

LIVE THIS YEAR DIFFERENTLY

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Text: Isaiah 43:18-20 (NIV)

Introduction: Failures and disappointments in the past often hinder us from success and moving forward in the future. God is speaking to Israel here and in spite of their disappointments and failures God is gracious and calls them forward into a better future. We think more about it at the beginning of a New Year, but in reality we are called to embrace a better future every day. ***Our challenge today and this year: Live it different than those without Christ!*** God wants to do a new thing through His redemptive power. The question is, do we decide what we want Him to do or do we just find His will?

I. LIVE THIS YEAR WITHOUT COMPARISONS TO THE PAST.

A. Forget—don't not call to remembrance

B. Forget—don't dwell on the past.

II. LIVE THIS YEAR WITH AN AWARENESS OF WHAT GOD IS DOING.

A. God was already doing a new work—but they didn't perceive it.

B. God can do great things, but if we are unaware of it we miss out.

III. LIVE THIS YEAR WITH CONFIDENCE OF GOD'S PROVISION.

A. While the wild animals were enjoying God's provision—God's people were living in doubt and fear.

Provision frees us to hope, dream, and plan.

B. How much more will God provide for those whom He has chosen?

1 Peter 2:9-10 “But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. **10** Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.”

Conclusion

The movie *"Second Hand Lions"* is one of my favorites. It is about these two old men and a relative’s child, a young boy, who comes to live with them. These two old guys weren’t too happy about the boy’s presence in the beginning, but come to be very fond of him. The boy hears the stories of the almost unbelievable exploits and adventures of these men and their adventures when they were younger men. As you watch the movie you are sometimes wondering if the exploits really happened or whether they are the product of the old men’s imagination. At the end of the movie, the boy is grown up and moved away, the movie draws to a close with the old men dying while trying to fly a biplane through their barn—just one more of their outrageous adventures.

The boy in the story, now a man, has come back to his old home and stands looking at the barn—biplane still sticking out of the rubble—where the two old men crashed when a helicopter appeared overhead. When it lands a man and his son got off. This man's father had told him about these two men and their adventures. After seeing that these two men were real, the man's young boy asked the question, "You mean they really lived?" The man raised by them answers, "Yes, they *really* lived!"

Can the same be said for us today? Are we really living the Christian life?

Our challenge today and this year: Live it different than those without Christ! God wants to do a new thing through His redemptive power. The question is, do we decide what we want Him to do or do we just find His will? The ANSWER: Both

Study Note: This passage has a dual significance.

“The deliverance from Babylon is foretold, but there is reference to greater events. The redemption of sinners by Christ, the conversion of the Gentiles, and the recall of the Jews, are described. All that is to be done to rescue sinners, and to bring the believer to glory, is little, compared with that wondrous work of love, the redemption of man.” - Matthew Henry Commentary