

“Have a _____ New Year!”

Genesis 3:14-19

I’ve never started off a sermon with a fill in the blank in the title! I’ve also never said “*You might want to wait until the end of the sermon to fill this blank in!*”

It’s the first Sunday in January, a new year! This is always a time of hopes & dreams, looking forward & forgetting the past, new possibilities/beginnings!

What are your hopes for 2022? That this year will be filled with... *what?*
Most New Year’s toasts go something like this... “**To health and happiness!!!**”

Well, I have spent these first 2 days of the New Year in quarantine with Covid! My Christmas celebration with my family has been postponed from before Christmas, to New Year’s Eve, to now who knows when!

Maybe your New Year has started off different than mine. Maybe you are healthy, happy, and excited for all that 2022 will bring, **but for how long?**

If there was ever a time in history when life was truly good, when health & happiness were the norm, it was in the Garden of Eden with Adam & Eve!
But how long did that last? How far into God’s story before the wheels fell off?

If it didn’t last in paradise, how long do we really think it will last in 2022?

Consider Adam & Eve who had God’s very best going for them! Perfect health & happiness, all gone in a moment b/c they ate the forbidden fruit!
All that was good now a distant memory, & in its place - pain, suffering, sin!

- **How long before one bad decision destroys everything that seems to be going so well right now in your life?** **Genesis 3**

Or consider Cain & Abel, Adam & Eve’s children who were offering sacrifices before God, & all seemed well. Abel did everything he was supposed to do & the next thing he knew his brother was trying to kill him, & he succeeded!

- **How long before someone you are close to, someone you love dearly, turns on you and stabs you in the back?** **Genesis 4:1-16**

Or Noah when God told him to build an ark in the middle of a desert land & prepare for a flood! What effect do you think this had on Noah’s reputation?

- **How long before God chooses to make your life more difficult by calling you to do something that the whole world will laugh at & reject?** **Genesis 6:9-22**

Or again, like Noah, but this time after God’s incredible faithfulness to him & his

family. A new beginning, & what does he do? He gets drunk & is defiled!

- **How long before you take things too far & make a fool of yourself & dishonor God, & then have to live with that regret & shame?** **Genesis 9:20-27**

Or how about the people who tried to build a tower so high that it would reach the heavens & make a name for themselves! What became of it, of them?

- **How long before you get so focused on trying to build your own life, your own career, & make a name for yourself that you forget about God? How long do you think that will last before it comes crashing down?** **Gen. 11:1-9**

Or how about Abraham, who God promised him an offspring in his old age, but he went about it his own way & the result was devastating - to his family, & even nations would come to oppose one another as a result!

- **How long before God’s promises seem so ridiculous & impossible that you take things into your own hands & make a complete mess?** **Genesis 15-16**

Or like Jacob, a son of promise, but one who was more times than not anything but an ideal example of a follower of God. **He even tried to fight God to take His blessing rather than receive it from him!** How do you think that turned out?

- **How long before our own self-centered, manipulative, and insecure nature rears its ugly head and reveals our true inner selves?** **Gen. 25-35**

Then there is Joseph, who had it all until his brothers threw him in a well, pretended that he was dead, sold him as a slave, was falsely accused by Potiphar, thrown into prison, forgotten, discarded, & left abandoned! **Gen. 37-40**

- **How long before all that seems to be going so well comes off the hinges & spins out of control leaving you wrecked & stranded on the side of the road?**

Need I go on? If what we desire is health & happiness in 2022, there is no guarantee of that, **if anything you can bet that the opposite will happen!**

But maybe in 2022, we can redirect our desires!

- **What if instead of health, we chose to desire & ask God to walk with us through whatever comes our way this year?**
- **What if instead of happiness, we chose to desire & ask God to teach us what He wants us to learn by walking this broken road called life?**
- **What if instead of saying “Have a Happy New Year”, we would say, “Have a Joyful New Year” – where Jesus is 1st, Others 2nd, & then You? **Ps. 30:5****

“Have a _____ New Year!”

