

DECEMBER 31, 2016



The Bible does not speak for or against the concept of New Year's Resolutions nor it mentions making resolutions at the beginning of a new year. But it does urge us to examine our lives regularly and to seek God's help to become better persons everyday. In Lamentations 3:40, it says "Let us examine our ways and test them and let us return to the Lord." So in a more practical sense, Christians should not wait for the new year to come in order to experience real transformation to take place in our lives.

There is no difference between Dec. 31 and Jan. 1, nothing mystical occurs at midnight on Dec. 31 but there is just something about the start of a new year that gives us a fresh start and a new beginning. So if a Christian determines to make a New Year's resolution, what kind of resolution should he or she make? And how will he or she be able to keep it?

The vast majority of New Year's resolutions, even among Christians are in relation to physical things like losing weight, avoid fatty foods, avoid junk foods, exercise more, saving more for travel, having more beauty rest... etc. This should not be. The Bible tells us in Romans 12:2 "Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind." So we should focus more on the spiritual resolutions rather than physical things.

While it is true that resolution to lose weight in conjunction with exercising more and eating healthy foods are all good goals to set, let us not forget 1 Tim 4:8 that instructs us to keep exercise in perspective "For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come".

But did you ever ask yourself, why you found it so hard to keep the resolutions you used to make? No exceptions as to Non-spiritual or Spiritual. Our examples of spiritual resolutions are fantastic goals, however they often fail or they are bound to fail just like the non-spiritual resolutions because there is no power in a New Year's Resolution. Resolving to start or stop doing a certain activity has no value unless you have the proper motivation.

Philippians 4:13 tells us "I can do everything through Him who gives me strength" and John 15:5 declares "I am the vine, you are the branches, if you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing".

If God is the center of your New Year's resolution, it has greater chance for success depending on your commitment to it. If it is God's will for something to be fulfilled, He will enable you to fulfill it. On the other hand, if a resolution is not God honoring or is not in agreement with God's word, we will not receive God's help in fulfilling the resolution.

Here are some suggestions to make our New Year's resolutions work:

1. **Pray to the Lord for wisdom as to what resolution to make and how to fulfill the Goals God gives you.**

This includes assessing ourselves. What needs to be improved in our lives. What needs to be eliminated or added. Most of all, ask yourself "what does God see me when He looks at me, and what does He want me to do?" This also includes praying for the right motivation, developing a more realistic plan and putting our wishes into action with discipline.

2. **Rely on God's strength to help you.**

If you don't want to fail from keeping your resolution, then don't seek to reach them in your own strength but rather rely on God's help. We are spiritually and morally weak and we will never be the people God wants us to be unless we turn to Him for the help we need. Often this is the reason why we fail. The problem is within ourselves- within our own hearts and wills. We rely too much on ourselves. We want to do what is right but we do not have the moral and spiritual strength to do it. Apostle Paul said in Romans 7:15 "I do not understand what I do, For what I want to do, I do not do but what I hate I do." That is why we need Christ, for only He can overcome our weakness by His Spirit and give us the strength to change.

3. **Find an Accountability Partner who will help you & Encourage you.**

Surround yourself with people who believe in you and avoid negative people from your life. Most likely this is your spouse if you are married, or your Christian boyfriend or girlfriend for the singles or even your sibling. Spend less time with people who drain your energy and resources and more time with people who love and support your dreams and goals. In other words, eliminate destructive distraction.

4. **Overcome Fear and Insecurity.**

What are you afraid of? Failure? Do not become discouraged with occasional failures, instead allow them to motivate you further. Insecurity and fear keep more people from achieving greatness than anything else. We are God's children created in His image. What could possibly keep us from reaching our potential? "God did not make no junk". You and I are special. You are unique and there's nothing you and God can not accomplish together.

5. **Don't become Proud or Vain but give God the glory.**

Whatever you have accomplished in life because of that simple resolution you have made, don't forget to give thanks to the Lord, your creator. Psalm 37:5-6 says "Commit your ways to the Lord, trust in Him and He will do this. He will make your righteous reward shine like the dawn, your vindication like the noonday sun.



1. **What resolutions do you contemplate for 2017?**
2. **How will make these resolutions possible?**
3. **What was the impact of the message to you ?**