

2020...Going, going, soon to be Gone!

December 27, 2020

Dear FBC Family and Friends,

I like new things (so I KNOW I will like heave...read The Revelation again!). I guess that is why I always enjoy "a new year." I know it is really only a "calendar thing" but it gives me a sense of being able to begin again—a fresh start with renewed energy and hope. I am excited about the year 2021—not because some claim the end of the world or at last America will occur (for whatever reason they give) or because I am just now entering the "last year of my 5th decade of life" or because I get to get make resolutions and dream about the future again. I am excited about 2021 because I believe God will walk with me (and you!) every step of the way. In so many ways and on so many levels 2020 was a difficult year of challenges, whether it was like 1918 (global pandemic) or 1968 (national rioting and unrest) or 2000 (a contentious election). It is even possible that for some of us that a similar type of upheaval may await us in 2021. However, the God of the Bible is the God who sees the end from the beginning and promises to "never leave us nor forsake us." That is **ALWAYS** reason for faith and hope.

I am eagerly anticipating the sermon series for the next several weeks that will be focusing on how to live a life that is mature and growing in Christlikeness as we study the book of James, the half-brother of the Lord Jesus Himself.

The following was in one of my devotional readings within recent days and I thought it summed up my feelings about the coming year—the year to leave this year behind and move **ONWARD in 2021** at FBC of Eden. This will require all the faith we have for every day of this coming year.

My salvation rests not in whether I live a sinless life or not - I don't and I can't. It's not in baptism, although I was baptized. It's not belonging to some certain church although I belong to a Baptist church. It depends solely on my faith in Jesus Christ. The best story of faith I have ever read is told below:

A very sick man turned to his doctor as he was leaving the room and said, "Doctor, I am afraid to die. Tell me what lies on the other side."

"I don't know," he replied.

"You don't know?" the patient gasped. "You, a Christian man, do not know what is on the other side?"

Just then they both heard a scratch and whine at the door. The doctor opened it and a dog sprang into the room and leaped up on him. Turning to the patient, the doctor said, "Did you notice my dog? He has never been in this room before. He did not know what was inside. Yet, when the door opened, he entered with no caution, only gladness. He knew nothing except that his master was here. In the same way, I know little of what happens after death. But I do one thing—I know my Master is there, and that is enough. I shall pass through with no fear."

Celebrating the Christ of Christmas all year long by believing the Master is always there,

Bro. Marty

How to Have Christmas All Year Long

MatthEw 1 & 2 and LUKE 1 & 2

1. Let God _____ you WITH HIS _____ WILL.
1) JESUS' _____.
2) AN " _____ " BIRTH.
3) A BIRTH AWAY FROM _____.
4) _____ AND _____ MEN.
5) THE _____ OF THE _____ BOYS.
6) _____ ON THE RUN TO Egypt.
7) A _____ LORD AND SAVIOR.

2. _____ FOR THE _____ OF GOD.
LUKE 1:26-28 AND Matt. 1:20-21; 2:13,19-20

- 1) Get _____.
- 2) Stay _____.

3. _____ TO _____ THE _____ OF GOD.
Matt. 1:24-25 AND LUKE 1:38

- 1) _____ IT _____.
- 2) _____ IT _____.

4. Let the _____ AND _____ OF GOD OVERFLOW _____ AND _____ YOU.

LUKE 1:39-45, 46-47, 57-58, 62-64, 67-68;
LUKE 2:8-10, 13-14, 16-20, 25-33; MATTHEW 2:9-11

If others described you with 3 one-word descriptions, what would they be?

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____