

Pastor's Perspective: New beginnings, new challenges...new year



Special to Pelahatchie News

By Guest Columnist John Vaughn, Pastor, Cross Roads Baptist Church

January is the month of new beginnings. A new year. New challenges. New resolutions. New hopes and dreams and goals to strive for. New seasons of life and new opportunities all await us.

Of course, new things, by definition replace older things. So we leave the old year behind. Unfulfilled resolutions, unkept promises and unmet goals, are all in the past, and we move forward with renewed expectations for what lies ahead.

The natural process of leaving older things and addressing newer things always requires change. Sometimes change can be subtle, and other times it is obvious. Sometimes change is easy and other times it is very difficult. But change is a part of life. And the new year is a good time for changes to take place.

On a personal level, the new year has brought about a drastic change for me. I have retired as the Pastor of Cross Roads Baptist Church, after having served in that role for 19 and a half years. So, as I begin a new year, I am dealing with the



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effects of that change in my life. I surrendered to the ministry and was licensed to preach on Thanksgiving weekend in 1980. I was ordained to the Gospel Ministry and began to serve as the pastor of Pleasant Hill Baptist Church in Simpson County in December of 1981. I then moved to Arkadelphia Baptist Church in Lauderdale County. From there, the Lord called us to serve as missionaries in Brazil for 16 years before coming to Cross Roads. So, for over 40 years, I have tried to be faithful to the calling the Lord placed on

my heart to be a Pastor. The reality is though, that I have not retired from ministry! I can't find in Scripture where the Lord affords us that luxury. Moses was 80 years old when God sent him back to Egypt to confront Pharaoh and lead the children of Israel out of captivity. He led them for another 40 years and still had strength and vitality when he died. Caleb was 85 years old and full of vigor when he said, "Give me that mountain!" He was courageous and trusted

the Lord for the strength to drive the giants out of the land in order to possess it. Anna was faithful to the Lord and served Him in the Temple daily. She was 84 years old when she finally got to see the baby Jesus, the promised Messiah of Israel. The Apostle John was thought to be of advanced age when he had the vision of the Revelation while living in exile on the Island of Patmos. Of course, I am grateful for the years the Lord has allowed me to serve Him in ministry. Kathy and I plan to continue to live in our home and be involved in our Church and in the community. The Editor of Pelahatchie News has also graciously agreed to allow me to continue to write an article for the newspaper each month. I have had a monthly article since shortly after the paper was started. I look forward to other opportunities that the Lord might provide for me in the days and years ahead. On another personal note, Cross Roads Baptist Church will be hosting a retirement reception for Kathy and me on January 29. Everyone is invited to come to the party! In 2023, keep moving forward, keep serving the Lord, and keep taking your family to church on Sunday!

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