



ONLINE SERVICE

Choosing the Future

Week 1
1 of 1

December 31, 2017

Bottom Line: Let go of the past, and choose 2018.

Icebreaker: How did you spend New Year's Day 2017? What is different this year? Biggest change of the year?

Key Verse: *Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland.* Isaiah 43:18-19

The most significant gift God has given us as human beings is the ability to choose. It is the key that opens the door to every other great gift He has given us, including the gift of salvation. But choice is not only a great gift—it is a huge responsibility. We make so many choices—and then our choices make us.

As we stand at the threshold of a new year, the choice presented to us determines what the next year will be. Will we hold onto the past year or move into the New Year and embrace all of its possibilities? Living in the past is sometimes very attractive because we had success there. Sometimes it's just scary to leave because someone we loved won't be going with us into the new year. You know; you've been both places.

This year, God is urging us to choose to move with optimism and faith into 2018. If you are going to live the incredible future God has for you, you have to choose it. He calls it "choosing life" (Deut. 30:19). Whether the past was filled with enviable successes or dotted with excruciating loss, God promises He is doing a new thing. We don't need to fear—with the New Year, He promises to make a new way for us. He will be with us. Nothing in the new year will catch Him off guard. He will not leave us stranded.

Things are not as they were. But don't waste your energy looking back with nostalgia and yearning, or with pain and angst. God is not confined to the past. He is bigger than what has happened and how things have been done. The last chapter of your story hasn't been written yet. He plans for it to be the best yet.

THINK IT OVER >>>

What impacted you most specifically from the weekend message?

React and Discuss:

"Sometimes we hold onto the past because it was incredible. We don't want to move on because we don't want to leave it. Sometimes we hold onto the past, not because it was so incredible, but because it was so painful. And it's not like we're holding onto the past as much as it feels like the past is holding onto us."

"When you're stuck, the new year doesn't feel very good because deep down you aren't looking forward to moving on."

"Sometimes the most spiritual thing you can do is choose."

"The life you have now is the sum of your choices."

LOOK IT OVER >>>

All through Scripture, we see God calling us to choose. Whom do you remember from the biblical examples who were tempted to stay stuck? Whom do remember who chose well? Anyone who didn't choose so well?

Did you ever hold onto the past too long? What was the result?

What's a healthy relationship for a Christian to have with a good past? With a painful past?

What resources does the heavenly Father provide for us to assist us in making the great choice?

"When we are holding onto the past, our arms aren't free to embrace the future." Discuss.

NEXT STEPS

This week consider taking some next steps together as a group:

1. Allow groups members to share the thing they must let go of to choose 2018.
2. Spend some time in prayer for each other.

EVALUATION/ACTION

Realizing and reaching your full potential in Christ

Bottom Line: Let go of the past, and choose 2018..

Rate yourself from 1 to 10 1 (never), 10 (always)	1	2	3	4		6	7	8	9	10
Why did you give yourself this rating?										
What benefits will you obtain by raising your rating?										
Do you know someone who demonstrates this bottom line well? What do you admire about that person?										
What specific action can you put into practice to raise your rating?										
At the end of this week, reflect - where did you see the bottom line show up in your actions throughout the week?										

PRAYER

List group members and their prayer requests for this week:

DAILY STUDY

Want to dig deeper? Check out **The Daily** this week at newpointe.org/daily:

Monday: Deuteronomy 30:19

Tuesday: Philippians 3:13-14

Wednesday: Lamentations 3:22-23

Thursday: Isaiah 60:20

Friday: Hebrews 4:16

Don't let the conversation stop here. Keep talking it over with others throughout the week.

(Don't forget to bring this paper to your next small group meeting)