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NEW BEGINNINGS

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Once again we find ourselves at the end of one year and the beginning of another. If this year is the same as years past, we will spend some time thinking about the past year, the opportunities taken and missed. We spoke last year about a Christian named Thian Lian in Myanmar and took as the slogan for the year, "Let's make a difference, let's make it count." As we reflect on 2015, we ask ourselves, "Did we make a difference this year, did we make the year count?"

The best place to start asking this question is within ourselves. We like Paul should "examine (y)ourselves as to whether you are in the faith..." (1 Corinthians 13:5) Are we "walking in the light" (1 John 1:7)? If we can affirm that it is the case that we are faithfully walking in the light, then we should ask ourselves are we "grow(ing) in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 3:18)? How do we know if we are growing in these ways? What have we done this year to impart grace to others? What have we done to increase our Biblical knowledge in 2015?

God is an incredible God! He loves us so much that He continues again and again to show his love and patience with us. Consider both in this passage, "The Lord is not slack concerning His promises, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance." (2 Peter 3:9) Since He ever lives to save us and does not want us to perish, we know that 2016 can and should be better than 2015 in the areas we have not excelled. Join me in committing to God that the next 12 months will be the best of our lives in service to God!