

2007 IS . . .

A brand new candle, barely lit, that will burn itself out in twelve fleet months; . . . another volume in our book of life, full of blank pages upon which we shall write with our lives; . . . a fresh suit of clothes without soil or tear; . . . an open door, behind which many paths may be found before the door is closed; . . . a new plant freshly pushing through the earth's crust, destined to bear fruit, either good or evil; . . . a piece of soft clay over which each exercises the power of a potter to mold it into a shape of his own choosing.

Worldlings will live out this new year in a Monday to Friday context. We Christians will live ours from Sunday to Sunday, looking forward to each Lord's day when we can assemble with our brethren to worship God and to study His Word. While those outside try to fight the battles and face the trials of life on their own, we can draw from the inexhaustible source of spiritual strength, found only by those who submit to mankind's only right Ruler.

The beginning of a year is a good time to view the past year in retrospect. How many times did I choose to be away from the assembly of the saints last year? How many times did I reject the spiritual feast of my Bible classes? How many weeks did I neglect to contribute financially to the spreading of the Gospel? How many times did I "freeze up" when I had an opportunity to say something about the Lord and His church? How many times did I compromise the moral standard of the Gospel to keep from being different from "the crowd"? How many times did I say "No" when the call went out for workers? If you can say, "None" to these, that is wonderful. You certainly moved to higher ground last year. If your record was not so good, do you understand that, just as

many times as you placed something ahead of serving God, you proclaimed that He was not in control of your life?

Now, let us look at this new year again. Only you and I can determine what sort of flame its candle will burn. Only you and I can decide what sort of lines will be written upon its blank pages. You and I alone are responsible for how free of soil and damage our suits of life will remain. The choice is ours as to how we will walk the paths that open before us. The fruit produced and the vessel molded are in our control. May we determine to make this the best year of our lives in God's service here below.

—Dub McClish

Denton, TX