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# LOOKING AHEAD TO NEXT YEAR

James 5:13-15

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Next year is currently pregnant to deliver in the next eight days from today. The expectation may be high or low with any of us differently. It is only God who determines what and how the next coming year would be.

However, we must build positive trust in Him and also do the do-able towards the expected year. Like a pregnant woman expecting the birth of her baby or babies with joy would of course, be prepared for the arrival with the associated responsibilities for the child upkeep. Similarly, we should be like the expectant mother in our spirituality as we look ahead to the coming new year!

We would recall that last week the Minister in his exhortation from **Revelation 22:12** reminds us of the rewards that await each and everyone. In the sermon he pinpointed fifty weeks of church activities until now. The poser then was what is your score and reward in all of this? To me that was a good record outstretched and we build a

little on that in this sermon. Truly, our God is a record keeping Father we must imitate. He created the World in a recorded time of six days and rested. In revelation, the books of records were opened, in **Hebrews 12:23** the records of the church of the first born are written in Heaven. In the same way the church should have and keep records of everything including her properties, used and unused. Individuals should keep records of their spiritual activities as well as physical activities for the Lord.

By His Grace as we are looking forward to the next year, we need self-assessment in our physical and spiritual performances in the Lord; the church needs to appraise herself in all areas. This is very necessary for proper planning and projections of where to be from where we had been. What is our focus? What is your focus for Christ as the new year creeps in? We should have set our spiritual goals to achieve, how to systematically attain the desired targets. There is no lack or failure with Christ.

Review of past Report Cards: Report cards show your performances and thereto improve for betterment. The world over , government, organizations etc look back, ascertain the current to check their performances in various areas to plan properly for the next year coming. The Body of Christ could not be exceptional as we look ahead to next year. I shall in this sermon take a look into three areas in the course of performance while we move on.

Excuses: Poor attendance to all Church activities was very common predicated on myriads of excuses on the part of most Christians. Absenteeism increased with the removal of fuel subsidy. Excuses are capable of weakening the spiritual fabrics of the Church. The Church could not her part mitigate this for many needy brethren but the vehicles are there for use.

Disconnect from feeding the flock by the elders. For most part of the year fading away the church was not natured by the bishops enough. Even the ministers and teachers are to assist ,it is the bishops mostly should nature the flock **Acts 20;28 Ephesians 4:11;12 1 Peter 5:1-2**. In teaching and exhortation, prayers the elders should stand out prominently.

Doctrinaire or scriptural issues unattended to: Quite a number of conflicting biblical teachings that arose were place` just there` unattended to by the ministers. And to the extent that an embargo is placed on such areas by the leadership. Christ alone makes commands for His church. Wholesale teaching of the bible is the right of all Christians as servants and teachers of His word. We confirm teachings by the bible. We must strive for bible interpretation using applicable research bible tools.

Others: Examine yourselves **2 Corinthians 13:5**. We are in position to judge ourselves. We have a duty to ensure that all is well with us individually and as a body. This year ends soon and the new one comes in, the old leaven should not be carried over. A man knows himself best besides God.

**Ahead And Expectations:** It is highly admissible that the congregation is scripturally organized. There is ambience of decency and orderliness as well as maturity in the congregation. However, there should be areas of consideration for development.

- a. **At A Glance: One – Year – Plan:** This is a document plan of what the Church would go into or do or achieve for the year as the new year sets in. It outlines the various activities

of the church and measures put in place for control which one can look into as guide for the whole year. In this way all members can know what activities would take place in the quarters that make up the year. It would help members in their spiritual planning as well since the Church to a large extent guides, directs or mirror the faithful life of the Christian. For instance What theme does the Church prepares for the next year; what are the Sub themes for each quarter, what are the activities enshrine for a quarter, who are involved, the mission works for the year, new congregations to established & place, media

evangelism ,programs in the quarters new/old, Christian recreation, financial projections in & out with its drive, meetings of elders with the congregation amongst others.

- b. **Capital Projects:** As part of the year plan, capital projects envisage to actualize should be incorporated. For example church library, evangelism recording studio, consideration for outgoing asbestos roof to zinc.
- c. **Training of teachers (Men & women):**

**Conclusion: *Philippians 4:8,9*** - Every new year witness offers us opportunity to us for spiritual improvement, breaking new grounds and we are empowered for victories in Jesus Christ conquering name, amen.