


LOOKING UP

January-February 2024



*"...look up, and lift
up your heads."
Lk. 21:24*

New Year, New You?

BY PASTOR JASON SALMI

Just over one third of Americans tell the pollsters that they make at least one resolution for the New Year. The other two thirds either believe resolutions to be a foolish custom, or not worth attempting as so few people can actually keep them. This second group finds validation in the fact that gym memberships explode in January, but by March the gyms are back to their normal levels of those who make their interest in fitness a

reality. But there is something to this whole idea of improving oneself. After all, few of us can honestly say that we have arrived in every area of our lives. A simple inventory will leave most of us acknowledging that we could stand for some improvement. For some of us, a little time on the treadmill wouldn't be such a bad thing.

Which brings me to another kind of treadmill. If anyone should be able to look at themselves and see room for improvement, it's Christians. After all, we don't just come up with the standards to which we are called to live on our own. God's Word has an awful lot

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Regular Schedule

Sunday

9:45 AM Sunday School
11:00 AM Worship service

Holy Communion

2nd & 4th Sunday of the month

Meal

2nd Sunday of the month

Board Meeting

7:00 PM 1st Tuesday
of the month

Ladies Bible Study

10:00 AM Wednesdays

Youth Group

TBA

Friday Night Bible Study

7:00 PM Location TBA

Looking Ahead

January 20th
Annual Meeting

to say about how we ought to live. To sum it up, we have the words of Jesus when He was asked about which is the greatest Commandment, meaning what is the area of life to which we must pay the most attention. He replied, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself." (Matt. 22:37-39) If anyone hears those words and comes away believing that they will ever be able to be pleasing and acceptable to God by keeping these Commandments, they will find themselves on a treadmill which never turns off; one which is never satisfied.

The Law of God can never be satisfied by our keeping of it, because we are unable to keep it. But there is One who has kept it for us. Jesus Christ, the Righteous One, came into this world not to condemn us for our sins, but to free us from them. He has perfectly satisfied the requirements of the Law on our behalf, therefore we are freed from its condemnation forever. Once one is freed in this way, he or she is now able to live a life which is pleasing to God. Not pleasing because we now live a life which is sinless, but pleasing to Him through faith in Jesus who has made us God's children.

For those who are in Christ, you don't need to become a "new you." You need to be constantly reminded that, in Christ, you have already been made new. You are a new creation, pleasing to God for the sake of His Son.

God's Peace and Blessings in the New Year.

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." Mt. 28:19-20

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