

From Pastor's Desk...

Take the next step: Jesus never fails!

We have entered in 2018 by the grace of God and 2017 has become part of past life. What an awesome time it was in the watchnight service to extend thanks to God for the manifold blessings and to welcome New Year with cheerful hearts. New resolutions taken for the year is a motivation for everyone to move on a daily basis. Walter Disney once said, "all our dreams can come true, if we have the courage to pursue them".

We all faced questions from the loved ones after high school, what is the next step? It's true after a degree program or at certain stages in life like unhealth, financial crisis, layoff at work, foreclosure of home etc. It is important to take the next step. There are many who are ignorant of the step to be taken in life. If we don't take, we will stumble and be isolated in everything. There is a Chinese proverb, "it is better to take many small steps in the right direction than to make a leap forward only to stumble backward". Here are a few tips for taking the next step:

- Start a day with God. We need to set apart a few minutes in personal communion with God the Father through Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit. Daniel is an example in the O.T.
- Prioritize things to do for a healthy and prosperous life. We need to discern what is the best in accordance with the plan of God.
- Take the next step in faith. Even though we have not passed this way before, have faith that God will see you through. It is good to contemplate faith-stretching situations in life like Abraham, Moses, and Joshua.
- Learn how to get along with others. We are to live a life relationally. Love is to be the expression in all realms.
- Grow in grace and understanding to give glory to God through our life. The ultimate goal for our witness is that everyone become a true worshipper.

Jesus responded to Peter's request while he was walking on the water during the fourth watch of the night, 'Come'. Peter was ready to take the next step though failed to walk ahead and cried, 'Lord save me' Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him. They climbed to the boat together (Mt 14: 28-31).

God bless you

In His Glorious Ministry,

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Do not settle your life for less

(Bro. Jiju John, Malayalam Worship Leader)

Greetings to my dear brothers and sisters. As you all are, I am also excited to welcome another New Year. No matter where we are in our walk with God, He is always calling us to a next step. For each of us it is different because we are all in different level in our spiritual life. But as long as we realize there is always a next step and be willing to pursue it, we should be able to reach the destiny that God intended for us.

There is an interesting story that we find in the book of Numbers Chapter 32. The promise God made more than five hundred years earlier to Abraham and repeated to Joshua (Joshua 1:1-8) was about to be fulfilled. The people of Israel were ready to take over the land of Canaan. It would not be an easy task as the people who had lived in Canaan for thousands of years already built walled cities and farmed the land, and they were not simply going to give their land to the people of Israel. To add the severity, they had to cross the Jordan River before they could enter Canaan. Yet, even before the Israelites entered the Promised Land, the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh who had very large herds and flocks chose to settle east of the Jordan without even crossing the Jordan (Numbers 32:1-5).

Here we see two groups of people; one who are interested in God's blessing towards them and another group that are really only interested in their earthly lot settling for something less than that God had stored up for them within the land of Canaan.

What happens to the two and half tribes? Out of all the nation of Israel the first ones to go astray were these tribes. But the people who decided to cross the Jordan river were able to enjoy the land that flows milk and honey although they had to conquer the strongholds of that nation.

So, what would you choose? Staying on the other side of Jordan or pursue the Promised Land? if you decide to pursue the promised land you may have to encounter challenges that you are not certain about. We do not know what year 2018 brings. Nevertheless, God wants us to trust Him in every step that we take as He lead our ways.

God has a greater purpose for each one of us. We must be willing to take that next step. It may be stepping forward to teach a Sunday school class, accepting the challenge of leadership in the church, going door to door handing out the gospel tracts, or even leaving your job and reaching out the nations for Jesus. Your next step will be a call from God, not a suggestion or impulse by man. May I encourage you to take your next step in this New Year and do not settle your life for anything less than what God has in store for you.

Let me conclude by quoting the word from Theodore Roosevelt "I dream of men who take the next step instead of worrying about the next thousand steps." Wishing you good health, happiness, and success in the coming year and always. Happy 2018!