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**Theme:** “New Year Resolutions + Hope = PEACE

**Scripture:** Jeremiah 29:11 (NLT)

*“For I know the plans I have for you,” says the Lord. “They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope”*

**A Thought:** The above verse in brevity fashion continues to explain to us that God is in control and His love and Holy Spirit is never ending. A new year is upon us and accordingly many of us are looking forward (or not) to scheduling work assignments, vacations, family and church activities, grandchildren outings, graduations, home maintenance, honey dos, doctor appointments and so on. Basically, we are looking into the future and it is all planned and stored in our respective minds or calendars. Or we think so! What we don't plan is the one major or minor crisis that sets you back on your heels. The “why me” crossroad of despair and hope. Depending on our attitudes and or personality we either face them directly or we withdraw to stuff that will not make us proud. Correct? Listen to what the tax collector, Apostle and Evangelist Matthew writes in 10:28-31 (NIV) *“Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell. Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father's care. And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows”*. A “spot check” of the previous year's calendar had its surprises. Some disheartening and others with joyous conclusions. The chances are that the months ahead will not be any different. Ask the Lord to give you strength to meet these unforeseen challenges including transgressions. Present them to Him through prayer and confession....do it and do it now! Remember His mercy and grace are irreproachable. *“For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.”* Psalm 103:11-12 (KJV)

Now....what are your thoughts? Write them down.

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**Talk to yourself:**

- Commit yourself to His Presence. (1Chronicles.16:27)
- Are your daily actions reflective of “agape love?” (John 13:34-35)
- Be of good character (Psalm 15:1-5)
- Less control and more listening. (James 1:19)

**Scriptures to read:**

- 1Samuel 2:3; Isaiah 55:9; Proverbs 4:25-27, 24:20; Psalm 34:8,
- 44:21,90:2,111:10,119:105; Matthew 5:1-48,10:28-30; Luke 10:39-42; John
- 3:16; Hebrews 4:13; Philippians 3:12-14

**Quote:**A. W. Tozer, American Evangelist and Author

*“I can only hope that you are wise enough, desirous enough and spiritual enough to face up to the truth that every day is another day of spiritual preparation, another day of testing and discipline with our heavenly destination in mind.”* Jesus, Author of our Faith

**Bottom Line:** The first day of the new year gives us an opportunity to not look back of what we should have, would have, could have accomplished. When you are driving and you want to pass a car you look at the rear view mirror to ensure that it is safe to pass. This tiny mirror is much different than the windshield with its wide panorama view. It is more focused and of course you have to be careful of the blind spot...so, learn to focus more and not spread your time and energy on things that you cannot control. Start the dawn of the new year with a refreshing outlook of wanting His presence in your life at all times and I mean ALL times. With the Lord’s presence in your life He will renew your mind more than the millions of pages written on how to be “*successful and live a good life.*” *Do not be a conformist to the vagaries of the world...Romans 12:2 “Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is - His good, pleasing and perfect will.”* God is in control even with all the hoopla that surrounds you daily. God loves you...He will not forsake you. His presence is infinite! *“Trust in the LORD, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed. Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart. Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass.”* Psalm 37:3-4 (KJV) **NOW.....THAT’S THE BOTTOM LINE.**

Spiritual Dabbler, Your bro, Ray

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