

PREPARING FOR THE NEW YEAR AS A CHRISTIAN

If you will have a successful and victorious year, One of the most important things you must do is prepare for it.

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Introduction

If you will have a successful and victorious year, One of the most important things you must do is prepare for it. You don't prepare for battle on the day of battle. To do that is to fail even before you get started.

This article is a guide to help you be deliberate and intentional about having a better year than you have ever had.

The following are three things you need to do to prepare for the new year as a Christian.

Pray

1. *Pray*

The first and most important thing you must begin to do as the new year approaches is to Pray!!

Prayer is an asset! In actual fact, it is the most valuable asset you have as a believer. By prayer you can set the tone for the new year way before it arrives. And its amazing how you can practically direct the year on the course of God's plan and purpose for you when you invest some prayer time into your preparation.

To pray before you embark on anything as significant as this, is to demonstrate your dependence on the infinite wisdom of God. This therefore means that to not pray about the new year, is to have a disposition of self trust and reliance on your mental calculations and strategies. This is nothing short of pride. And you see, Your self will and physical capacity will always be limited and disadvantaged relative to the wisdom of God, which is already at our disposal, if we will access it by prayer.

So maximize this divine advantage, and spend time praying. Take some time off, go on a leave or take a break from everything if you can, retreat, and pray intensely (James5:16-18), when you do this, you exert the will of God over all that concerns you in the new year.

Now its okay to have a long list of prayer points that covers your heart desires and expectations, but make sure the following make your list:

a) Pray to know God's will, plans and purpose for you and yours in the new year.

Colossians 1:9 KJV For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;

You see, God has every moment of your life planned out even before the foundations of the world. So our prayer is for the purpose of Knowledge; to know, to discover His will. And its such a relief to understand that God's will is always Good, perfect and acceptable. That invariably gives us an assurance of a Very Good year!!

b) Pray for Clarity.

As we pray to know God's will for us in every area of our lives as regards the new year, One of the basic ways God will speak to us is by impressing images in our hearts, such that we begin to see in form of pictures, specific things concerning the year. And as we catch these glimpse, we must continue to pray, this time for clarity.

To Pray for clarity is to pray to receive details and specific directives on what we are already beginning to see and hear from God. This brings us to a place of assurance, that helps to build and strengthen our resolve and convictions concerning the year.

Ephesians 1:18 KJV The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints,

c) Pray for strength.

Pray that your faith and resolve be strengthened, because God will show you great things! One of the ways God takes us His children to the next level is by showing us big pictures, images of unfamiliar things that are designed to take you beyond your comfort zones. You must Get ready to walk on water if you will walk with God. As you pray, you will see yourself take steps that are bigger than your current capacity, status, and ability such that you will need your faith strengthened to receive them and believe them.

Ephesians 3:16 KJV That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man;

General things to note:

- Look out for divine instructions and corrections:

Instructions will come to us in the place of prayer. These are not to be shrugged off or taken lightly, because they are life.

Proverbs 4:13 KJV Take fast hold of instruction; let her not go: keep her; for she is thy life.

As we receive divine instructions, we must ensure to hold on to them very tightly. The way to do this is to have them written down in a safe place. Be mindful to document them just the way you receive them, and keep going over

them from time to time, as spiritual things can slip if we don't pay attention to them. We take notes of instructions and corrections so we can act on them.

- Read your bible and meditate on God's word as you pray.

Joshua 1:8 KJV This book of the law (the book of the Lord) shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.

This is good practice, and in fact One of the most effective ways to eliminate distractions in prayer. It also helps you stay focused and attentive to the voice of the inward witness (the Holy Spirit). GOD'S word is His will, so you should also expect to glean some instructions, exhortations and corrections from it.

2Timothy 3:16 KJV All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

Your bible is indeed a world of possibilities that can be yours if you lay hold on it in faith.

- Prayer at this time should be done intensely. And intensity begins from the heart, not the mouth.

James 5:16 AMP ...The heartfelt and persistent prayer of a righteous man (believer) can accomplish much [when put into action and made effective by God—it is dynamic and can have tremendous power].

Your prayer will have better results when it engages your

heart.

Note that It is what you see and believe in your heart, that will become a reality in your hands.

And whatever it is you haven't prayed about, you do not have the God perspective about just yet.
So Pray, and start today.

Speak

2. *Speak*

The phrase that says A closed mouth is a closed destiny is not at all far from the truth.

If you are not speaking words concerning the year, all you have is a cloud that is full of rain. Voicing the words you have received in prayer, is you releasing that rain to pour on the land and water the earth. When you speak, things happen!! Until then, you have mere potentials, things that could be.

But No, you are entering into manifestations in the new year, so start calling those things to be!

Mark 11:23-24 KJV For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith. Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.

What an assurance we have in God!!

Speak words!! Not wishful thinking, or mere talking but God inspired words. And believe that you will have what you say.

This is not the time to be loose with words, Be deliberate about what comes out of your mouth. You cannot afford to be frivolous with your speech, not now, not ever.

