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Dear Believer:

Blessings to you in this new Advent season. Recently we shared that the Lord was making it known that the church is in a new season and old patterns, old ways of doing things may not always work in carrying out the present day assignments of the kingdom. For most of us the learning curve of new ways may result in one of two responses:

Because we keep trying to go through doors which were once open, but have now been closed by the Lord, we may wear ourselves out. This may empower some of the old traps of the enemy such as believing we are helpless, hopeless, and useless. It would be all too easy to quit the work that God has assigned to us, leave the battles to someone else, or shut down completely and walk away from building the kingdom. This may also occur because we are extremely tired from persevering in coming into this new season. Let us avoid weariness and rest in Christ.

On the other hand if we are really energized and because of this sense of a new season, have a great impetus to do SOMETHING, but have no real direction from the Lord; it would be very easy to run ahead of the Lord. This tends to wear us out as mentioned above. Being out of the Lord's timing can also lead to the trap of building our own kingdom, while thinking we are building the Lord's kingdom. Let us wait upon the Lord and not rush ahead.

As we grow up into this new season let us remember that doing things in new ways can give a lot of room for offense. Leaving behind old ways, which we personally might prefer, is not comfortable. Rushing headlong into what we believe is a new direction from the Lord often causes discomfort in others. In either case offense may be taken. In each case one may feel the other does not appreciate their position and concerns. Both of these must be guarded against. There are four things which will empower us to avoid conflicts in this new season. They are:

- 1. Draw close to the Lord in His presence is fullness of joy and an abundance of mercy.
- 2. Purposefully spend time listening to the Lord as we hear His direction we will walk more graciously.
- 3. Walk in humility and dependence upon the Lord realize without Him we are nothing and can do nothing.
- 4. Remember that Love covers a multitude of sins give lots of room for grace to others and do not assume that they are trying to offend or that they purposefully desire to hold back the things of God.

In this new Advent season let us remember that through Jesus Christ came an abundance of grace and let us therefore share the grace with great lavishness. Pastor Don Leavell often says that the Lord has given us the power and authority to shape this day for the kingdom. Let us indeed shape it well. May we truly reflect Christ to the world.

Sincerely, William W. Lumry, II We are working to set up an email database for quick alerts, our quarterly newsletter and other communications. If you would like to receive these, please send an email to <u>wlumry@spmius.org</u> and tell us you want to be on the list. Remember to pray for the church and school listed daily in the Prayer Calendar. **MERRY CHRISTMAS AND THANKS FOR YOUR PRAYERS & SUPPORT.**

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