

## The Front Porch of the New Year

Friends,

We know that God brought us through another year into another year! As we stand on the front porch of 2026 looking over the horizon we hear the still small voice saying, "I am with you!" We need to hold onto this conviction like never before. I have come to realize how easy it has become for people to check out of your life without prior notification that they are leaving. They don't think enough to stop by the front desk of your attention to let you know they are checking out! The world has become even more brutal in the way it sends relationships to the graveyard of subtle rejection through the pallbearers of ghosting and the cancel culture! In a society of easy divorces and convenient separations people have also lost the capacity to retain relationships. So to keep from being overwhelmed in the sorrow of loneliness, abandonment, and rejection this year we must remain mindful of the conviction that God is with us!

In a world where people have become more narcissistic we must brace ourselves for jealousy, envy, and competition to come at us from the most unsuspected sources! Let everyone who checks out of our lives without notice be a divine reminder that ultimately in the end God is the only one who can be with us beyond our last breath. So let us travel with realism as our counselor, learning to see people as they are and not as we hoped they might be. Let us pay attention to how others treat us, without bitterness and without surprise, and let that truth guide our steps. When some choose to leave quietly, without explanation or ceremony, let us release them with respect rather than resentment. Their departure does not diminish our worth, nor does it delay our calling. It simply reveals that their view from the front porch of this new year is aimed toward a destination too narrow and too confining to carry the weight of our destiny.

We will bless them as they go, and continue forward with clear eyes and steady hearts, trusting the path that still lies ahead. We move on in spiritual syncopation with the One who holds all the living in his hand, keeping time with a grace that does not abandon us and a Divine Presence that never lets us go.

Blessings and Hope for the New Year!

Jerry Andrew Taylor