biblical, nor is it always true from a scientific point of view, it is often true from a *philosophical* point of view. When we are at our lowest point we need some bright light to shine into our life and bring us clarity.

If there is one truth about God that I know to be true, it is this, God is never late. When we think we cannot go any further, we need to keep going, trusting that God will sustain us and that His light will break through the darkness at just the right time. In Psalm 67:1, we read, "*May God be gracious to us and bless us and make His face to shine upon us.*" Have faith that this is exactly what will happen. That God's grace will be sufficient and appear just when it is needed. Have faith that God's blessings will fall when and how they are most needed. Have faith that God's smile will break through the darkness and shine into your life. It may be very dark in this moment, but have faith that the light of God's grace will chase away the darkness.

If you take the time to read the remainder of Psalm 67, you will see the reason why the psalmist wanted God's grace and blessing, why he wanted God's face to shine upon his people. The reason was simple, so that God's saving power might be made known to all nations. This should be our expectation, as well, moving forward. Let's sing praises to our God and Savior, Jesus Christ. Let us be joyfully expecting God to move in a mighty way. Let us be the ones who are shouting and glorifying God for His provision, so that others might know the reality of His salvation.

Central—lift your head, look for the light of God's grace. He isn't finished with us. His kingdom will move forward. Take a deep breath or two. Regardless of how dark it may seem, God has not abandoned us, nor will He do so. Pray like you have never prayed before. Then, stand up, and **walk**. This is what I am going to do, no matter what happens. I am going to be faithful to God's call in my life. I pray that you will join with me in this steadfast determination to not let the enemy gain a victory. Don't quit. Don't give in. It may seem very dark, but the dawn **is** coming!

Pastor Alan

P.S. Don't forget, ministry leaders, that I need your reports as soon as possible in order to prepare for the Annual Business Meeting coming up this next Sunday evening. For those ministry areas that were more or less "canceled" during 2020, please spend some time to cast a little vision for what you prayerfully are considering for 2021. The sooner I get your reports, the sooner I can work on formatting these for the Zoom meeting.

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

*Tolerance says,
"You must approve
of what I do, agree
with me, and allow
me to have my
way."*

*Love says, "I must
do something
harder; I will love
you even when
your behavior
offends me, I will
tell you the truth
even if it offends
you because only
the truth will set
you free, and I will
plead with you to
follow the right
way."*

*Tolerance seeks to
be inoffensive, love
takes risks;
tolerance glorifies
division, love seeks
unity; tolerance
costs nothing, love
costs everything.*

JOSH MCDOWELL



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MISSIONARY SPOTLIGHT

Our missionary spotlight for this week is [Tyler & Kellie Penn](#)



To visit either of our mission's departments, click their logo above.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Deacon Ministry Team Meeting ~ Zoom
 - Monday, January 11th from 7:30-8:00 PM
- Mid-Week Bible Study ~ Book of Genesis
 - Wednesday, January 13th ~ 11:00-11:30 AM on Facebook Live
- Annual Business Meeting ~ Zoom
 - Sunday, January 17th from 7:00-8:00 PM
- Advisory Board Meeting ~ Zoom
 - Thursday, January 21st from 6:30-8:00 PM



BIBLE CHALLENGES

Bible Reading Challenge: Ephesians 5:1-21

Bible Memorization Challenge: Ephesians 5:2 (ESV) ~ *And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.*

SERMON ARCHIVE

Latest Message: [A Worthy Walk](#)

You can access all of our archived messages by clicking this [link](#).

CENTRAL FAMILY

Here's how you, the Central Church family, can help spread the news on social media about our church:

- If you have Facebook—find and 'Like' **and** 'Follow' the [page](#) (if you want to get **really** bold, invite friends and family to Central's page, especially those in need of the gospel)
 - When something new and engaging (Sunday live stream, Wednesday Bible study, upcoming events, etc.) appears Central's page—SHARE it to your own timeline
- If you have a Twitter account—find and 'Follow' [Central's Twitter feed](#)
 - When something new and engaging (Sunday live stream, Wednesday Bible study, upcoming events, etc.) appears on Central's Twitter feed—retweet it!

FIG LEAF NEEDS

- Hangers
- Unopened socks and underwear for both men and women
- Winter clothing (hats, gloves, coats, etc.)

Volunteer Schedule

January 17, 2021

A/V Tech ~ Brett Daire

Security ~ Gary Breshears

Greeters ~ Brett & Beth Daire

Please remember to make arrangements for someone to fulfill your role if you are unable to do so.

If you make it this far, take a moment to send an encouraging note to someone today! They may need it more than you realize...