

January 2023

The Lighthouse

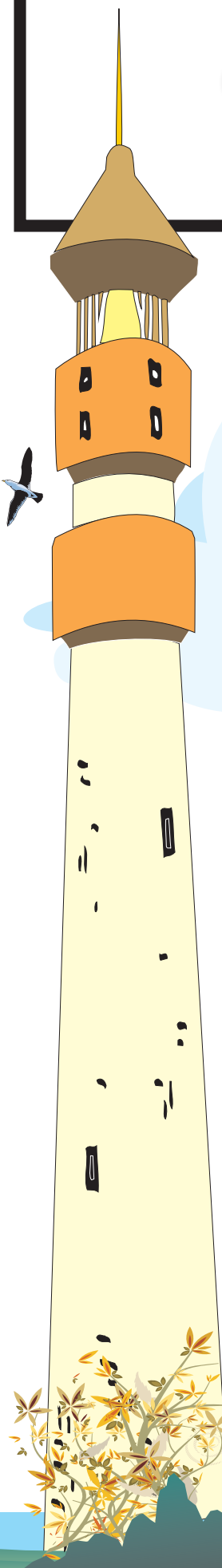
New Year's Resolution: To Feed Myself More on a Regular Basis

Of course, New Year's is the time when people make resolutions for the coming year. Without a doubt, the number one resolution of most Americans is to lose weight. Some people have had that same resolution every year; which highlights the problem with resolutions. The problem with resolutions is that we rarely stick to them. Purposeful, lasting change is very difficult to effect in one's life. Will power will only get you so far when you are fighting against your natural desires. It can become so frustrating that we might be tempted to ask, "Is lasting change even possible?"

Christianity says that it is possible to change; in fact, it is imperative and it is certain for the true believer. This is what the Lord is doing in the life of his children. He has begun a good work in them and will bring it to completion. Christians are new creations in Christ. "... *Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.*" (Ephesians 5:25–27, ESV). In this life, Christians always have spots, wrinkles and blemishes in their lives and characters, but he is in the process of cleansing them.

How does he do this? It is by his grace, not by our will power alone, not by resolve. The word "grace" is not always used in the same sense in Scripture, but has a variety of meanings, but most generally means *favor* or *good-will*. We often define grace as being "unmerited favor." The Bible repeatedly speaks of "favor with God and men." When a person was in favor with God it carried with it the bestowal of favors or blessings. So, "grace is not an abstract quality, but it is an active, working principle, manifesting itself in beneficent acts. The fundamental idea is that the blessings graciously bestowed are *freely* given, and not in consideration of any claim or merit" (L. Berkhof, Systematic Theology). Grace is not a mere passive quality, but also an active force, a power, something that labors. Grace is a noun, but it involves a lot of verbs on God's part!

We need *God* to enact change in us, and that is what he does through the Holy Spirit graciously working in us. In most of the passages in the New Testament, the term



"grace" refers to "the unmerited operation of God in the heart of man, effected through the agency of the Holy Spirit. While we sometimes speak of grace as an inherent quality, it is in reality *the active communication of divine blessings by the inworking of the Holy Spirit, out of the fullness of Him who is "full of grace and truth."*" (Berkhof, emphasis mine)

I often pray on Sundays that we would "grow in grace." What I am asking is that the Holy Spirit would give blessings to us; the blessing of having the Holy Spirit work in our hearts to remove sin, to renew us sinners in conformity to the image of God, and to increase and confirm our faith.

The way the Holy Spirit ordinarily communicates to us these blessings is through the means of grace – the Word and the sacraments. We call them the means of grace because these are the means by which the Holy Spirit communicates divine grace. What does the Holy Spirit do for believers through the means of grace? Sanctifies – "removes sin and renews the sinner in conformity to the image of God." (Berkhof, p.605). The Holy Spirit works in the Word preached and the sacraments to work faith in the hearts of believers and confirm faith.

Here is how the Westminster Larger Catechism describes how the Spirit works when we encounter God's Word... "The Spirit of God maketh the reading, but especially the preaching of the word, an effectual means of enlightening, convincing, and humbling sinners; of driving them out of themselves, and drawing them unto Christ; of conforming them to his image, and subduing them to his will; of strengthening them against temptations and corruptions; or building them up in grace, and establishing their hearts in holiness and comfort through faith unto salvation."

If God does all those things to you, then you will be changed! But we cannot simply sit back and do nothing and expect God to change us. No, we have a part to play! We have to put ourselves in contact with the means of grace, which means we must read the Word and especially hear the Word preached. We must feed on his Word. "*Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.*" (Matthew 4:4, ESV). We must be in attendance on Sunday mornings so we can feed our faith through the Word and sacraments.

