

BETWEEN SEEDTIME AND HARVEST



**Senior Adults Newsletter
Christ Covenant Church
January, 2018**

GRACE TO YOU
by
Pastor Bruce Creswell

What to Do in 2018!

Soon 2018 will be upon us and with it brings daily decisions, directions, and circumstances that God sovereignly has designed for our good and His glory. Just think back on this year and what came your way. Each day you were able to navigate and see your way through by His leadership and wisdom. At the time you did not know how things would turn out or all the steps that you would take. BUT what you did then is exactly what you must do in 2018. Hold on to that thought!

Many of us know the names of Jim and Elisabeth Elliot, who reached out to the Auca Indians of Ecuador. After Jim was killed by the Indians, Elizabeth labored among them for two more years. Upon her return to the States, she became greatly used as a conference speaker and a writer. Her radio program *Gateway to Joy*, was heard all over BBN stations. The impact of her ministry on so many could be traced to the fact that "she knew Christ's strength in her weakness" and made the "clarion call for others to do the same."

Her advice that she gave to others and she herself followed was from an Old Saxon poem: *DO THE NEXT THING*. Here it is in her own words:

Do it immediately;
Do it with prayer;
Do it reliantly, casting all care;
Do it reverence,
Tracing His Hand,
Who placed it before thee with earnest command.
Stayed on Omnipotence,
Safe 'neath His wing,
Leave all resultings,
DO THE NEXT THING.

The original poem: “Doe the Nexte Rhyng” is reprinted with spelling modernized:

From an old English parsonage down by the sea
 There came in the twilight a message to me;
 Its quaint Saxon legend, deeply engraven,
 Hath, it seems to me, teaching from Heaven.
 And on through the doors the quiet words ring
 Like a low inspiration: “DO THE NEXT THING.”

Many a questioning, many a fear.
 Many a doubt, hath its quieting here.
 Moment by moment, let down from Heaven,
 Time, opportunity, and guidance are given.
 Fear not tomorrows, child of the King,
 Trust them with Jesus, do the next thing.

Do it immediately, do it with prayer;
 Do it reliantly, casting all care;
 Do it with reverence, tracing His hand
 Who placed it before thee with earnest command.
 Stayed on Omnipotence, safe ‘neath His wing,
 Leave all results, do the next thing.

Looking for Jesus, ever serener,
 Working or suffering, be thy demeanor;
 In His dear presence, the rest of His calm,
 The light of His countenance be thy psalm,
 Strong in His faithfulness, praise and sing,
 Then, as He beckons thee, do the next thing.

Now, back to the lingering thought of the first paragraph. We got through this year by simply “doing the next thing” in front of us. Real life is lived out in the daily mundane. It is a repeat “of uncelebrated steps, of hidden habits.” This first week of 2018, you will do what you did last week, unspectacular things: eat food, brush your teeth, answer the phone, check your mail, do laundry, make your bed, etc. You will do the next thing and after that you will do the next thing.

It is said, in the daily mundane God writes His story. Out of the mundane He reveals His miraculous power to His children. As you take care of the task before you, regardless how mundane it appears, if you offer up your obedience to Him, He reveals His presence and power!

So, remember in each day—do the next thing.



A VOICE FROM THE PAST

This article was written by J. C. Ryle, a pastor, in 1884!

The way to do good is to amuse people!

([J.C. Ryle](#), 1884)

A great change has taken place in the last forty years. A quantity of *church work* is continually being carried on both by clergymen and laymen, which, however well-meant, can hardly be called *Christian*--and in reality has a painful tendency to throw true Christian work into the background, if not to throw it entirely out!

No one, for instance, can fail to observe that a large number of professors are spending all their time and strength on church music, church decorations, church programs, and an incessant round of church attractions. Others are equally absorbed in social work, feeding the poor, and improved dwellings for everyone. Others are incessantly getting up popular concerts, secular lectures, and evening recreations. They proclaim everywhere, that **the way to do good is to amuse people!**

Others are always occupied with secular guilds, and societies, and associations--and think you very wrong and heathenish if you do not join them. Myriads of professors are restlessly busy about such things from one end of the land to the other; and superficial observers are often saying, "*What a great deal of church-work there is in these days!*"

Now I would not for a moment be supposed to mean that all the things I have just mentioned are wrong and wicked. Yet I doubt whether the present state of things is altogether healthy. I doubt whether the work of the Holy Spirit on hearts and consciences, is not insensibly being left out in the cold and neglected. Amidst the incessant hustle and bustle about matters of *entirely secondary importance*--I doubt whether the sort of direct spiritual work to which the Apostles wholly gave themselves, receives as much attention as it ought.

