

Caffeinated Insomnia

The way I handled New Year's Eve wasn't smart. Several hours before the midnight ball drop Kathy called it a night, and headed for bed. I decided to watch a video movie in hopes of staying awake to see the New Year in. To keep alert I finished off a soft drink started earlier in the day. In spite of its caffeine I still dozed off, waking up at 12:30 AM. Now that 2017 had arrived I headed for bed. My night wasn't over. As I tried to settle down my mind was racing "100 miles an hour", thinking about all the unresolved things in my life from the past year. I rationalized that these were things I needed to address, but in reality, I just allowed my mind to worry about things I had no control over. Many of the problems were issues that will only be resolved over time. There was nothing I could do to help them, especially in the wee hours of the morning. The caffeine accelerated my heart rate and my mind went into an endless loop of worry. There were no solutions – just rehashing over and over again what the problems were.

So here I was, ready to begin the New Year and all I could think of were problems of the past. Instead of dreaming about the future possibilities God had laid out for me I was literally wallowing in yesteryear. In reality, 2016 was a wonderful year, yet I let the few challenges seize control of my mind. After an hour of this mental torture I got up to read a book, seeking to alter my thinking before trying to sleep again.

This time I made an intentional decision to only think about the 2016 blessings of my life. There was much to celebrate. 2016 brought a second granddaughter and the expectation of a grandson in March. I have a wonderful, loving family and the best friends anyone could ask for. God gave me good health coupled with the motivation to be healthier. I published a second devotional book and God gave me opportunities to share my faith in many different ways. The list of blessings is seemingly endless. God doesn't promise us a perfect life (this side of heaven), but He does bless us in so many ways. If we allow ourselves to dwell on the negative we will constantly be at war with ourselves. It is a war with no victor, except for Satan. Instead, if we focus on the blessings we can be at peace and feel fulfilled as we use the God-given opportunities to serve Him by serving others. The many blessings are really the tools to make a difference.

Once I focused on the blessings, God gave me rest that night. I was easily able to get to sleep. When we focus on blessings, God is the solution to the issues that would have paralyzed us without Him. God gives us peace.

Practical Idea: I saw an interesting idea on Facebook. It suggested that we write down how God has blessed us each day on individual pieces of paper and deposit them in a jar. Then, next New Year, open the jar and read each of the blessing statements. It will change your perspective; reminding you how many different ways God has blessed you. If we don't acknowledge them we take many of the blessings for granted. Let the past be yesterday's news. Be at peace. Use the assets God gives you to be of Christian service.

Sleep in Peace: As you settle down to go to sleep, train your mind to focus on how richly God has blessed your life. Sleep in peace.

Scripture Verses:

- *And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:7).*
- *The LORD gives strength to his people; the LORD blesses his people with peace (Psalm 29:11)*
- *Great peace have those who love your law, and nothing can make them stumble (Psalm 119:165).*
- *Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you (1 Peter 5:7).*

Prayer: Dear Lord. We thank you for the countless ways you have blessed our lives. We pray that we can utilize what you have given us to serve you and allow us to live in peace. Amen.

