

# GAME WARDEN CHAPLAIN'S CHAT



## "WORDS OF LIFE"

The word for this month from the early Greek language is pronounced, "agnaphos," meaning "new." Do you like new things? I do! I love to get new "stuff." As a matter of fact, according to the Five Love Languages (and this is something I will talk more about in the future because it is a wonderful study on how to approach your spouses and children), my primary Love Language is "Gifts." In other words, that's my primary way of knowing someone loves me, by getting a gift. That sounds a little self-absorbed, I know, but that's the way I am built. Others like quality time, still others like words of affirmation and so on. Not me. Give me a gift and watch my eyes light up!! Even if it is something old and worn out, its new to me and thus, its NEW!

Interestingly, this particular word is really a negative particle and properly means "unfulfilled" as in a new tire which has yet to be used for anything and is waiting to meet its purpose. When we think of the *New Year*, we consider what it is that is coming our way, i.e., what exactly is going to come our way? Will what is coming our way be good or bad or a mixture of both? Will that which is coming change my life for a little or for a lifetime? And, maybe more importantly, how will I act or react to the change? So many questions on this side of the New Year but so very few answers.

Some like to use the what the future holds, future." That is quite a have its basis in fact or in

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phrase, "I don't know but I know who holds the statement, but does it hope? What part do I play

in the future or what place do others play in bringing about this future without a Sovereign to guide every part of it. And, if so, do I really have a place in its outcome or am I an automaton?

A woman walked into her bathroom at home. As she did, she saw her husband weighing himself on the bathroom scales, sucking in his stomach. The woman thought to herself, "He thinks that he will weigh less by sucking in his stomach." So, the woman rather sarcastically said to her husband, "That's not going to help." Her husband said, "Sure it will. It's the only way I can see the numbers." New weight! New strategies to get rid of the weight! New appreciation for ... weight?

No matter what may be coming in the new year, we need to rest assured that all can and will be right when we decide what the true desire of the new year is. Is it to be what we unrealistically hope it to be, or will it be something that, through the life of faith, we give our lives to allow to happen. We are not so "big" unto ourselves that we can make all things happen simply by "wanting" them to happen. Things happen when we remember we are a part of something bigger than ourselves. "Yesterday is not ours to recover, but tomorrow is ours to win or lose." — Lyndon B. Johnson

# “Watching Ourselves”

We, all of us, have the ability to be a blessing or a curse to people who know us. I’ve used the following as an illustration in sermons about church members, but I think it applies to all of us as people in any group, work and organizations. Which one do you think you might be?

1. Wishbones—Folks always wishing for better things, but never willing to work for them.
2. Jawbones—The gossiping kind that keep everyone in turmoil. A real pain in the ...
3. Funnybones—like the bone in the elbow that throws a person into a tizzy when its hurt. They are touchy, wear their feelings on their sleeves, and are always talking about leaving.



4. Drybones—Orthodox, by the book, but dead as fossils.

5. Backbones—The support of the group that keeps the organization standing.

Unfortunately, I’ve both known all of these kinds of people, and BEEN all of these kinds of people. Sometimes, I can be each of them all in one day. That’s not unusual for any of us. The issue is, which of these do I tend to be most of the time, in difficult times, in times of crisis or in times where things are coming apart at the seams. Do we kick others when they are down? Do we talk about others behind their backs in character assassination? Do we come up with great ideas but fail to support others in their ideas? Or, are we the kind of people on whom others can always count?

# “Family Foundations”

## SIBLING RIVALRY

When a mother came home from the hospital with her second baby, she hired Annie, a live-in nurse, to come along and help out for the first few weeks. Having read up on sibling rivalry, the mother watched her 18-month-old daughter for signs of jealousy or insecurity. But Robyn adored her little sister from the start. She loved to help Annie feed and bathe the baby, and she even offered to share her toys.

Several weeks passed and the mother, convinced that Robyn was suffering no ill effects, decided she could manage without a nurse. As she watched Annie walk out to her car that last day, she heard an unmistakable cry of distress.

“Annie!” yelled Robyn, running after her. “You forgot your baby!” Wendela Whitcomb Marsh, **Reader’s Digest**, May 1983



My wife and I now have three grandkids. They are absolutely the best. I love each of them individually as well as equally. However, there are times, when they are in the same room, that I dislike them tremendously. I know, I know, that sounds harsh, cruel and mean. But you know exactly what I mean.

It was exactly the same with our three kids. The rivalry issue, though, is NOT permanent. When they grow up, they move into the “friend” stage. As difficult as it is right now, take heart! They may fight each other now, but they’ll stand up to anyone

who attempts to mess with them. That’s the way it should be. That’s the way it will always be. Take heart.

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## *The New Year: “High Risk Means High Reward”*

In the movie, **The Patriot**, Benjamin Martin, played by Mel Gibson, has just watched as his son was killed by a sadistic British colonel. After the colonel leaves, Martin goes into the room of his burning house and rescues the weapons he once used against the French in the French and Indian war. He comes out with several muskets and gives two to his young sons. They then head off to rescue the oldest son who had been taken back as a spy. They run through the woods in order to ambush the troops escorting the son back to be hanged. When they reach the point where the British troops will be walking through, he hands each of his sons a musket and he asks them, “What did I teach you about shooting?” In unison they reply, “Aim small, miss small.”

The idea is that if you pick out the smallest target instead of shooting in the direction of something, you will most likely hit it. If you don’t, you have at least come pretty close. That’s the whole idea of risk-taking. You don’t take stupid risks in a general way, you take risks that are calculated. If you miss, well, at least you came close.

**High Risk Means High Faith** - A Buddhist proverb says, “You cannot discover new oceans unless you have the courage to lose sight of the shore.” As long as we can rely on our own best judgments, or worse, the things that worked for us yesterday in a world that has changed many times over since yesterday, we will be safe where we are. We will become the “Brigadoon” (old Gene Kelly movie—Look it up!) of the world where nothing changes for us while the world changes around us. I submit that we miss out on our Spiritual rights because we’re not about to risk our spiritual safety to live among the unsafe. We have got to have enough faith that when we step forward, we step with a Sovereign who is already there.

**High Risk Means High Ability** - Someone once said, “A calm sea does not produce a skilled sailor.” Which comes first, the chicken or the egg? This can be looked at from another point of view: Which comes first, the rough sea or the skilled sailor? You cannot teach skilled sailing in a classroom, you have to go through rough seas. A person that risks little will get little because they will only sail when the sea is like glass. In Scotland, there is a body of water between the Orkney Islands and the mainland. Between them is where the North Sea and the Atlantic Ocean meet. The place where they meet is extremely rough water, but ships have learned how to negotiate the water because to go north or south is to add too much time and energy that can be cut by 200% if they risk the water. Y’all have such ability. Add to that what the Sovereign brings to any situation and your high-risk work can be accomplished well.

**High Risk Means High Reward (32-34)** - It is recorded that after a ship wrecked off the New England coast some years ago, a young Coast Guardsman on a rescue crew saw the terrifying storm and said to his captain, “Sir, we cannot go out. We’ll never get back.” To this his captain replied, “Son, we have to go out. We do not have to come back. We may yet lose our lives, but they are lost for sure if we do not go.” Each of you has taken on the responsibility to go out into the storms to “serve and protect.” You know the risks. You know you may not come back. But there is a huge reward every time you go out. That reward may or may not be yours, but the potential for the reward of a safe return and longer life for those you serve cannot be calculated. That’s the reason the Sovereign came out for us!!

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