Speak by faith, and speak faithfully, the words you receive in prayer, the words given to you by prophecy, and the words you read in your bible!!

Put them in your mouth, and speak until your heart and hands align with it.

The best way to prepare for the new year is to create it. And Creation is done by speaking words.

See how God created the heavens and the foundation of the earth?

"And God said, let there be..."

We see this in Gen 1v3,6,9,11,14,20,24,26,29. But see what happened in v31 "and God saw everything he had made, and behold it was very good".

When you declare what you see about the new year boldly, it will also be written concerning you that..

"And Funlola (you can slot in your name here) said, let there be much more in 2020, and there was much more. And Funlola saw everything that she had said, and behold..2020 was a very Good year!"

Hallelujah.

So desire and expect that the new year will be a better year for you and yours, then say it out loud consistently! Faith confessions is not about saying it once and for all, its saying it until you see it. What you don't see with your eyes, or say with your mouth, you may never hold in your hands.

Always remember that God's word has creative power. And when we take His word, put it in our mouth, and declare it by faith, great things happen.

Act

3. Act

As God begins to show you things concerning the new year, begin to act on them. Particularly when you receive specific instructions to do certain things. You don't necessarily have to wait for first day of the year, you can start now. For example you sense in your heart that you need to take the study of the word more seriously, start reading your bible now!

Philippians 2:13 KJV For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

Of course there are instructions that may be time specific, for such you should act only when God says to act.

So get started, Make bold moves and take bold steps of faith in line with what God is showing you.

Begin to take steps however little, in the direction of the things you hear in prayer.

As you watch for divine leading, there is also room for taking initiatives. To take initiative means that you take steps that do not negate the principles and character of God, while still watching out for the leading of the Spirit, especially when it has to do with timing, and association.

For example, you need to be sensitive to know if something is good for you, even though there is nothing wrong with it. Also Is it the right time for it? Or is my friend the right person to do it with if at all? These are questions you need to be open to receive answers to.

There are specifications attached to every divine instruction and initiative, make sure to receive them first before you begin to run. Speed is detrimental when one is moving in the wrong direction.

See this beautiful example in the word..

Acts 16:5-9 KJV

And so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily. Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia, and were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia, After they were come to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia: but the Spirit suffered them not. And they passing by Mysia came down to Troas. And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us.

It is God's will for Paul as well every believer to preach the gospel. Paul made a move along that line as a divine initiative, but the Holy ghost restrained him from doing so in a particular place.

Pay attention to timing, location and association in carrying out divine instructions in the new year.

Major areas of prepar- ation

- *Spiritual Growth*
- *Ministry*
- *Assignments*
- *Relationships*
- *Health*
- *Finances*
- *Career/Business*

Spiritual Growth

Make a decision to be more intentional about your spiritual growth! Spiritual growth is not the feeding of your spirit so it increases in size as your physical body does, It involves feeding on the word (to renew your mind), and exercising the things of the spirit (such as prayer, service, walking in love, flowing in the gifts of the spirit etc) to the end that you are fit and mature to live the Christian Life and do the work of the ministry.

Your spiritual growth is very important and must be taken seriously. You can only be useful in God's kingdom and in the fulfilment of your assignment to the extent to which you are growing. Now there is no end to growing and maturing in God, but considering the many Great things God wants to do in and through you, its better to start now.

And to get started, you must be planted in a church family where Gods word is taught wholesomely, in a conducive environment of Love. Just like you have it physically, you need a Home where everything you need for your healthy growth is available. When you find it, be planted and stable.

Growth is inevitable when you are planted and consistent in a local church.

For further insight on this, get a copy of the book titled
The church code from www.rhemawordng.org)

Ministry

Every believer in Christ is called to do the work of Ministry. And ministry is basically the call to preach the gospel to every creature, so they can be saved and disciplined. This call is not for a special group of 'some', but for All! You and I are called to preach Christ. And the content of our message is The finished works of Christ (the consequence of His death, burial and resurrection), and not our own good works.

Our good works, even though good, cannot save a soul. It only creates opportunities for us to preach the gospel as it opens the heart of men to receive our ministry.

So As the new year burgeons, Take your ministry more seriously. Preach the good news to at least one person per week to begin with. You can always do much more. Make up your mind to Be instrumental to the salvation experience of someone. Save a soul from sin and death. God is counting on you for this one.

Proverbs 11:30 KJV The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise.

Assignments

Embedded in the general call to the ministry that every believer has received are personal and specific assignments God gives his children, and this assignment will border around the spread of the gospel of Christ.

Ephesians 2:10 KJV For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

The major consequence of your spiritual growth is the discovery of your divine assignment in God.

Where you begin to receive specific directions on what to do/say, where to go, who to meet, and when to move etc. These details when acted upon and obeyed per time, will culminate in the fulfilment of the plan and purpose of God for your life,

Whatever leadings you have received along these lines, now is a good time to follow through with them. And as you pray, be open and expectant to receive more guidance from God.

