



02 January 2026

## Welcome to 2026!

The calendar has flipped. *Welcome to 2026!*

For some people the new year doesn't make much difference, except for the annoyance of their habit of writing 2025. For others it comes with fears about the unknown days of the new year, or sorrows over the losses of the last year. Then there are those who determine to finally make that change, reach that goal, carry out those resolutions.



Let's look at a few essential quick brush strokes for all of us, regardless of our thoughts and feelings about the new year.

We should begin with the foundation of God being in control. Nothing will or can happen that is out of God's control. God tells us through Isaiah, "My plan will be established, and I will accomplish all My good pleasure" (46:10). Job learned this through difficult experiences, and confessed to God, "I know that You [God] can do all things, and that no plan is impossible for You" (42:2). Job worked his way through tragedies to also learn the truth stated by the apostle Paul, "God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose" (Romans 8:28). God is and always will be in control.

A second key feature is to review and remember what God has done for you in the past. When king David led the celebration of the Ark being brought into Jerusalem, Asaph and his choir sang "Remember [God's] wonderful deeds which He has done, His marvels and the judgments from His mouth" (1 Chronicles 16:11). Again, in Psalm 77 Asaph sang, "I shall remember the deeds of the LORD; I will certainly remember Your wonders of old. I will meditate on all Your work, and on Your deeds with thanksgiving" (11-12). Yes, "count your blessings, see what God has done!" Review, remember, praise and thank God for all He has done for you.

Another building block is the actual focus and purpose for your thinking, planning and actions. You may know Paul's statement, "whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all things for the glory of God" (1 Corinthians 10:31). That is so much easier to say than actually to live, isn't it. One thing that can help us actually do this is by remembering and asking ourselves the familiar question "What would Jesus do?" This probing question was the subtitle of Charles Sheldon's 1896 book *In*

*His Steps.* He placed it in a situation of a homeless man coming into a church where they were singing “All for Jesus, all for Jesus.” The man said,

“It seems to me there’s an awful lot of trouble in the world that somehow wouldn’t exist if all the people who sing such songs went and lived them out. I suppose I don’t understand. But what would Jesus do?”

We can avoid a lot of trouble if we ask and then live by that question.

The apostle Paul stated it this way, “For to me, to live is Christ” (Philippians 1:21). Can I, can you say that today, each day? When we look carefully, sometimes our testimony may actually be “I live for being accepted, loved, valued; being happy, content, secure, comfortable; having money, power, possessions.”

Think about where you are at right now, then fill in the blank, “For me to live is \_\_\_\_\_.”

Another important perspective is to trust God’s timing. We know the old line, “I want what I want, and I want it right now!” Patience does not come naturally, nor easily. If God’s plans for us are good, and they are, and if God’s timing is perfect, and it is, why would we not trust God?

Recall the example of Abraham and Sarah. God promised them that they would have a son and through him then a great nation. The calendar kept flipping, year after year, and no son. So they came up with their plan in their time: they would have a son through Sarah’s maid Hagar. Even after that, in God’s time and in His faithfulness, He enabled Abraham and Sarah to have a son, Isaac. There were tragic results from them not trusting God’s timing, results which are still being felt today.

King David closed Psalm 27 with this admonition, “Wait for the LORD; be strong and let your heart take courage; yes, wait for the LORD” (14). Yes, trust God’s timing.

*Welcome to 2026!* We don’t know what lies ahead, but God does. He is in control. His plans for us are good as they have been in the past. Trust Him. Live for Him and His glory in each day and situation.

Pastor Lyle