

## **January: What will 2019 Bring?**

The apostle Peter said to the people on the day of Pentecost, “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (See Acts 2). Yet, Peter’s word is appropriate as we face the dawn of a new year this month of January 2019.

The word repent comes from the Greek work “*metanoia*” which means “to turn around.” Peter’s message was for people to turn from the direction they were going in life. What this meant was a turn from the old life and a turn toward the new life offered from the Christ—the Messiah of God. But how often do our words of profession match our lives. Surely the beginning of a new year gives us a chance to “start fresh,” which when you think about it, is the essence of the gospel—the good news.

*Preaching Magazine* offered this attention-grabbing story years ago, but well worth the re-telling. Mexican missionary Herb Pinney recalled a time in 1965 when he lived in New Mexico and had a number of Navajo children living in his home with his own family. He took them to the movies. It was a western and near the end of the film, there was a scene in which the Indians surrendered to “the white men.” The surrendering Indians spoke in Navajo.

The English subtitles translated “the lay down your arms” speech as nothing other than a beautiful surrender speech. But the Herb’s Navajo children were dying with laughter. For what the Indians really said in Navajo was, “You white men are so low you can walk under a snake’s belly and not knock off your tall hat.” The English subtitles had given an opposite meaning to their words (Robert Shannon, *Preaching*, May/June 1998, p. 58).

What would happen in 2019, if for a year, we aligned our actions with our words? In a congregation as effective as ours we could do a lot of good. Salado United Methodist Church is here in Bell County for good!

Sincerely, your friend,

David Mosser