

JANUARY 2019



# Hemyock Baptist Church

**“In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.” *Proverbs 3:6***

As a New Year begins and we may be considering one or two resolutions to make, surely there can be few better than to aspire to the wise words above from Proverbs 3:6. Life, like our walk with the Lord, is a journey – and to please him we must walk in his will, stay on the path he has set before us and not wander off.

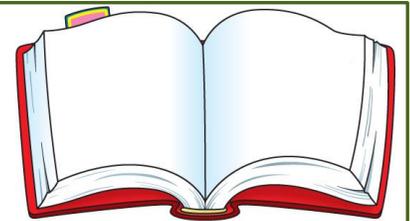
The first step is to give him all our heart. James 1:6-8 reminds us of the instability of the double-minded; we cannot serve two masters. And the Lord promises in Jeremiah 29:13 that when we seek him, we will find him, ‘when you search for Me with all your heart.’ How would you feel if the water in a restaurant claimed to be 90% pure? Partial devotion to God is not an option, we are to love the Lord our God with *all* our heart (Matt.22:37).

We must also trust him completely. Faith is living beyond our own agenda. It’s living with the confidence that God means what he says, and does what he promises. Sometimes we are good at turning the ‘big problems’ over to God and yet we still aim to manage the ‘little matters’ by ourselves – and before we know it, they too can become real issues. We should remember that the will of God comes from the heart of God, and is an expression of his love for us as unique individuals; and if we obey him, he delights in us (Ps.37:23).

If we’re trusting in God, it follows that to some degree, we cannot trust ourselves to always do what’s best. “He who trusts his own heart is a fool” (Prov.28:26). That doesn’t mean we switch off our brains and ignore our experience – rather we don’t depend on them. “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?” (Jer.17:9). Every situation is unique, and we need the Lord’s discernment to guide us.

Finally, we must seek to glorify God alone; “In all your ways, acknowledge Him” (Prov. 3:6). Our purpose in life is to bring glory to God, not to build up ourselves. 1 Cor.10:31 tells us to do all things to the glory of God. If we trust and obey, then by God’s grace we will never find ourselves in a situation where we are unable to bring honour to him. With the help of the Scriptures and time in prayer, we can test our motivation and ensure that the decisions we make are pleasing to the Lord rather than solely to ourselves. Yes, we can consider information, seek one another’s counsel, pray, meditate on God’s Word and make decisions – but remember the words of Solomon: “A man’s heart plans his way, but the Lord directs his steps” (Prov.16:9). So, for 2019 and beyond, may we all seek first the Lord, and follow his path for our lives, to his glory!

*Pastor Steve*



## Open the Book..?

Have you ever thought about writing a book? It’s said that many of us would like to – and some folk actually manage it! But even if you’re not a budding writer, there is one piece of authorship that falls to us all.

Edith Lovejoy Pierce suggested: “We will open the book. Its pages are blank. We are going to put words on them ourselves. The book is called ‘Opportunity’ and the first page is New Year’s Day.”

Many empty pages await us during the next twelve months. What will *you* write on them?