This year, you will fulfil your purpose!!

Relationships

Men will always be God's method now and forever. For example, we see how the only way a person can be saved is when a man preaches the gospel to him.

Romans 10:14 KJV How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?

Just like salvation, Whatever else God wants to make happen in your life in the new year, He will do through men! God is the source, but men are His channels. He will bring divine supply, favours, counsel and safety to you through men.

So now is a good time to strengthen the God ordained relationships in your life.

Your relationship with your family, parents, siblings, spouse, Pastor, mentors, friends, boss etc, if divinely chosen and managed, are instrumental to the fulfilment of God's plans for your life.

As there are good relationships that must be cultivated, there are also toxic relationships that must be severed.

These are relationships that will terminate the workings of God in your life, and make it difficult and impossible to

walk in the plan of God.

Psalms 1:1 KJV Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

Toxic relationships are detrimental to your advancement in the new year, and you need to be spiritually sensitive to recognise them and divinely wise to avoid them.

You don't need Friends like Jonadab who will help you devise ways to do the things that are contrary to God's principles and character in the new year (2 Samuel 13:1-19).

You need companions like Jonathan who will stop at nothing to ensure you fulfil the call of God on your life (1Samuel 19:4).

And as you give yourself to prayer, God will expose such toxic relationships, and equip you with strength and wisdom to sever them.

Health

You need your body fit and your health sound if you will successfully carry out the will of God on the earth. Your body is a vehicle for your spirit man, and a vehicle that breaks down on the way can never get to its destination unless it is fixed.

This means therefore, that The state of your health pretty much determines how far and how well you will go through your life's journey on earth.

Now is a good time to be deliberate in Taking care of your body! Maintain your health by speaking faith filled words over your body regularly. Don't wait till you are sick to confess sound health. Make it a habit now. The word of God is life and gives life and vitality to your body if you apply it to your health.

Proverbs 4:22 KJV For they are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh.

Eat heathy, rest adequately, and maintain a generally healthy lifestyle. Let the Joy of the Lord saturate and strengthen your emotions and mind.

Proverbs 17:22 KJV A merry heart doeth good like a medicine: but a broken spirit drieth the bones.

Also Listen to the nudging of the spirit in your heart, Many times the Holy ghost will speak to you concerning your health, learn to listen more.

There are illnesses that can and are better avoided. So Make up your mind to have a Healthy and physically fit year. And Start now.

Finances

Your divine assignment, as spiritual as it is, will need to be funded materially! A new year is a good time to make better financial decisions. Start by evaluating how well you have done so far, in your spending, saving, investing and particularly Giving! As a believer, God has given us instructions to work so that we may have to Give, and also take care of our needs!

Ephesians 4:28 KJV Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.

And even as we work, we must be conscious of God's ability and willingness to prosper us beyond what we can achieve by our own calculations, strategies and mental strength.

There is the principle of Giving and receiving, supernatural favour and miraculous supply and multiplication for us to enjoy and maximise.

We see Jesus feeding over 5000 with as little as five loaves of bread and two fishes...not once. (Mark 6:41, Matthew 15:36)

We also see the workings of favour in the lives of men like Joseph, Daniel and David, a Man whose last words were

that "God took him to the top" (2 Samuel 23:1)

Psalms 5:12 KJV For thou, LORD, wilt bless the righteous; with favour wilt thou compass him as with a shield.

So yes, God can Give you much more than you can ask or imagine in the new year, He can literally take you to the very top, so trust Him now more than ever before. HIS desire is that you have all that you need to do His will per time. This is true prosperity.

Career/ Business

Daniel 6:3 KJV Then this Daniel was preferred above the presidents and princes, because an excellent spirit was in him; and the king thought to set him over the whole realm.

The excellent Spirit David had, got him chosen, preferred and referred for greatness.

To whom much is given, even much more is expected. God has given us an excellent spirit too. Excellence should therefore radiate through all that we do as it pertains to the works of our hands.

A new year presents a great opportunity to do even better in your career and/or business.

It begins with you first doing something with your hands. The work you do is one the many channels through which God's material supply and blessings will flow into your life. You may want to have multiple channels in the new year. Reopen closed and non functional channels, open new ones, give God as many means as possible for him to meet your needs and exceed your expectations. God doesn't just want you blessed, He wants you to be a Great blessing. If you look around you, you will see that There are many more people and causes that your resources can impact, particularly the spread of the Glorious Gospel.

Declare the new year, as your year of Making Impact.

*What If
I Am Not
Seeing The
New Year
In My
Heart?*

You see, before you can have the new year in your hands, you need to first be able to see it in your heart.

One Thing you need to do, if you are not seeing the new year in your heart, is to Check your Heart-environment.

In other words, check The state of your heart to ensure that it is conducive to accommodate the words and images concerning the new year, that God is sending your way.

Ensure that your heart, and invariably your life is free from strife, doubt, wrath, bitterness, unforgiveness etc.

Ephesians 4:31-32 KJV Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

Create room in your heart today. The new year is yours for the taking!!