It is quite certain that musical services, and church decorations, and concerts, and bazaars, and social work, and the like--will not save souls.

It is equally certain that, without repentance, and faith, and holy living, and practical, self-denying, kindly charity--no one is fit for Heaven. Do these simple, old-fashioned graces fill the place which they ought to do, in the daily proceedings of many so-called church-workers in this day? I confess I doubt it exceedingly.

I certainly see on every side a vast increase of what people call "church-work." But there is little or no increase of true religion. There undoubtedly is more *show* and *glitter* and *display*. But I extremely doubt whether there is more spiritual reality, and more growth of practical godliness.

JOY SINGERS



Joy Singers will resume on January 15th. Come join us in the Prayer Chapel at 1:30 pm on Mondays. We are privileged to have Pam Eash lead us in praise to our Heavenly Father and prepare us for singing at a Sunday evening service and ministering to those in nursing and retirement homes.

HYMN HISTORY

By
Peggy Dear

I HEARD THE BELLS ON CHRISTMAS DAY

Christmas Day 1863 was not a day of "peace on earth, good will to men" in the United States. The bloody Civil War was being waged. At Gettysburg, only six months earlier, forty thousand men were killed, wounded, or missing. The long siege of Vicksburg resulted in thirty thousand Confederate soldiers being taken as prisoners. And there was no end in sight.

No wonder the poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow "bowed his head" in despair and said, "There is no peace on earth." The entire country, both North and South, were in despair. But there was something about Christmas that helped Longfellow see beyond the carnage of the present and realize that God is not dead and that right would prevail.

The birth of Jesus Christ brings hope. Christmas doesn't mean that all problems disappear, but it does assure you that God is not dead, nor does he sleep. Even the darkness of Good Friday is followed by the dawn of Easter. Yes, the bells of Christmas are still ringing, singing on their way.



I heard the bells on Christmas day their old familiar carols play,
And wild and sweet the words repeat of peace on earth, good will to men.

I thought how as the day had come, the belfries of all Christendom
Had rolled along th'unbroken song of peace on earth, good will to men.

And in despair I bowed my head: "There is no peace on earth," I said,
"For hate is strong, and mocks the song of peace on earth, good will to men"

Yet pealed the bells more loud and deep: "God is not dead, nor does he sleep;
The wrong shall fail, the right prevail, with peace on earth, good will to men."

Then ringing, singing on its way, the world revolved from night to day--
A voice, a chime, a chant sublime of peace on earth, good will to men.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807-1882)

A PRAYER FOR THE YEAR THAT IS NEW

Dear Master, for this coming year,
 Just one request I bring.
 I do not pray for happiness
 Or any earthly thing;
 I do not ask to understand
 The way Thou ledest me;
 But this I ask – Teach me to do
 The thing that pleaseth Thee.
 I want to know Thy guiding voice,
 To walk with Thee each day.
 Dear Master, make me swift to hear
 And ready to obey;
 And thus the year I now begin
 A happy year will be,
 If I am seeking just to do
 The thing that pleaseth Thee.

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS



- 9 Fred Depp
- 10 David Collier
- 11 Peggy Elkin
- 12 Barbara Price
- 14 Jerry Cauble
- 15 Anne Murray
- 17 Donna Whitehead
- 17 Jane Williams
- 17 Judy Moore
- 21 Norma Coleman
- 29 Dot Branson
- 29 Jim Parrish, Jr.

JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES



- 10 Al and Peggy Elkin
- 20 Cal and Elaine Deaner
- 20 Hugh and Fran Wise
- 31 Steve and Roma Thompson

We apologize for missing Erma Roberts birthday last month. It was December 25th.

MONTHLY CLASS LUNCHEON

Friday, January 5th, 12:00 Noon
Bring a dish to share.

LADIES LUNCHEON

Friday, January 12th
11:30 am

Trio's Restaurant
10709 McMullen Parkway
Charlotte, NC (*off Highway 51*)

Please come and invite another lady
from our class.

MEN'S LUNCH

Friday, January 19th
11:30 am

Park Place Restaurant
10517 Park Road, Charlotte

Coram Deo Sunday School Class:

Sundays: 9:00 AM, WC 201 (Choir Room)

Pastor on Call: (704) 708-6101

Pastor of Senior Adults and Visitation:

N. Bruce Creswell

bcreswell@christcovenant.org

Study: (704) 708-6106

Newsletter Editor:

Jane Yancey

jane@yancey.com

Jennifer Dean, Assistant to Pastor Bruce:

jdean@christcovenant.org

(704) 708-6104

Christ Covenant Church

800 Fullwood Lane

Matthews, NC 28105