

## “Behold I make all things new.” Revelation 21:5a

Happy New Year! I hope everyone had an enjoyable and blessed Christmas and treasured the time you were able to spend with your family and friends, celebrating the birth of our Savior Jesus the Christ. Now that the turkey has been eaten, the gifts unwrapped and the festivities have slowly come to an end, let us thank God for the many good gifts and graces that He has bestowed upon us in 2017, as we seek His guidance and blessings in 2018.

Did you make any New Year resolutions? Most people resolve to lose weight, get in shape, to make better use of their time and the like. On the onset of this New Year I cannot help but think about Genesis 1: 1 “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.” This scripture is used quite often in Masonic Ritual, but let us take a closer look at some of the key points it has to offer for us in 2018.

“In the beginning ... God,” As Bible believing Christians we all share the common knowledge that God created all things. From the vastness of the universe to the smallest molecular structures, God created all things. We also understand that God formed mankind from the dust of the earth, liken to His own image, breathing the breath of life into our nostrils ... thus time began. The verse before us tells us that God was there in the beginning; the beginning of what? God was there at the beginning of time. God, the Triune God of Father, Son and Holy Spirit existed in perfect harmony before time was created. Time is not relevant to an omniscient, omnipresent and omniscient God, so time was created for OUR benefit. God created the sun to rule the day and the moon to govern the night and gave the seasons to plant, to sow, to reap and to harvest the fruits of our labor. God gave us the Sabbath, a day to rest from our labors, for in six days God created the heaven and the earth and all that is in them and saw that it was good ... then God rested on the seventh day. So, as to reference the 24” gauge of the Entered Apprentice, we are to serve, we are to labor and we are to rest.

God existed in the beginning, and God exists in the present. My New Year resolution was to serve God, through Christ, more often in the here and now. We are living in a time of moral decline and decay; a time of rebellion against all forms authority; from the authority of the family home, the social authority of the Law, which governs us and a rebellion against the authority of the Church. Many in this generation feel empowered and entitled, refusing to acknowledge sin and to repent from it. The terms hard work and discipline are lost to these individuals. As Templar Knights, we are bound to protect the faith of our Order, which includes, but not limited to, proclaiming the Good News of salvation through Jesus Christ the Lord. Have we neglected this sovereign duty as Christian Knights Templar? Have we, like those mentioned in Thessalonians 2: 3 began to fall away from the very faith that saved us? The Word of God tells us in Romans 3:10 that “there are none who are righteous, no, not one,” Romans 3:23 “For all have sinned and come short of the Glory of God.” Romans 6:23a “For the wages of sin is death.” I have resolved, as a Minister and a Templar to preach, as the Lord may direct, the Good News. Romans 5:6b “in due time Christ died for the ungodly.” Romans 6:23b “the gift of God is

eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” John 3:16 “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him would NOT PERISH, but have everlasting life.” People are dying every day without the blood of Jesus applied to their lives, facing a place of eternal darkness and torment; many have never been given the opportunity to hear the Gospel truth, much less accept Jesus Christ. In this “politically correct” society in which we live, the name of Jesus is offensive, why? The name of Jesus is offensive because there is still power in His name; power to heal, to forgive and to save. Romans 9:9 “if thou shall confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus and shall believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, THOU SHALL BE SAVED.” My focus on serving God is in the time of here and now, because that is where God needs me to be, and He needs you, my Brother Sir Knights, to be, working in the here and now. Being dressed in God’s armor: the shoes of peace, the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness and the helmet of salvation; carrying the shield of faith and wielding the sword of the spirit, which is God’s Word, not giving ear to political correctness, let us stand fast in these days of darkness, ready to do battle with the forces of evil and to extend our hands in charity to those in need, ready to testify to the divine salvation in Christ. People need to hear the Good News. People need to know that they are loved. People need charity and goodwill. People need hope. How will they receive these things without Christ?

Finally brothers, God is in our future. One day this temporal life will be over and eternal life will begin. Revelations 21 tells us that “God will wipe away all tears, there will be no more death, nor sorrow, neither shall there be any more pain; for these things have passed away.” The One true God is faithful and true and He will make all things new. A new heaven, and a new earth, free from the pains and afflictions, the trials and temptations we must now endure; a place of rest and a place of peace, a place where time will be no more. Before we pass into the realms of glory, in this New Year 2018, we have work to do. People need the Lord, but sinister forces are fighting against Him, from Hollywood to the classroom, people are being told that He is not acceptable. He stands giving us the call to go into the World, and proclaim Him ... are you ready?

In 2018 let’s take advantage of the fresh opportunities and unites under the banner of Christ! Amen.

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