**"NEW DIRECTION FOR THE NEW YEAR"**

TEXT: Rev. 22:20

INTRO: A. We all want Jesus to come in this new year! With the economic indicators all negative, the unemployment figures at an all-time high, the unstable world conditions in Europe, the Mid-East, the Arab World, etc. it would be a wonderful thing to be just removed from all the chaos. Satan is having a heyday in his end-time rampage. The New Agers flourish while fundamentalists are persecuted, the cultists grow while it is all God's people can do to hold their own, the charismatics build bigger churches for their "spiritual extravaganzas" while Bible believing churches struggle to maintain the status quo, Rock music, Rap music, TV, Hollywood, et. all get dirtier and dirtier and attract more and bigger crowds and make millions of dollars while many former workers in churches drop out and fade away or quit their ministries.

 B. What has happened, I am afraid is what Dan Hummel calls "Rapture Paralysis." God's people have become so rapture-oriented that they forget they are to "occupy" till Jesus comes back. We are so mesmerized by signs and paralyzed by the sights around us we are no longer interested in building till He comes. We are so concerned with the sweet by and by, we fail to make an impact on the nasty now and now!

TRANS: What we need is "NEW DIRECTION FOR THE NEW YEAR"...

**I. THE PAST IS A GUIDE FOR THE FUTURE:**

 A. God's Morals Still Stand:

ILLUS: To navigate a boat to a point on the compass you must have a fixed point of depart-ure. You can't know where to go unless you know where you are. You can't get to point B till you know where point A is located. The old-fashioned standards of morality and righteousness must be revived. Bible holiness must be preached and practiced.

 B. God's Methods Still Work:

ILLUS: Both God and His Word are immutable. If our Savior is the "same yesterday, today and forever, then the same is true of the Book He gave us.

 l. His Word still saves.

 2. His work still builds.

ILLUS: The Word of God undergirds the work of God in the church and in lives. The same Book which produced character in the lives of the saints of yesteryear will produce it in the saints of the new year.

TRANS: Though the past is important our focus must be on the future. 1992 looms before us as a new volume with blank pages. It is up to us what we will write on those pages.

**II. THE FUTURE MUST BUILD ON THE PAST:**

 A. A Look Back:

 l. It is good for us to look back to "the pit from which we are dug..."

 2. We need to always be reminded of our roots.

ILLUS: Rosh Hoshana or the New Year from Israel was not instituted and Israel had no national life or status until the blood of the Passover Lamb was shed... "This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you." Ex. 12:2

 B. A Look Ahead:

 l. Our future as believers are based on the promises of God to us.

2. Our future as a church is based on the plans we make as we seek to determine God's will for this New Year:

ILLUS: What goals do YOU have for Faith Baptist Church (see bulletin) for the New Year? I have projected several goals for us:

 l. Complete Phase I and II of the new bldg.

 2. Establish new S.S. classes: College and Career and Ladies class (?).

 3. Build a boys and girls ministry.

 4. Rebuild our Bus Ministry.

 5. Increase baptisms and church members.

 6. Call a full time School Administrator and Youth Pastor.

 What would YOU like to see us accomplish in the New Year?

CONCL: Let's get some "NEW DIRECTION FOR THE NEW YEAR" and beware "Rapture Paralysis." At the same time while we are building let's keep on looking. "Even so, come quickly Lord Jesus." Let's be sure we have no plans so important they would be prevent us from welcoming His return!

Paul Fedena - 1/5/92