

The Way to a Happy New Year

by Zac Poonen

We can experience spiritual growth and become a blessing to others by releasing our grudges and being merciful to all men.

Scripture: Genesis 12:2, John 3:5, John 4:14, John 7:38

Topics: "Blessing Others", "Spiritual Growth"

Description

Zac Poonen emphasizes the three levels of spiritual development through the Holy Spirit as illustrated in John's gospel, starting with being 'born of water' for salvation, progressing to having a 'well' of living water for personal victory, and culminating in 'rivers' of living water that bless others. He encourages believers to embrace their role as a source of blessing to others, reflecting God's mercy and generosity. Poonen urges the congregation to make a commitment to speak positively about others and to release any grudges, ensuring a happy and fruitful new year filled with spiritual abundance.

Transcript

In John's gospel, Jesus used the symbol of water to describe three levels of spiritual development possible through the Holy Spirit:

- Level 1: In John 3:5, He spoke of being "born of water and the Spirit". This is "the cup of salvation" (Psa.116:13), with which we begin our Christian lives. With this cup of water, we are cleansed and brought into God's kingdom as His children.
- Level 2: In John 4:14, Jesus went further and spoke of that cup becoming "a well (spring) of water". This is a deeper experience of the Holy Spirit, where all our inner longings are met by Him, so that we live in perpetual victory and joy, lacking nothing. A man who has a well in his own compound is not dependent on the city corporation's water supply. No outsider can turn off his water supply, for he has the source of water within his own compound. This is how it is with the Christian who has found the secret of perpetual abundance in Christ. No-one outside of him can cut off his supply of joy or peace or victory (Jn.16:22).
- Level 3: In John 7:38, Jesus went still further and said that the well would now become a river, and many rivers, flowing out of the believer. This is a picture of overflowing abundance. Such a believer is able to quench the thirst of many needy people around him. Whereas a well satisfies only our own longings, rivers of living water make us a blessing to many people, wherever we go.

The blessing with which God blessed Abraham was, "I will bless you....and in you ALL THE FAMILIES of the earth shall be blessed" (Gen.12:2-3). This is the blessing that can now be ours through the Holy Spirit (Gal.3:14). When God blesses us to the point of rivers flowing out of us, many families in many parts of the country and even in the whole world can be blessed through us.

The good news of the gospel is that we can be saved from sin and be a blessing to others. We can now have rivers of living water flowing out through us constantly, and be a blessing to every family that we meet. We can be merciful to others just as God has been merciful to us. We can release others just as God has released us. We can bless others just as God has blessed us. We can give freely to others just as God has freely given to us. We can be large-hearted to others just as God has been to us.

A.W. Tozer in his article Five Decisions For Spiritual Power says: "If you are really serious about your spiritual development - the gaining of new joy, new power and new life - then you should make certain decisions in your heart concerning your life, and proceed to keep them.

"One decision is: Never pass on anything about anybody else that will hurt him.

"'Love covers a multitude of sins' (1 Pet.4:8). The talebearer has no place in God's favour. If you know something that would hinder or hurt the reputation of one of God's children, bury it forever. Let God take care of it. 'With what judgment you judge, you will be judged' (Matt.7:2)."

If you want God to be good to you, you must be good to His children. The rules of our Father's table demand that you don't tell stories about others who are sitting around that same table with you, no matter what their denomination, their nationality or their background." (From the book THE BEAUTY OF HOLINESS).

It will be a good thing if all of us make that decision today - never to pass on anything about another that will hurt him or his reputation - and keep that decision, not just for the rest of this year but for the rest of our lives. Those who have lived by that decision in past years have found that when they discarded the worthless from their daily conversation, and spoke only what was edifying and profitable, God in turn, fulfilled His promise, and made them His spokesmen - His mouth (Jer.15:19).

This year - and every year - can be a happy year for all of us if we release everyone who owes us anything, or who has hurt or harmed us in any way. Bury those grudges permanently and be merciful to all men and thus make a new beginning with the Lord today.

Wish you a Happy New Year

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