

# 53 - a New Years Reflection

by Ben Torrey

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*As we look to the new year, we should remember to seek the Lord, do justice and righteousness, and trust in God's deliverance and provision.*

**Duration:** 7:28

**Scripture:** Psalm 37:4, Isaiah 55:6 - 56:2, Matthew 6:33

**Topics:** "New Years"

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## Description

In this video, Ben Torrey announces that this will be his last broadcast as he is unable to continue due to his increasing workload. He reflects on the past year and the sense of gain and loss that comes with it. He encourages viewers to spend time reflecting on the year that is ending and to seek the Lord while he may be found. Ben also mentions the Great Pyongyang Revival that began a hundred years ago and the importance of unity in the body of Christ.

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## Transcript

Happy New Year. This is Ben Torrey once again. One year ago on New Year's Day I began these broadcasts.

Now we have come to the end of the year and also the end of my time with you. I'm sorry to say that this will be my last one. I would like to continue them and my good friend Changsuk Kim would like me to as well, but I've had to make the hard decision to stop.

As they say, all good things must come to an end. Of course, I am not sure if you all really thought my little talks were a good thing or not. However, I have enjoyed them, but as my own work gets busier I have had to pull back.

Perhaps I'll get the chance to talk with you again from time to time, we'll see. It is the last night of the year. A lot of you may well be going to your churches in a little while to bring in the new year with prayer, a wonderful thing to do.

Often when we get together to do that we also spend time reflecting on the year that is ending. As I look back over this past year I see great high points and some low points as well. We began the year and these broadcasts last January thinking about prayer and revival as we remember the great revival that began a hundred years ago on January 14th, 1907.

I also spoke about the importance of unity in the body of Christ and rejoiced in the major steps taken towards that unity at the large Transformation Korea rally from January 8th to 13th. That was the first time that evangelicals and charismatics in Korea had cooperated on a major event. It was also a time of great repentance for the divisions in the church.

However, we also remember looking back the pain of Afghanistan and the 23 members of Semmul Church in Bundang who were taken hostage. We were deeply affected by the martyrdom of Pastor Pae Hyung Kyu and then of Brother Shim Sung Min, but we rejoiced when the rest were all freed. During this ordeal there was a great outpouring of prayer on their behalf and a strong sense of unity.

In the aftermath there has been a lot of soul searching which is good but also some blaming that threatens the unity that is so important. Of course we want to and need to learn from this horrible experience but we must not let it become a source of division. It is truly important to continue in prayer for those who suffered and for Pastor Park Eun Jo as he leads Semmul Church forward.

Many of you will remember my talks last spring about faith financing, about trusting God for provision and direction. At that time I spoke about how the reconciliation of two brothers appeared to be resulting in a large gift to the Three Seas Center that would enable us to begin building our training facility. Unfortunately things did not work out.

The brothers seemed to have had a falling out again and the gift to us never materialized. Nevertheless as we work through our own disappointment we continue to believe that this work is God's and he will enable us to go forward in his way and in his time. Meanwhile we do our own soul searching and seek how he wants us to move forward.

None of this changes a word of what I said back then. God does provide for his work and his people. Later in the year we learned about the great floods in North Korea that destroyed so many buildings, killed so many people and wiped out vast tracts of fields and paddies.

This tragedy was followed by a great outpouring of aid from all over the world. Eventually Kim Jong-il said that they had received all they needed. That's pretty amazing right there.

This was followed by the spectacle of President Roh Moo-hyun meeting with Kim Jong-il in Pyongyang. What an amazing event that was. I had my own visit to Pyongyang last April when I celebrated Easter at the Chilgol Church.

That's the one that Kim Il-sung built in memory of his mother in her home village and spent a week traveling around Hwanghaedo. I spoke of that in a broadcast earlier in the year. So all in all it has been a year of ups and downs for the nation, for the church and on a personal level.

I imagine you look back with much the same sense of gain and loss. As we look to the new year ahead we all wonder what will it bring. Will we see more wonderful and exciting things happen? If our God is still in charge then we surely will.

But then what new tragedies await us in the months ahead? Yet far better than regrets for the past and guesses for the future we should remember what the Lord says. As we all look forward I would like to leave you with these words from Isaiah 55 6 to 56 2. Seek the Lord while he may be found call upon him while he is near let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts and let him return to the Lord and he will have compassion on him and to our God for he will abundantly pardon for my

thoughts are not your thoughts nor are your ways my ways declares the Lord for as the heavens are higher than the earth so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts for as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there without watering the earth and making it bare and sprout and furnishing seed to the sower and bread to the eater so will my word be which goes forth from my mouth it will not return to me empty without accomplishing what I desire and without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it for you will go out with joy and to be led forth with peace the mountains and the hills will break forth into shouts of joy before you and all the trees of the field will clap their hands instead of the thorn bush the cypress will come up and instead of the nettle the myrtle will come up and it will be a memorial to the Lord for an everlasting sign which will not be cut off thus says the Lord preserve justice and do righteousness for my salvation is about to come and my righteousness to be revealed how blessed is the man who does this and the son of man who takes hold of it yes we look forward to the coming year confident in our God and in his deliverance yet as we do so we remember his requirement to do justice and righteousness justice in laws politics and the nation righteousness in our own lives churches and communities as I sign off on this my last short talk with all of you I call you to remember this good night

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