Be aware that simply showing up on Sunday mornings is no guarantee that the Holy Spirit will use the Word and sacraments as means of grace. We must pay attention to some details. I'll let the Larger Catechism speak to us again...

Q. 157. *How is the Word of God to be read?* A. The holy Scriptures are to be read with an high and reverent esteem of them; with a firm persuasion that they are the very Word of God, and that he only can enable us to understand them; with desire to know, believe, and obey the will of God revealed in them; with diligence, and attention to the matter and scope of them; with meditation, application, self-denial, and prayer.

Q. 160. *What is required of those that hear the word preached?* A. It is required of those that hear the word preached, that they attend upon it with diligence, preparation, and prayer; examine what

they hear by the Scriptures; receive the truth with faith, love, meekness, and readiness of mind, as the Word of God; meditate, and confer of it; hide it in their hearts, and bring forth the fruit of it in their lives.

Q. 171. *How are they that receive the sacrament of the Lord's supper to prepare themselves before they come unto it?* A. They that receive the sacrament of the Lord's supper are, before they come, to prepare themselves thereunto, by examining themselves of their being in Christ, of their sins and wants; of the truth and measure of their knowledge, faith, repentance; love to God and the brethren, charity to all men, forgiving those that have done them wrong; of their desires after Christ, and of their new obedience; and by renewing the exercise of these graces, by serious meditation, and fervent prayer.

With this in mind, won't you join me in resolving to feed yourself more this year; not on physical food, but spiritual food!

Happy New Year,

Tim

Stay tuned for updates from three of our missionaries!

First from Jon and Karen Schmidt serving with Proclaim Aviation in Spokane, WA.

Then from Darin and Melanie Stone serving with Ministry to State in North Carolina.

Finally from Jody Collinge serving with the Global CHE Network in Zihuatanejo, Mexico.

Enjoy!



A Short Schmidt Christmas Greeting

Jonathan Schmidt <jkschmidt82@gmail.com>

Fri, Dec 23, 2022 at 5:58 PM

Merry Christmas Dear Ones,

"I bring you good news of great joy for everyone. The Savior-yes the Messiah, the Lord has been born tonight in Bethlehem...", "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and peace on earth to all whom God favors"

We have been given the most amazing and fabulous gift, that of which not even the world could ever have conceived. God the Creator before the foundations of the universe were laid, was committed to the most amazing plan to save us. The plan was a one of a kind, the only one that would work, a plan that would cost Him His own life. But to Him it was infinitely worth it, we were worth it! When the angels sang "I bring you good news", they knew what they were talking about! Jesus, the only begotten Son of God, did not demand and cling to His rights as God. He made himself nothing, took the humble position of a slave and appeared in human form.... Wow, do we ever have a reason to celebrate. We plan to do just that and hope you do as well.

Heart Update

Today we celebrate 8 weeks of a heart that is in "sinus rhythm"! It is simply amazing how our bodies are created. One messed up nerve cell in the heart and it will throw the whole show in a muddle. Thank you so much for praying. My heart is still healing from the burning that had to be done to take the bad cell and his friends out of the loop. I am continually improving and gaining strength. The process of getting my FAA medical back is still a little murky, but it is in the hands of my Aeromedical Examiner who is getting answers directly from the FAA, and most of all in the hands of God whose timing is perfect. I apparently am a very different case and don't fit the normal bad heart mold.

New Semester Ahead

We have so much to be thankful for. All for our students are caught up and ready to start their semester on schedule. I will have the privilege of working with brand spankin' new missionary pilot "wanna-bes". For many years I have been more on the "icing part of the cake finishing", so to speak, but because of my medical that is still in the hands of the FAA, I get to work with our new flight students in the simulators for a couple of months. When they transition to the airplane I will hand them over to another flight instructor. I hope to see a new medical in my hands by spring time.

Karen is at the tail end of a major shift in her work at Moody, as we have now been officially approved by the FAA to use our new curriculum and in a completely digital format. This should lower the pressure on her and allow her more time to interact with the students, which is what she loves most about her job.

Our family which has grown from 5 when we left for the field in 1990 to 18 today will all be together for Christmas morning, Lord willing, with our traditional family brunch requested by both sons! My brother and sister-in-law from Sandpoint, ID will be joining us as well. So, you can be sure there will be lots of carols, jokes and puns along with our desire to continually remind our offspring and theirs of the sacrifice our Jesus has made for them.

