

## INTENTIONAL NEW BEGINNINGS



January is the first month of the year. However, along with the month of February, it was the last to be added to the calendar. The month is named for Janus, the Roman god of doors and gateways. Janus was usually depicted with two faces looking in opposite directions—one to the past and one to the future. The month of January beckons us to look back and take inventory of the previous year and to look ahead to the opportunities of the coming year. January represents the opportunity for a fresh start, a second chance, and a new beginning. Fresh starts have a way of giving new meaning to life and invigorating us with purpose, energy, and the resolve to meet new challenges. As you begin a new year as a Sunday School director or teacher, please take a few moments to take inventory of the following areas of your life.

### Personal Accountability Questions

*People often get into trouble because they fail to build accountability into their lives. Here are some questions to ask yourself at the start of every week.*

1. Have I spent time daily in prayer and in the Scriptures this week?
2. Have I been completely above reproach in all my financial dealings this week?
3. Have I exposed myself to any explicit material this week?
4. Have I been with a person of the opposite sex this week in such a way that was inappropriate or could have looked to others like I was using poor judgment?
5. Have I taken any crooked paths or short-cuts this week?
6. Have I served the Lord with pure motives this week?
7. Have I spoken negatively about any person in an inappropriate manner?
8. Have I maintained integrity in my work schedule and in the use of my time this week?
9. Have I answered each of the above questions honestly?

### My Study Habits

*A good lesson is the product of intentional preparation. As you begin a new year of teaching, please read over the following study essentials.*

1. I have a specific time(s) set aside for the study of God's Word and for the preparation of my lesson.
2. I begin my personal study and lesson preparation time with prayer and personal confession of sin.
3. I read the Biblical text at least 5 times.
4. I meditate on key verses throughout the week.
5. I memorize a Scripture verse(s) each week.
6. I do responsible research to determine what a passage means to God and study to understand the context of the passage under consideration.
7. I anticipate possible questions, consider how I will stimulate interest in the lesson, and guide learners to discover and apply the truths in the passage under consideration.
8. I obey the commands of the lesson before teaching others.
9. I acknowledge my trust in God concerning grace He gives, promises He makes, and warnings about sins to avoid in each lesson.