

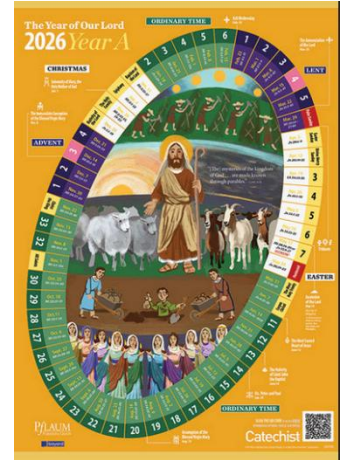
## Not As the World Goes

Would I be rushing things if I wished you a Happy New Year? It's only the beginning of December, and we haven't even celebrated Christmas yet. The calendar on the wall tells us that the New Year is still a month away. Still, I wish you a Happy New Year!

December marks the beginning of the new church year in the Christian church. The liturgical calendar sets the themes for our personal and worship life. For many people, it goes unnoticed because we are so focused on getting ready for Christmas. My goal in this devotion is to emphasize the difference between worldly vs. Christian living.

Jesus taught us a new way of living diametrically opposite to the world's point of view.

- Christianity differs from many worldviews in that it emphasizes a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ, rather than relying on human efforts to achieve salvation. While many worldviews focus on what individuals must do to earn favor or reach a higher state, Christianity teaches that God has already done the work for humanity through Jesus' sacrifice and resurrection. The secular worldview emphasizes self-determination and personal achievement.
- Christianity teaches forgiveness of others vs. the worldview of getting your revenge on people who have wronged you.
- To the Christian, what is considered right and wrong is based on biblical teachings and the character of God, with right and wrong defined by divine commandments. In the secular worldview, morality is often subjective, based on changing societal norms, personal beliefs, or "giving in" to what others want you to consider acceptable behavior. Ethical decisions may vary widely among individuals.



As Christians, we live in the secular world, but our decisions are based on God's Word, and not public opinion or generally accepted social norms. One author said it this way: "A Christian worldview is the world's view filtered through God's truth."<sup>1</sup> Every decision a Christian makes is based on their beliefs and understanding of God's Will.<sup>2</sup> *Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will (Romans 12:2).*

What is most important in your life?

- Being accepted by your fellow man or strengthening your relationship with Jesus Christ?
- Living according to the current standards of the secular world or attempting to be like Jesus? One lifestyle may get you temporary success while the other will place you on a path to Heaven. One lifestyle may rely on your own power, while the other taps into the unlimited power of Jesus Christ to achieve far more than we can do on our own.

The calendar on my wall shows secular dates, and it is the daily schedule we maintain as we go about our lives. What is even more critical, however, are the Christian values we live by every day. The Christian way of life is a higher calling. Happy New Year.

**Question:** How do you make decisions in your life?

**Prayer:** Heavenly Father. Let us base our life decisions on your Word, not on the whims of the secular world. Amen.

<sup>1</sup> Ed Young, [www.edyoung.com](http://www.edyoung.com)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.jrsbible.info/comparing-the-christian-and-secular-worldviews/>