

Dawning of a new year

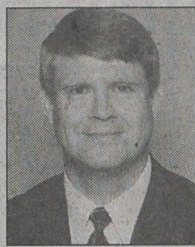
"The older I get, the faster the years seem to go by." I used to hear adults say something like this when I was a boy, but I didn't understand it. To a child, the days seem long and a year may as well be an eternity.

Yet, I have now reached an age at which I can appreciate the brevity of years, and I greet the arrival of a new one with surprise at the swift passage of time.

There are many exhortations that are fitting for the beginning of a new year, but one biblical example is found in the fourth chapter of Paul's epistle to the Philippians. There the Apostle writes: "Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me — put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you."

In this sentence sermon Paul promises us that we will have the peace of God in our lives if we will learn, receive, hear and see. Now learning is an activity that applies to all of life, including spiritual matters.

Meditation



Dr. Jeff Hensley
Pastor
Kings Mountain Baptist Church

Of course, it is one thing to learn a truth, but quite another to receive it inwardly and make it a part of our inner nature. Spiritual truths are certainly matters that deserve to be received as well as learned, and so Paul advises us not simply to learn but to receive, and not simply to hear but to see as well.

Yet, Paul's faith was about more than internal matters, for he not only taught the word of God so as to help his followers deepen their thoughts about God, but he also sought to live the will of God so that his listeners could see the truth of God at work in his actions.

Paul is an example of the importance of both spiritual growth and ethics, and it

seems to me that all of us would benefit from following his example. I suspect this is what James had in mind when he wrote: "Do not merely listen to the word.... Do what it says" (James 1:22 NIV).

Paul says that if we are willing to hear the word of God and do the will of God then God's peace will be with us.

Rather surprisingly, this suggests that the peace of God is actually a sign of whether or not we are living as God desires. Or to put it another way, if we are walking with the Lord in our daily lives, then the peace of God will exercise its influence over our hearts.

Even though it may be hard for us to believe, another year is dawning and my hope for all of us is that this year will be filled with God's peace.

Furthermore, I believe that both the God of peace and the peace of God will fill our year if we will commit ourselves to receiving God's word into our hearts and practicing God's will in our daily lives.

Church briefs...

Breakfast Saturday

Grace United Methodist Church, 829 Cleveland Avenue (Highway 161) will serve country style breakfast, all you can eat, Saturday, Jan. 2, from 6-10 a.m. Donations of \$6 for adults, \$3 for children 7-12, \$5 for senior citizens 65 and older, will be applied to the building fund. Children under 6 eat free.

Burning of the Greens Sunday

The Epiphany celebration of Burning of the Greens will take place Sunday, Jan. 3, at 5 p.m. in the Resurrection Lutheran Church yard in Crescent Hill behind the Fellowship Hall. Take your live Christmas tree and pile it in the church yard and join the congregation for a bonfire and then enjoy a light meal of soup and sandwiches, close the Christmas season by singing favorite carols and find out who has hidden coins in their slices of Kings Cake.

The Burning of the Greens is a unique tradition of remembering many of the local Old Christmas celebrations and bringing in the season of Epiphany. The public is invited.

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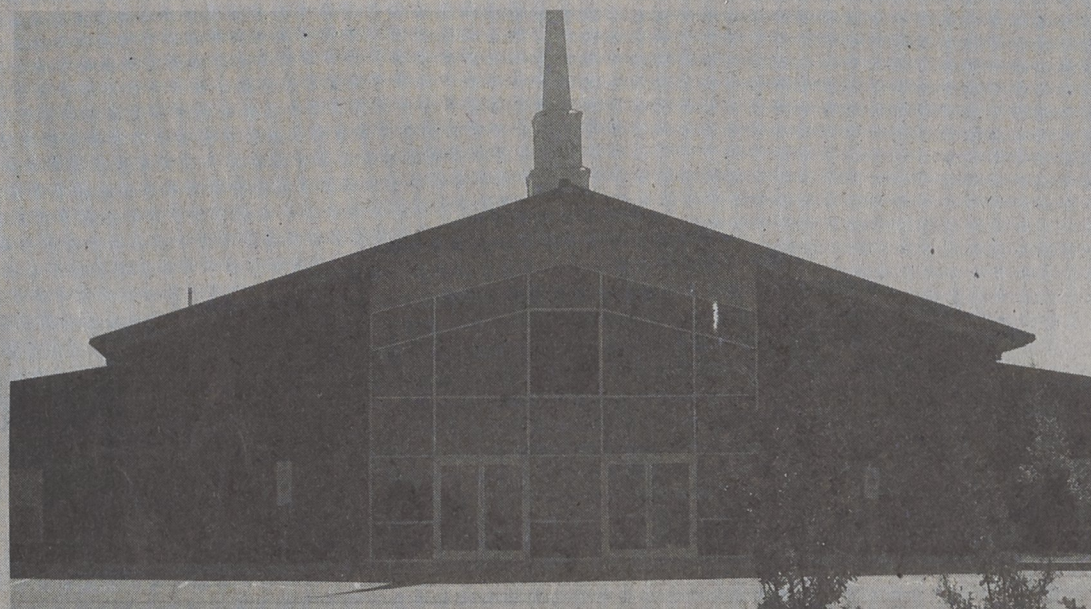
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Burning Bush House of God
310 Long Branch Rd (KM)
704-739-2877

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1017 Second Street
Pastor Clifton Morgan

Carson Memorial Baptist Church
262 Sparrow Springs Road
704-739-2247

Central United Methodist Church
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704-739-2471

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704-739-7697

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246 Range Road
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Cornerstone Independent Baptist
107 Range Road
704-737-0477

Crowders Mountain Baptist
125 Mayberry Lane
704-739-0310

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704-739-4555

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602 Dixon School Road
704-739-5536

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704-739-7367

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704-739-8055

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704-739-8331

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122 El-bethel Road

704-739-9174
Emmanuel Independent Baptist Church
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704-739-9939

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704-739-8396

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