

## **The New Year: January 2009**

**By Bob Young**

Another New Year dawns, stretching before us in its early days in a way that seems almost endless, I am thinking about the words of the English writer, Joseph Addison (b. 1672, d. 1719), who summarized the absolute necessities of life in this way: “Three grand essentials to happiness in this life are something to do, something to love, and something to hope for.”

I hope you already know what it is that you will do in 2009. I hope your “to do” list is overflowing already with little hope of completion, because having something to do is an essential dimension of the happy life. I hardly know how a Christian could lack for something to do! The imitation of our Lord fills our days to overflowing, always with something remaining for tomorrow. Want to be happy? Find something to do! Invest your life in something that is bigger than you are, will last longer than you do, and does not seek only to satisfy your own needs. Invest your life in doing something.

Second, I wish for you something to love. Contrary to Addison’s perfect parallelism, however, I wish for you also someone to love. May your 2009 be filled with meaningful and fulfilling relationships. I encourage you to invest your life in people.

Finally, I wish for you hope—something to hope for. This is perhaps the most powerful dimension of the three Addison mentions. Aging may take away from us of the sources of happiness we often point to. But happiness is ultimately about hope. Where there is hope, the potential for happiness yet exists. Thus, I wish for your hope. Specifically, I wish for you a hope for eternity found only in Jesus Christ.

May your new year be happy and spiritually prosperous is my prayer!