**Setting Priorities for 2015 – Making Christ First in Everything**

**Why followers of Jesus Christ have special reasons to love the concept of “newness.”**

1. Because in Christ, we enjoy a new standing with the Heavenly Father

**Psalm 99:9** - *Exalt the Lord our God and worship at His holy hill, for holy is the Lord our God.*

**Romans 3:23** - …*for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God…*

**Psalm 24:3** - *Who may ascend into the hill of the Lord? And who may stand in His holy place?*

**Colossians 1:13-14** - *For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.*

**Zechariah 3:1-5** - *Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to accuse him. The Lord said to Satan, “The Lord rebuke you, Satan! Indeed, the Lord who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! Is this not a brand plucked from the fire?” Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments and standing before the angel. He spoke and said to those who were standing before him, saying, “Remove the filthy garments from him.” Again he said to him, “See, I have taken your iniquity away from you and will clothe you with festal robes.” Then I said, “Let them put a clean turban on his head.” So they put a clean turban on his head and clothed him with garments, while the angel of the Lord was standing by.*

2. Because in Christ, we enjoy new mercies every day

**Lamentations 3:22-23** - *The Lord’s lovingkindnesses indeed never cease, for His compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness.*

3. Because in Christ, we enjoy singing a new song

**Psalm 40:1-3** - *I waited patiently for the Lord; and He inclined to me and heard my cry. He brought me up out of the pit of destruction, out of the miry clay, and He set my feet upon a rock making my footsteps firm. He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God; many will see and fear and will trust in the Lord.*

**Revelation 21:5** - *And He who sits on the throne said, “Behold, I am making all things new…”*

4. Because in Christ, we enjoy new hope

**2 Corinthians 5:17** - *Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.*

5. Because in Christ, we enjoy the process of progressively becoming more pleasing to Him

**Ephesians 4:22-24** - …*that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.*

6. Because in Christ, we enjoy a new destination

**2 Peter 3:11-13** - *Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat! But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells.*

6 areas of life where we can and should especially make Christ first

**I. Make Christ First in Your Personal Life**

**Colossians 1:18** - *He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything.*

A. Daily communion

**Psalm 5:3** - *In the morning, O Lord, You will hear my voice; in the morning I will order my prayer to You and eagerly watch.*

A – Adoration

C – Confession

T – Thanksgiving

S – Supplication

B. Personal spiritual growth

**Colossians 2:6-7** - *Therefore as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, having been firmly rooted and now being built up in Him and established in your faith, just as you were instructed, and overflowing with gratitude.*

**2 Peter 3:18** - …*but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.*

**Colossians 1:28** - *We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ.*

**II. Make Christ First in Your Family**

A. For singles

B. In your marriage

**Colossians 3:18-19** - *Wives, be subject to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives and do not be embittered against them.*

C. In your parenting

**Colossians 3:20-21** - *Children, be obedient to your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing to the Lord. Fathers, do not exasperate your children, so that they will not lose heart.*

**III. Make Christ First at Your Job**

**Colossians 3:22-23** - *Slaves, in all things obey those who are your masters on earth, not with external service, as those who merely please men, but with sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord. Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men,*

**IV. Make Christ First at Your Church**

**V. Make Christ First in Your Finances**

**VI. Make Christ First in Your Health**