



Pastor Doug Wilson • BETHANY - A PLACE OF NEW BEGINNINGS
HAPPY NEW YEAR! January 4, 2026

1. Your “Old Year” might have been _____.

2. Your “New Year” might be _____.

3. Life is _____.

JUDGES 2:3 (TNIV)

2¹ The angel of the Lord...said, “*I brought you up out of Egypt and led you into the land I swore to give to your ancestors. I said, ‘I will never break my covenant with you,’² and you shall not make a covenant with the people of this land, but you shall break down their altars.’ Yet you have disobeyed me. Why have you done this?*³ ...I have also said, ‘*I will not drive [the people of this land] out before you; they will become traps for you, and their gods will become snares to you.*’”

a. It’s natural to ask “_____?”

b. Sure, sometimes it’s _____.

JUDGES 2:10 (TNIV)

¹⁰ After that whole generation had been gathered to their ancestors, another generation grew up who knew

① neither the LORD

② nor what he had done for Israel.

c. But sometimes it’s _____ any fault of our own.

ECCLESIASTES 9:11 (NIV)

I have seen something else under the sun:

The race is not to **the swift**

or the battle to **the strong,**

nor does food come to **the wise**

or wealth to **the brilliant**

or favor to **the learned;**

but *time and chance happen to them all.*

“Life is what happens when we’re busy making other plans.”

— JOHN LENNON

d. So, what can we _____ about it?

**Seek a closer relationship
with the One who created you,
loves you,
sustains you,
is WITH you,
and is for you.**

▪ Ask Him what _____ He might have for your suffering.

▪ Ask Him to be _____ you.

▪ Ask Him to _____ you get through what you’re going thru!

JUDGES 2:21-3:4 (TNIV)

²¹ *I will no longer drive out before them any of the nations Joshua left when he died.* ²² *I will use them to **TEST** Israel and see whether they will keep the way of the LORD and walk in it as their ancestors did.”* ²³ *The LORD had allowed those nations to remain; he did not drive them out at once by giving them into the hands of Joshua.*

① It was a _____. That’s an _____.

3¹ These are the nations the LORD left to **TEST** all those Israelites **WHO HAD NOT EXPERIENCED any of the wars** in Canaan ² (*he did this only TO TEACH WARFARE to the descendants of the Israelites who HAD NOT HAD PREVIOUS BATTLE EXPERIENCE*): ³ the five rulers of the Philistines, all the Canaanites, the Sidonians, and the Hivites living in the Lebanon mountains from Mount Baal Hermon to Lebo Hamath. ⁴ *They were left to **TEST** the Israelites to see whether they would obey the LORD’s commands,* which he had given their ancestors through Moses.

② It was _____. That’s _____.

That’s instruction. That’s teaching. That’s “Torah”! That’s discipleship!