

Life Group Devotion

Starting the New Year off Right - Week of January 4

Primary Text: Genesis 8: 13-20

Opening questions: Whether this is your first Life Group meeting or not, a few questions might be helpful to get to know one another.

- Where were you born? What town or city?
- Do you have any siblings and if so do you stay in touch?
- What are your first memories of attending a worship service?
- What new thing would you like God to do in your life in 2026?
- As we begin our Life Group lesson how would you answer the question “Can people change?”
- Have you ever witnessed someone make some changes, whether slightly or 180 degrees, in their life?
- We will open with prayer, however, be thinking about how we can pray for you and your family when we close our time together.

Introduction: The story of Noah and the Ark is often mentioned in children’s books with attractive pictures of animals going two by two into the large boat that Noah built. These lovely illustrations for children are far from the truth of what was happening in the time of Noah. The sinful acts of humankind had become so dark, and the hearts of nearly the entire population were filled with rebellion and rejection of God altogether.

Background: The question was asked in the message, “Can people change?” God’s sovereign action here in Genesis at first may throw great doubt upon that possibility. You may be tempted to think, “People can’t change” and that’s why God had to destroy the earth for the scripture

says, “¹²God observed all this corruption in the world, for everyone on earth was corrupt. ¹³So God said to Noah, “I have decided to destroy all living creatures, for they have filled the earth with violence. Yes, I will wipe them all out along with the earth!” Genesis 6: 12-13

However, we read that “Noah was a righteous man” and God had actually desired that the people change: Read **1 Peter 3:20** “those who disobeyed God long ago when God waited patiently while **Noah** was building his boat. Only eight people were saved from drowning in that terrible flood.”

According to 2 Peter we learn that God used Noah to warn the people—giving them an opportunity to change. Read **2 Peter 2:5** “And God did not spare the ancient world—except for **Noah** and the seven others in his family. **Noah** warned the world of God’s righteous judgment. So God protected **Noah** when he destroyed the world of ungodly people with a vast flood.”

So, it’s not that people could not change, they refused to “surrender” their wills to God’s will and be obedient to God. So let’s read the plain truth aloud together:

Plain Truth: In birthing the new; God provides the way and the means which both require our surrender.

- 1) Read Genesis 6: 12-14 and discuss: a) Why again did God destroy the world? b) How did God provide the “Way”?
- 2) Read Genesis 7: 1-5 and discuss: a) How many pairs of animals did Noah have to bring upon the Ark? B) Now that you know the answer—discuss how God made “means” for this “New Chapter” of redemption. C) Discuss the provision of food that came from God’s direction.
- 3) Now discuss what “New Thing” God may want to do in your life in 2026 and why you might be resistant. Is it because you doubt that God may provide the “**means necessary**” to accomplish this? Refer briefly to ***Eight Spiritual and Physical Disciplines*** in the Message Outline to provide the **means** of our growing in God’s grace and being healthy, mature Christians.

- 4) Note that God's heart is for redemption of humanity. Sin and evil will not get the upper hand. Read John 14:6. Discuss how God made the way through his Son Jesus and the means for "New Life"?
- 5) Close in prayer as each person shares how the group can pray for you. Also don't forget to request prayer for the "New Thing" God wants to do in your life in 2026.

Starting the New Year off Right!

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Plain Truth

In birthing the _____; God provides the _____ and the _____ which both require our _____.

Physical Wellness

Emotional Wellness

Spiritual Wellness

Social Wellness

Intellectual Wellness

Occupational Wellness

Environmental Wellness

Financial Wellness

One Year Bible Reading For This Week:

January 4: Genesis 8:1-10:32, Matthew 4:12-25, Psalm 4:1-8, Proverbs 1:20-23

January 5: Genesis 11:1-13:4, Matthew 5:1-26, Psalm 5:1-12, Proverbs 1:24-28

January 6: Genesis 13:5-15:21, Matthew 5:27-48, Psalm 6:1-10, Proverbs 1:29-33

January 7: Genesis 16:1-18:15, Matthew 6:1-24, Psalm 7:1-17, Proverbs 2:1-5

January 8: Genesis 18:16-19:38, Matthew 6:25-7:14, Psalm 8:1-9, Proverbs 2:6-15

January 9: Genesis 20:1-22:24, Matthew 7:15-29, Psalm 9:1-12, Proverbs 2:16-22

January 10: Genesis 23:1-24:51, Matthew 8:1-17, Psalm 9:13-20, Proverbs 3:1-6

January 4, 2026