

# New Year, New You

What are your new year's resolutions for 2015? Lose weight? Get out of debt? Improve relationships? Read more books? Get a new job? How about choosing to get closer to Jesus than ever before in 2015? The Rapture is soon to come! It could happen at any moment and we must be ready or be left behind. The Bible says, "This is all the more urgent, for you know how late it is; time is running out. Wake up, for our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed" (Romans 13:11). Here, the Apostle Paul explained that our salvation becomes closer and closer with each passing moment. It is closer now than it was when you first began reading this study. Therefore, we must hyper-focus on getting ready to meet the Lord when He calls us home. Here are some things that we should focus on in 2015: the imminence of the Rapture, more effective prayer, and holy living.

## ***Imminence of the Rapture:***

The rapture could take place at any moment. The Bible does not indicate precisely when the Rapture will happen, but we are living in the end times. We know that the rapture will occur prior to Christ's second coming and prior to the end of the age. In Matthew 24, Jesus gave his disciples some examples of things that would occur when his second coming and the end of the age is imminent. The signs include: false doctrines and cults that will deceive millions (Islam is one such cult), famine, earthquakes all over the world, wars, persecution of Christians, etc. Jesus said that when we see these things occurring, we will know His return "is very near, right at the door" (Matthew 24:33). To learn more about the Rapture, see the Bible Study "What is the Rapture?" on the Bible Studies page.

## ***Effective Prayer***

A robust prayer life is of critical importance in cultivating a close walk with Jesus. It is our primary means of communication with Him. Jesus wants to hear from us. He wants to hear our worship and praise. He wants us to ask Him what His will is for us. He wants us to tell Him our troubles and seek Him for guidance. He wants us to confess our sins and ask for forgiveness. Most of all, He wants us to have power to overcome sin. Jesus said, "Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation" (Matthew 26:41). Prayer and closeness with God will release power and anointing into our lives. Jesus himself was a prayer warrior. He often went off by himself to commune with the Father. If prayer was of utmost importance

to Jesus Christ, and he was the Son of God, how much more important is prayer for us? Let's make prayer a priority in 2015. To learn more about how to pray, see the Bible Study "Teach me to Pray: The Lord's Prayer Applied" on the Bible Studies page.

### ***Holy Living***

God requires holy living. Because we have been made new in Christ, and because we have the Holy Spirit living within us, we have the tools we need to be a "living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God" as the Bible says we should (Romans 12:1). By studying the Word and abounding in prayer, our minds will become Christ-centered rather than focused on the world, wealth, society and pop-culture. It is when we overcome the temptation to sin and instead do what is right in the eyes of God, that we are holy and pleasing to Him. Take some time to think about your life and what attitudes, actions, and habits you need to put aside in order to become holy because God your father is holy. To learn more about holy living, see the Bible Studies "God Requires Holy Living," "Cultivate the Fruits of the Spirit," "A Living Sacrifice: A Guided Self-Study," and the parts 1, 2, 3, and 4 of the Sermon on the Mount Series on the Bible Studies page.

### ***Conclusion***

Let's make getting closer to Jesus the true priority for 2015. Choose Jesus today!

*God bless.*