

4 Things All Believers Should Do in 2017

With 2016 coming to a close [last] week, we meet the beginning of a new year filled with new opportunities and experiences with high expectations. To meet those expectations, here are four things every Christ-follower should be doing fervently in the upcoming year.

Pray

Prayer is the foundation upon which we are called to lay all things. And as 2016 [came] to a close, the beginning of a new year filled with new opportunities and experiences [was] right around the corner. Let us first pray for safety and guidance as we set off into a new year, and let us also thank God for His goodness and provision for the year prior. Let us pray for our friends, families, our country, our enemies, our allies, our leader, those less fortunate than we and those journeying through trials and tribulations. And although not everything in 2016 may have panned out the way we would have wished, we must realize that God is still in control, and His plan is always in His best interest for our lives.

Reflect

Reflecting on the past is a good thing, but we must also make sure we don't dwell on it. Regardless if things took place this past year that you are not proud of, remember the grace of Jesus covers you like an anchor that has found itself at the bottom of the ocean floor. Take the last year as an opportunity to reflect on your life, your achievements, your failures, your actions, your experiences and your relationship with God. Spend time evaluating each and every aspect of your life and make decisions on things you wish to change moving forward.

Adjust

Once you've reflected on the last 365 days and evaluated each aspect of your life, it's now time for you to adjust accordingly in order to make things better than they were the year prior. For some, that may mean letting go of a bad habit, a toxic relationship, a friendship or even a job. For others, it may mean spending more time in prayer, in church and reading the Bible. Regardless of what adjustments need to take place in your life, the sooner you can make them, the better. Sometimes, adjusting is the hardest part of the process, so I'd encourage you to gather friends and loved ones you trust to help keep you accountable as you head down new paths.

Forgive

Whether you are learning to forgive yourself or someone who has hurt you dearly, don't go into a new year with resentment and begrudging. I believe forgiveness is one of the hardest things to do as it pertains to our spiritual lives, especially when it comes to family and those you consider closest to you. What we have to understand is that even if we don't think someone deserves it, we are still called to forgive because Jesus first forgave us.

Forgiveness doesn't mean affirmation. And forgiveness does not mean you approve of what someone has done to you. But what forgiveness does mean is that you've handed what has been done to you over to the hands of Jesus, a place where grace overflows and love dwells deeply. {eo}

Jarrid Wilson is a husband, pastor and author relentlessly sharing the love of Jesus. For the original article, visit .