

Believe it or not, one of my favorite subjects in school was English. I'm not exactly sure why and yes I know I could use a refresher course, but I love WORDS and how they are used. One of the foundation principles I remember learning was the use of subjects and verbs. A subject is always a noun (person, place, or thing) and a verb is always an action. So with this in mind, I'd like for us to test our English skills as we look at a few passages in the WORD of God, the Bible. See if you can identify the SUBJECT and VERB in each passage. Ready?!

- 1) Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His Righteousness (His way of living and being) and all these things (food, clothes, daily supplies) will be added to you. (Matthew 6:33)
- 2) Submit yourself to God, resist the devil and he will flee. (James 4:7)
- 3) Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. (James 4:8)
- 4) Humble yourself before God and He will exalt you. (James 4:10 & 1 Peter 5:6)
- 5) Give and it will be given unto you, good measure pressed down, shaken together, and running over shall men give to you. (Luke 6:38)
- 6) Present yourself to God as a living sacrifice. (Romans 12:1)
- 7) Choose life so that you and your descendants will live. (Deut. 30:19)

Well how did you do? In each sentence the subject is YOU. That's right Y-O-U. The subsequent verbs are YOU seek, YOU submit, YOU draw near, YOU humble yourself, YOU give, YOU present yourself, and YOU choose life.

Finding the subject and verbs in the Bible as an English assignment is easier than actually doing what the verse is saying. While it is God's grace that prompts and convicts us, there is also a part that we must do. I'm not suggesting that we have to work for our salvation because salvation is an unearned, undeserved gift of God. God loves all. However God's *blessings* are most often conditional on us doing our part.

I am fully convinced that God is loving and He truly desires to bless us. But He is a wise Father who doesn't just pass out blessings to be squandered. To whom much is given, much is required. God has given us all that we need pertaining to life and Godliness but He expects us to do our part. Somehow we've bought into the idea that God's going to do it all "if it's His will." I can't find anyone in the Bible that did anything significant that did not have to participate in the process. It was "God's will" for an ark to be built, but

Noah had to DO the building. It was "God's will" for the giant to come down, but David had to go get 5 stones and DO the slinging. Over and over again God's Word reminds us that the "doing" of our faith must come from a heart that is submitted to obeying and following Him. Actions really do speak louder than words.

So as we enter into a NEW YEAR let's determine to set our hearts to the doing of God's Word. Let us SEEK God's ways first and DRAW near to Him, PRESENTING all that we are and all that we aren't to Him. As we CHOOSE to HUMBLE ourselves and GIVE ourselves fully to Him, God will be faithful to meet and supply all of our needs. We can't do God's part, and God won't do our part. Our part is to position ourselves so that we can receive all that He has stored up, prepared, and ready for us. Let us begin the New Year with new mind set to follow the Lord fully and live according to His plans.

Prayer: Dear Lord, I ask You to give me a new heart as we enter into this New Year. Help me to be eager to do my part so that I will be in position to receive all that You have to give me. Thank You for Your patience with me and for Your mercy that is new every morning. I am expecting to receive Your wisdom, Your insight and Your revelation for my life. I choose to give you all that I am and all that I'm not. Lead me in Your ways so that with each passing day, I will come to know You more and more. In Jesus Name, Amen.