**Jan 1, 2017 New Year’s Day**

**Forward Focus Jan 1st. 2017**

**God’s Blueprint: Part 1 Blessing**

**The role of hope in the year ahead:**

**Romans 15:13**

*Now may the****God******of******hope****fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in****hope****by the power****of****the Holy Spirit.*

1. **The God of hope is there in our future already:**

He lives outside of time, but intersects with us in time: He is engaged.

1. **His hope is connected to His promises in Jesus.**

# 2 Corinthians 1:20

***20****For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us.*

God kind of hope: confident expectation of Good as He has promised.

(Human hope is different: more like wishes, if only, maybe).

#  Jesus has paid for & paved the way for our future.

1. **The power of blessing:**

*‘to confer (by speaking) or invoke divine favor upon; ask God to look favorably on’.*

1. **Aaron’s OT blessing:**

**Numbers 6:23-27**

*23“Speak to Aaron and his sons, saying, Thus you shall* ***bless*** *the people of Israel: you shall say to them,*

*24The Lord****bless*** *you and keep you;
25the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you;
26the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.*

*27“So shall they put my name upon the people of Israel, and I will bless them.”*

1. **Christ’s N T blessing:**

**Ephesians 1:3**

***3****Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:*

* In Christ, we are already blessed because of His completed work.
* Know it, believe it, declare it, enjoy it.
1. **Can we as believers be ‘cursed’**

Balaam can only but bless Israel: even after ‘bad King Balak’ hired him to curse Israel.

**Numbers 23:8**

*But how can I curse those
    whom God has not cursed?
How can I condemn those
    whom the Lord has not condemned?*

**Numbers 23:20**

*Listen, I received a command to bless;*

*God has blessed, and I cannot reverse it!*

**Numbers 24:1**

*By now Balaam realized that the Lord was determined to bless Israel,*

**Table talk / Communion:**

**Matthew 26:26-27**

*26And as they were eating, Jesus took bread,* ***blessed****and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, “Take, eat; this is My body.”*

*27Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you. 28For this is My blood of the new covenant,*

* At the last supper, Jesus **spoke a blessing** over bread, how much more over us as His followers…
* On the cross, Jesus said to the repentant thief by His side: “Today you will be with me in paradise”

 -One focused on his bad past and would not turn from it.

 -The other looked into the future…yet…

He is our very present help in trouble … right now