

PRAYERS *for the* NEW YEAR

LARGE GROUP LESSON

BOTTOM LINE:

Ask God to give you a new start in the New Year.

OBJECTIVE:

Kids create their own personal prayer for the New Year.

KEY PASSAGE:

Psalms 98, A New Song

Isaiah 43:18-21, A New Thing

Lamentations 3:22-23, New Every Morning

2 Corinthians 5:17-21, New in Christ

INTRO:

Did you have a frustrating year? Did things go bad in a really rotten way? Did you make some big mistakes - or even little mistakes - that have haunted you? Would you like to hit the reset button? Would you like to start over? If you do, I have good news - this is the time of year to do it!

New Years Day is a special day because it's the day we reset the calendar. There's nothing magical about New Years. There's no religious significance to it. There's nothing that makes January 1 any different than February 1, March 6, August 8, November 13, or any other day on the calendar. But since January 1 is the start of a new year, the day we go from 2018 to 2019, it gives us a chance for a do over. It gives us a concrete date on which to say, "This is it. I am letting the past go, and I am starting over."

New Years Day is a time when people make resolutions, hoping to change things about themselves. Some want to get in shape. Some want to eat better. Some set goals for themselves like making the basketball team or starting a new business. The simple act of changing the calendar gives us reason for hope. We can leave the past behind and start over. We can make something new happen in the new year.

The Bible has a lot to say about new starts and new beginnings. Let's look at a few of those passages and see what they have to teach us.

READ PSALM 98

LARGE GROUP LESSON

God wants to give us a new song. He wants to give us new reasons to love him and praise him. If we give this coming year to the Lord, he will give us a new song, and a reason to sing his praises.

READ ISAIAH 43:18-21

God wants to help us put the past behind us. Yes, we've made mistakes. Yes, we've had embarrassing moments. And yes, we have sinned against God. God wants to help us forget the past. He wants to forgive us and help us to start over. We can leave those embarrassing moments behind and move forward because God is doing a new thing in our lives.

READ 2 CORINTHIANS 5:17-21

This may be the most important new thing of all. God wants to give us a new heart. He wants to make us new in his Son Jesus, and he wants to give us new life. God sent Jesus to give us the ultimate do-over. He can forgive our sins, and he can give us eternity. He can give us a new beginning.

MAIN POINT:

New Years is a time to think about change, about new beginnings. The question is, what new start does God have in mind for you? If we pray, God will show us. He will give us new direction, and he will give us a new start.

DRIVE IT HOME:

We all have reasons for wanting a new start. Maybe last year brought a lot of disappointment and loss. Maybe you lost a few loved ones, or maybe you had to move, or maybe you lost some friends. Maybe you made some poor choices that led to tough consequences.

New Years Day is the time to let those moments go. It's the time to ask God to help you forget what is behind, and strive for what is ahead. Ask God to lead you, to show you how to make better choices. Ask him to give you a fresh start so you can do things his way. Ask him, and he will make things new.

But what happens if we mess up? What happens when we fall back into old habits? What happens when we sin? Here's another great promise for you. You don't have to wait for next New Years. We can give those frustrations to God, and God will give us a fresh start every day.

READ LAMENTATIONS 3:22-23

Do you need a new start? Let today be your day.

LARGE GROUP LESSON

Let God know that you want to start over. Pray and let him know that you want to leave the past behind. Ask Jesus to come into our life. Ask him to give you wisdom. Ask him to lead you in the right paths.

God wants to give us a new song, a new day, a new life. Let's claim that promise in this New Year. Let's claim it every new morning in prayer. Get on your knees and tell God to take control. God will hear us, and he will make all things new!

CLOSE WITH A SIMPLE PRAYER:

Dear God,

Give us a new start and hope for a great New Year.

In Jesus' name,

Amen