Genesis 3:14-19

I’ve never started off a sermon with a fill in the blank in the title! I’ve also never said *“You might want to wait until the end of the sermon to fill this blank in!”*

It’s the first Sunday in January, a new year! This is always a time of hopes & dreams, looking forward & forgetting the past, new possibilities/beginnings!

What are your hopes for 2022? That this year will be filled with... *what?*
Most New Year’s toasts go something like this... “To _____”

Well, I have spent these first 2 days of the New Year in quarantine with Covid! My Christmas celebration with my family has been postponed from before Christmas, to New Year’s Eve, to now who knows when!

Maybe your New Year has started off different than mine. Maybe you are healthy, happy, and excited for all that 2022 will bring, but for _____?

If there was ever a time in history when life was truly good, when health & happiness were the norm, it was in the Garden of Eden with Adam & Eve!
But how long did that last? How far into God’s story before the wheels fell off?

If it didn’t last in _____, how long do we really think it will last in 2022?

Consider Adam & Eve who had God’s very best going for them! Perfect health & happiness, all gone in a moment b/c they ate the forbidden fruit!
All that was good now a distant memory, & in its place - pain, suffering, sin!

- How long before one _____ destroys everything that seems to be going so well right now in your life? **Genesis 3**

Or consider Cain & Abel, Adam & Eve’s children who were offering sacrifices before God, & all seemed well. Abel did everything he was supposed to do & the next thing he knew his brother was trying to kill him, & he succeeded!

- How long before someone you are close to, someone you love dearly, turns on you and _____ in the back? **Genesis 4:1-16**

Or Noah when God told him to build an ark in the middle of a dessert land & prepare for a flood! What effect do you think this had on Noah’s reputation?

- How long before God chooses to make your life more _____ by calling you to do something that the whole world will laugh at & reject? **Genesis 6:9-22**

Or again, like Noah, but this time after God’s incredible faithfulness to him & his

family. A new beginning, & what does he do? He gets drunk & is defiled!

- How long before you take things _____ & make a fool of yourself & dishonor God, & then have to live with that regret & shame? **Genesis 9:20-27**

Or how about the people who tried to build a tower so high that it would reach the heavens & make a name for themselves! What became of it, of them?

- How long before you get so focused on trying to build your own life, your own career, & make a name for yourself that you forget about God? How long do you think that will last before it comes _____ **Gen. 11:1-9**

Or how about Abraham, who God promised him an offspring in his old age, but he went about it his own way & the result was devastating - to his family, & even nations would come to oppose one another as a result!

- How long before God’s promises seem so ridiculous & impossible that you take things into your _____ & make a complete mess? **Genesis 15-16**

Or like Jacob, a son of promise, but one who was more times than not anything but an ideal example of a follower of God. He even tried to _____ to take His blessing rather than receive it from him! How do you think that turned out?

- How long before our own self-centered, manipulative, and insecure nature rears its _____ and reveals our true inner selves? **Gen. 25-35**

Then there is Joseph, who had it all until his brothers threw him in a well, pretended that he was dead, sold him as a slave, was falsely accused by Potiphar, thrown into prison, forgotten, discarded, & left abandoned! **Gen. 37-40**

- How long before all that seems to be going so well comes off the hinges & spins _____ leaving you wrecked & stranded on the side of the road?

Need I go on? If what we desire is health & happiness in 2022, there is no guarantee of that, if anything you can bet that _____ will happen!

But maybe in 2022, we can redirect our desires!

- What if instead of health, we chose to desire & ask God to _____ through whatever comes our way this year?
- What if instead of happiness, we chose to desire & ask God to _____ what He wants us to learn by walking this broken road called life?
- What if instead of saying “Have a Happy New Year”, we would say, “Have a _____ New Year”— where Jesus is 1st, Others 2nd, & then You? **Ps. 30:5**