



PASTORAL LETTER – JANUARY 2022

Dear friend,

As we embark on a new secular calendar year, I pray that the turning of the calendar page from December to January offers us an opportunity to think about how we can experience a new beginning.

January is an ideal time to ponder and explore newness. As the calendar’s root meaning name suggests—it traces to Janus, the Roman god of doorways and beginnings—January is a time for new beginnings.

But, beyond the mythological underpinnings of January, change is possible because our faith promises us personal renewal, transformation, and hope. In fact, the Bible says in 2nd Corinthians 5:17, *“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!”*

So, how do we experience change?

I am sure that if we had an opportunity to discuss this question face-to-face or during an online forum that we would have enumerable perspectives on the topic of change.

In the interest of time, I am going to share one perspective.

I am going to suggest that we must have **passionate desire**.

Passionate Desire is the impetus behind any commitment to change. So, when we use expressions like, “I hope” or “I wish,” it is unlikely that we are going to change. “I hope” and “I wish” lack weight, energy, conviction, and substance.

When we have desire, it is possible for us to focus on our virtues and possibilities rather than on our shortcomings and past failures. On the topic of change, social observer and *New York*

Times columnist David Brooks once wrote that change could happen when **“we go on the offensive and try to maximize some alternative good behavior.”** In other words, desire engenders change.

Desire allows us to pick a small goal, to lay out measurable steps toward it, and to celebrate our incremental achievements. As Christians, we believe that desire can be sparked by God during those moments when we lack the passion to pursue the process of change. Talk to God about your desire to change.

As Oswald Chambers said, **“that God’s end, God’s reason for being, is to be in our process.”** You can talk to God about your desire to change through prayer. You can allow God to talk to you about your desire to change through scriptures, and through the encouraging and wise voices of spiritually mature people of faith.

What is your single 2022 goal?

If you have desire, you stand a good chance of attaining it.

May you have a prosperous and safe New Year!

Pastor Luis