

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

Review Republican
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WILL 2018 BE YOUR YEAR TO HUMBLE YOURSELF BEFORE GOD AND HIS SON?

A newly commissioned Navy captain took great pride in his first assignment to be in command of a battleship. One stormy night the captain saw a light moving steadily in their direction. He ordered the signalman to send the following message: "Change your course ten degrees to the south." The reply came back: "Change your course ten degrees to the north."

The captain was determined not to give way to another vessel, and so he sent a counter message. "Alter your direction ten degrees. I am the captain." The answer flashed back promptly: "Alter your direction. I am the lighthouse."

There are times when all of us have to identify with the captain: times when we allow self-will to set us off on a collision course.

"I have my rights," we say, determined to have our own way. But God, whose Word is like a lighthouse with a penetrating and unchangeable beacon, reveals a rocky shore ahead and finally we do as the captain surely did. We obey.

Our prayer for ourselves and for the church should be as Jesus prayed, "Not my will, but Thine be done."

Luke 22:39-46 (NASB)

39 And He came out and proceeded as was His custom to the Mount of Olives; and the disciples also followed Him. 40 And when He arrived at the place, He said to them, "Pray that you may not enter into temptation." 41 And He withdrew from them about a stone's throw, and He knelt down and began to pray, 42 saying, "Father, if Thou art willing, remove this cup from Me; yet not My will, but Thine be done." 43 Now an angel from heaven appeared to Him, strengthening Him. 44 And being in agony He was praying very fervently; and His sweat became like drops of blood, falling down upon the ground. 45 And when He rose from prayer, He came to the disciples and found them sleeping from sorrow, 46 and said to them, "Why are you sleeping? Rise and pray that you may not enter into temptation."

As we enter the New Year will we humble ourselves before God and His Son, or will we step out in pride and arrogance and grab all that life offers to us? This is a very important question. We can be used of God to help others and show His love to them by our actions, or we can look out for ourselves and get all we think we deserve from this life.

Pride and arrogance can bring us down to our knees. The new Navy captain learned quickly that he didn't know all that he thought he did. He could have charged ahead and destroyed the ship and his career, but he changed his attitude and his course once he learned what lay ahead.

How about you? Is the path you are on leading you to God and eternal life, or is it leading you to destruction? Take a moment and reflect on 2017. How did your plans work out? What was your attitude during the year? Were you living in harmony with God or off doing your own thing?

We would do well to learn from Jesus, the Son of the Living God. He could have followed a different path than what He chose but instead He bowed to the Eternal Father and followed His plan for His life. It was not an easy road but the way was right for Him and a great blessing for us.

We sometimes stumble along with our lives and wonder what is going on and what does all of this mean. We need to stop and ask directions but instead we let our pride cloud our thinking and stagger along until we are totally lost and without direction. We have all been there and done that.

Jesus, as He was facing temptation, suggested that His disciples pray to God and get ready for what was ahead. Just as the lighthouse suggested the captain change his course, we need to listen to God and follow His lead and the course He offers to us. You can only learn that course through prayer and study of the Holy Scriptures. I hope you will make that your practice for 2018.

Jesus was also in need and turned to God in prayer for His life. He knew what was coming and knew He couldn't do this on His own. He even asked to be relieved of this assignment. Still there was something quite important that He added to his request. Those special words were "not my will, but Thine be done". When we come to God for direction in our lives are we of this same attitude? Too often we come to God with our plans and ask Him to bless them instead of asking for His direction in our lives. Which way do you want to follow in the New Year?

After Jesus made His request, God sent an angel to strengthen Him. Do you suppose that God does the same for us when we ask for His will in our lives? This didn't make His decision easier but gave him the strength for the mission God had given Him. We sometimes forget that to follow God can cost us our lives.

So What Does This Mean For Our Lives? I don't know what God might be asking you to do with your life. I do know that unless you humble yourself before Him and seek His will for your life that you will never find "the peace that passes all understand." We can charge ahead and not listen to God and follow His instructions or we can pay attention and find the path that leads to the proper destination. Where are you headed this next year? Will you seek God's will for your life and follow that path? Will it be your will or His will in 2018?

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