



# Fresh Oil



January 2017

Dear Fellow Servants,

As we begin another year and seek to get a fresh start in our walk of faith, let me challenge you with the words of 2 Corinthians 5:17:

***Therefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come."***

In his second letter to the church in Corinth Paul is here focusing on the benefits of being a believer in Christ. The whole chapter is a contrast between the earthly and the spiritual realms. Paul is urging his readers, and that includes you and me here in the twenty-first century, to take our attention off the earthly realm, where the works of the flesh abound. Instead, he wants us to focus on the spiritual realm, on our relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ.

As far as I'm concerned, anytime is a good time for us to make such a focus. However, there is something strategic about the start of the New Year that makes putting this verse into practice all the more powerful. We have just concluded 12 months of activities, work, church projects, celebrations, etc. Now, with another year upon us, we need to take things up a notch. It will not suffice for us to merely keep doing the same thing we have always been doing. The Lord's return is closer and the world is continuing to drift away from the moral compass of the Scriptures. With that in mind we must endeavour to grow in our relationship with the Lord. A key component to that growth process is establishing a beach head of conviction in our minds and hearts. Look what Paul says elsewhere in Romans 12:2:

***"And do not be conformed any longer to the pattern of this world, But be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect."***

What not start this year with a fresh focus on your salvation in Christ and how that makes you a "new creature" in Him. If you had disappointments or failures in 2016 don't keep going over them. Instead, do what you must to finish things up but quickly resolve that you are getting a fresh start and will accomplish much with God's help. Set some goals for yourself, especially in the areas of Bible reading and prayer. Also, consider what relationships need mending and get to the task of seeing them restored. Make this your best year yet! Let me leave you with the sound counsel of Proverbs 16:3:

***"Commit your work to the LORD, and your plans will be established."***

Your fellow servant,

Pastor Brian

*... I have been anointed with fresh oil*

PSALM 92:10

