

## Happy New Year

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Happy New Year! Words that, in a few hours, will be said many times in many places. I expect that I will say those words a few times myself tonight to my friends that I will be celebrating with as the clock strikes midnight and officially ushers in the year of 2017.

This past year has seen many different situations for me. I have been through some difficult circumstances and I have had some moments of excitement and victory! I have learned in all those circumstances. The most important thing that I have learned this year is that my worth is not defined by what anyone on this earth thinks of me. I am sure that all of us know people who like us and those who do not like us. I am sure there are people out there who can tell stories about us that might embarrass us or make us feel bad. I am sure we all have friends that will stand up for us in any circumstance. However, ultimately, the only thing that really matters is our relationship with God.

I am glad to say that I am heading into 2017 as close to God as I have ever been. I spent the better part of the last half of 2016 reexamining my life, rededicating my life to Jesus Christ and searching the Scriptures for His Will for my life. I had slipped away from Him. I admit it. However, God is a forgiving God and I am pleased to say that I am forgiven and back now and I am excited to see what future God has planned for me in 2017.

I am reminded of a song that was written by Kirk Franklin but has been recorded by several Southern Gospel Artists as well. The song has meant a lot to me over the years and especially earlier this year. The song is "My Life Is In Your Hands" and the last verse and chorus goes like this:

"So, when your tests and trials. They seem to get you down. And all your friends and loved ones are nowhere to be found. Remember there's a friend in Jesus who will wipe your tears away and if your heart is broken Just lift your hands and say.

I know that I can make it. I know that I can stand. No matter what may come my way My life is in your hands. With Jesus I can take it. With Him I know I can stand. No matter what may come my way my life is in your hands."

I wish each of you a Happy New Year and I pray that as you enter 2017 that you have placed your life in God's Hands!