Serving Canada & Beyond
CVM Canada Director’s Office

“Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous! Do not tremble and be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.” Joshua 1:9

Happy New Year!

I pray that you and your family have had a wonderful Christmas Season. December always goes so quickly with shopping, decorating, visiting and parties. It is also the season that we pause and reflect on the reason for Christmas, the birth of Christ and the reason that he came. We are reminded of Christ’s birth in the carols of Christmas, special Advent traditions, Nativity scenes. Now we are on to January – the decorations are down and put away, sweets are eaten, and calories stored up. We are heading into the main part of winter. I always find January to be a great time for looking ahead to the New Year, setting goals and making plans. I don’t call them resolutions, because we all know about the track record of people keeping their New Year’s Resolutions – they usually last until the first week of January at best.

A few months ago, I read a book called Atomic Habits by James Clear. “Atomic” in this case refers to making small changes but building on them. Ideas like getting ready to work out and doing it for 5 minutes to get into the routine of doing it, and then gradually increasing the work out time. Linking one habit to another, so that as soon as you do one thing, then you do something else right afterward and link the two together. Or stacking habits, do one thing while you are doing something else. We all have things in our life that we want to do less of – overeat, sit and watch Netflix, “fill-in-the-blank,” and things we want to do more of – spend time in prayer, read the Bible, exercise, keep in touch with friends. How often are we like Paul? We don’t do the things we want to do, but the things we don’t want to do we do. Rather we should be like Paul in Philippians 3: 12-14 – “Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. 13 Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.”

It’s great to read good books and make plans to improve our habits, but we can’t just depend on our own strength and will-power to make changes. We need to depend on the Lord God for wisdom (James 1:5), understanding, strength, and courage (Josh 1:9). If you are setting new goals or trying to start new habits this January, how about including some goals like setting more time aside for prayer, Bible study, helping others. The atomic changes you make in this area of your life may make huge changes over time. What about linking the audio daily Bible reading from the CVM app and listen for 15 minutes while you fold the laundry. I have a stack of
Bible memory cards near your toothbrush and read over a verse while you brush your teeth. Keep a prayer list in the back of your day planner or journal and spend a few minutes while you drink your coffee. Don’t think that I have all these mastered – these are some of the ideas that I must work on.

Whatever your plans are for this upcoming year, I pray that you will be encouraged by the fact that God has good plans for you. Jeremiah 29:11 “For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” January and February are going to be busy months for me. I’ll be heading to the VMX conference in Orlando, Florida with Southeast region rep, Lauren Charles. Then I’ll be at the Ontario Veterinary Medical Association (OVMA) conference in Toronto. In February, I’ll be at the Northeast and Western Canada Real Life Real Impact weekends in Rome, New York and Sundre, Alberta. I’m looking forward to an exciting new year in 2020. I hope you are too. Please let me know if there is any way that I can pray for you or encourage you.

Debbie

Praise notes

- I’m thankful for all of God’s provisions this past year – health, financial, friends, safety.
- I’m amazed at seeing how God is working in the lives of students and vet professionals.
- I’m thankful for your support this year as I have been busy at CVM

Prayer Requests

- Please pray for upcoming conferences and the Real-Life Real Impact events for students and professionals, that lives will be impacted by these events.
- Pray for me as I’m busy preparing for these conferences and RLRI events.
- Pray for the growth of CVM Canada during this upcoming year, that more people will get involved and take a next step, whatever that may be for them.

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