

Let Us Have a Happy New Year! – Part 1

Scripture Reading: Hebrews 12:28 – 13:25

We wish people a Happy New Year. We hope that good things will happen to them. They wish the same for us. But there is no guarantee that good things will happen in 2024. There is likely to be a blend of good things and bad things. Thankfully, we are told that **all things** will “*work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose*” (Romans 8:28).

We can pray, but we can't control the things that will happen to us in this world. Asking God for good things is fine, but if we want to be happy in this world, we need to focus on what's happening **in us** more than just what is happening **to us**. It has been said that life is 10% what happens to us and 90% how we respond to what happens to us. So, the focus of this message is on what we can do to develop Christ-like character and behavior – to make us faithful, happy / joyful, content, and peaceful in 2024. Many passages in Scripture could have been used to elaborate on this matter. Here is a list of possibilities:

Psalm 37:1-11; Matthew 6:5-34; 7:7-12 (cp. Luke 11:9-13); Ephesians 3:14-21; Philippians 1:9-11; 2:1-16; 3:10 – 4:1; 4:4-13,19; Colossians 2:6-10; I Thessalonians 5:9-28.

But for this message, Hebrews 12:28 – 13:25 has been chosen. Some of the above references will be consulted, but we are using the word “**Let**” and the phrase “**Let Us / Let's,**” which are found in the Book of Hebrews, to give us guidance on how to experience happiness through God. The English word “*Let*” implies a cooperation – something that we do, so something else can continue its action and purpose (Colossians 3:15-16; James 1:4). The phrase “*Let us*” / “*Let's*” implies that there is something to do, individually and cooperatively with others – like we are part of a symphony, playing before God and anyone else who cares to listen (Romans 13:12-13).

There is not a separate, distinct Greek word for “*Let*” / “*Let us*” / “*Let's.*” It is built into various words. Translators need to insert an English word that makes it an imperative, an exhortation to do something. Most of the time, in the Book of Hebrews, we see this word and this phrase, but some translations use wording that tells us to keep on doing something, to make sure something is done. Here is a list of Scriptures, found in the Book of Hebrews, that compel us to “*let*” something happen or continue, to do something important, in concert with other believers:

Let us fear. – Hebrews 4:1

Let us labor. – Hebrews 4:11

Let us hold fast our profession. – Hebrews 4:14

Let come boldly (without fear) to the throne of grace. – Hebrews 4:16

Let us go on to perfection (maturity). – Hebrews 6:1

Let us draw near (to God) with a true heart. – Hebrews 10:22

Let us hold fast our profession of faith. – Hebrews 10:23

Let us consider one another / encourage one another. – Hebrews 10:24

Let us lay aside the weight and the sin that hinders us. – Hebrews 12:1

Let us run with patience / perseverance the race that is set before us. – Hebrews 12:1

Let us have grace / Let us be grateful and worship God with reverence and awe (godly fear).
– Hebrews 12:28

Let brotherly love continue. – Hebrews 13:1

Let your life / your conduct be free of covetousness (the love of money) and be content.
– Hebrews 13:5

Let us go unto Him (Christ) bearing His reproach from this world. – Hebrews 13:13

Let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually. – Hebrews 13:15

When discussing the ministry of God's Word, it is often said, "**Exposition must have Application.**" In other words, when the Bible is taught, there must be a conclusion that requires decision and action. God's Word isn't just for accumulating facts and information. It is for transformation and obedience (Psalm 119:1-11,59,105; John 3:21; I Timothy 6:3; II Timothy 3:16-17; Titus 2:1-15; James 1:22-25; II Peter 1:2-11; II John 1:4; III John 3-4).

In 2024, let us know the Word of God – What God says, what God means by what He says, and what He wants from us, based on what He says. Let us be transformed by His Spirit, through His Word, and be devoted, obedient followers of Jesus Christ (John 8:30-32; Acts 2:42; II Corinthians 3:18; Romans 12:1-2; 16:25-27). Our next message will be focused on the use of "**Let / Let us / Let's**" as found in Hebrews 12:28 – 13:25.