May your Christmas be blessed as you remember and celebrate Christ and may your new year ahead be filled with rich growth in our Lord.

With hearts that are eternally grateful for you,

Jon & Karen Schmidt



MINISTRY TO STATE - NORTH CAROLINA

Dear Folks,

The Tar Heel State is known for its rich history, abundant resources, and friendly citizens. It's where the Wright Brothers took their first flight, the location of the first attempted English Colony, and the first state to instruct her delegates to vote for independence from the British crown. North Carolina is one of the fastest growing states in the country, drawing people from across the nation and around the world for its economic opportunities, natural beauty, and quality of life.

There is so much about North Carolina to appreciate and enjoy. But more than anything else, I long for our state to be known across the country and around the world for the proclamation of the gospel and the faithfulness of God's people. As I serve as the State Capitol Minister

with Ministry to State, **my chief desire is to see our state's elected officials and government staff come to know Christ and to glorify and enjoy him forever.**



Throughout the course of 2022, God has been so kind in providing ample opportunities for me to pray for, counsel, and bring the Scriptures to legislators who have lost a parent, a child, a colleague, or a friend, to executive officials who are facing unfair and untrue public criticism, to staff who are celebrating new marriages and new children, and to churches who are seeking how to live godly lives under a secular authority.



The upcoming year promises to offer tremendous opportunities for outreach and discipleship in Raleigh. The recent election will bring in several new House and Senate members and new staff. Also, the General Assembly will likely be in session regularly into November, providing a helpful consistency and rhythm to the ministry. My networks into the executive and legislative branches have also grown which I pray God will use to make disciples in those branches as well. As we enter our fourth year of work at the capitol, Ministry to State is becoming increasingly known, respected, and valued. The opportunities for discipleship and evangelism are abundant and I am excited for all that the Lord has in store for 2023.

With that in view, **I am asking the Lord to provide \$30,000 in year-end support to fuel us through the upcoming year.** Would you prayerfully consider joining me – financially and prayerfully – to reach our government officials for Christ? **You can learn how to give by visiting mts-nc.org/support.**

Our family is so thankful for your friendship, support, and encouragement personally and in our work of bringing the gospel to those who serve in government. May God richly bless you and your family as we anticipate the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ.

For the sake of the gospel,

Darin, Melanie, Sarah (16), Luke (11), Ryan (5), Caroline (2)

La Frontera

Jody Collinge
jodycollinge@gmail.com



Send donations to:
Global CHE Network
4702 East Monte Way
Phoenix, AZ 85044



Many thanks!
¡Muchas gracias!

*Jesus said,
"I am the light of the world."*

May His Light shine
in our lives.



Thank God for all He has done this year!

Match the descriptions with the photos below.

- Children's ministries in Zihuatanejo and online Bible studies with youth
- Working with the Global CHE Network with community health evangelism ministries. Pray for change in a million villages.
- A visit to Guatemala to help with their CHE training in residence
- Visits to the Christian Health Service Corps in Texas and a CHE planning retreat in Arizona
- Visiting friends, family, and several churches in upstate New York at a beautiful time of year.
- Our time in Israel: time on the Sea of Galilee, being baptized in the Jordan River, riding a camel near Jericho, and enjoying our time in Jerusalem.

Thank God for his protection and his presence in all of this.



Thank God for sending his Son!

Remember God's promise in Isaiah 9:6 (ESV):

For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given;
and the government shall be upon his shoulder,
and his name shall be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Thank God for your friendship, your prayers and your support.

May God fill you with his joy this Christmas!

And may you have a wonderful New Year!

Much love to you,

Jody

BIRTHDAYS for JANUARY

Mike Clark 4th

Pat Shaw 13th

Ben Bowden 19th

Joy Glidewell 21st

Kim Clark 10th

Maria Gonzales 15th

Victor Allen 20th

Nicholas Clark 23rd

Megan Jackson 24th

Dates to Remember for January

- January 1 Communion at the morning service, No Sunday School or evening service
- January 2 Church Office will be closed for the New Year Holiday
- January 4 Ladies Circle at 9:30am in the church parlor
- January 4 Wednesday evening activities starts back up
- January 7 Men's Breakfast at 8:00am in the Fellowship Hall
- January 11 Ladies Bible Study starts on Wednesday evening
- January 14 Workday at the church at 8:00am
- January 15 Congregational Meeting after the worship service
- January 15 Communion in the evening service
- January 16 Church Office will be closed for the Holiday
- January 22 Monthly Luncheon after the worship service. Please bring a dish to share
- January 22 Installation Service for the new Officers

