

## Biblical New Year Resolutions

Another year passes and we are made aware of our most precious, fragile gift: time. Benjamin Franklin wrote “Dost thou love life? Then waste not time, for that is the stuff that life is made of.” Our use of time determines success or failure. Surely it is fitting that we make some biblical New Year’s resolutions to direct us into the future. Let us look at the word “resolutions” and see how we can apply it to be better Christians.

First, resolve to stay in the (R) Race (Hebrews 12:1). In this race, we must be able to take it and not give up. Paul said, *“Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run ...”* (1 Corinthians 9:24-27). We need to get rid of everything that would slow us down or hold us back, or detour us from running the race of our Christian life. Stay in the race!

Second, resolve to stop making (E) Excuses (Luke 14:16-24). A common practice among us is excuse-making for our failure to do what we need to do. Many in the church take lightly the command to come together for worshiping God. So they make plans as these three did in Luke 14:16-24, and use excuses why they could not assemble with the saints (Matthew 6:33; Hebrews 10:25). The Master was angry with the three, and all who lightly considered His generous offer. Stop making excuses, and do your best!

Third, resolve to be good (S) Soldiers for Christ (2 Timothy 2:3). This army is made up of all volunteers. Our enlistment began when by faith (Hebrews 11:6) we repented (Luke 13:3) of our sins, confessed (Matthew 10:32-33) the name of our Commander in Chief (Hebrews 2:10) and was buried into Him for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38; Romans 6:1-4; Galatians 3:27). As a result, one is in subjection to God’s will, a member of the spiritual army of God. As soldiers in the Lord’s army we need to *“Fight the good fight of faith”* (1 Timothy 6:12). Brethren, God has a right to expect godly living, cheerful giving, Bible reading, praying, loving, and faithful attendance of worship services from His soldiers. After all, we volunteered! We need to say as Paul, *“I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith”* (2 Timothy 4:7).

Fourth, resolve to keep our (O) Obligations to God (Deuteronomy 6:5; 10:12; 11:1; Matthew 22:37). God’s children have the obligation ... a duty we have promised the Lord that we will ever be faithful in all His duties as a part of the church. We promise to love the Lord, the church, to keep the commandments of the Lord, to walk in all His ways and to serve the Lord your God with all your heart. May I implore you to live true to your word being a Christian!

Fifth, resolve to be united in (L) Love (Ephesians 5:1-2; John 13:34-35). John commands Christians to love one another (1 John 3:11; 4:7, 16). The lack of such love causes grievous harm to the growth of the body of Christ (Galatians 5:15). If there is one thing that all men know about the teaching of Christ, they know that He emphasized

love (John 13:35). How do we know that we truly love the brethren? John says, *“By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments”* (1 John 5:2).

Sixth, resolve to be (U) Unselfish (2 Corinthians 5:15). Who had died for all, deserves all glory! Christians are bought or redeemed for the Lord’s own possession (Ephesians 5:25-26; 1 Peter 1:18-19). One of the most difficult things in life is denying self, and living apart from selfish desires and ambitions, but to be a disciple of Christ it must be done (Matthew 16:24-25). We *“no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God”* (1 Peter 4:2). *“Let no man seek his own”* (1 Corinthians 10:24). The love of Christ constrains us to leave self!

Seventh, resolve to use our (T) Talents (Matthew 25:14-30). God requires that we use our talents and not only use them, but to use them faithfully. Woe to the brother or sister that shirks their responsibility, for their eternal destiny hangs in the balance. Use them or lose them!

Eighth, resolve to keep our saving (I) Influence (Philippians 1:27). The conversation (manner of life) of the Christian needs to be as we read in the gospel. The manner of life of the Christian will be either a real asset or a significant liability to the cause of Christ. The conduct of the Christian should adorn the doctrine of God (Titus 2:10). The life of a faithful Christian reveals the beauty of God’s will and way. There is nothing more impressive than the influence of a pure Christian life. Show the world what a Christian is (Matthew 5:13-16)!

Ninth, resolve to be (O) Orderly. Orderly means a soldier assigned to perform services. We are soldiers in the Lord’s army, and we need to be doers, not hearers only (James 1:22). It is absolutely essential that we, being followers of Jesus, emulate His example in doing the will of our heavenly Father (John 4:24). God pronounces a blessing on all those who both hear and do His will (Revelation 22:14).

Tenth, resolve to be truly a (N) New person in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17). We are new in Christ; the old sinful self has been put to death (Romans 6:6). The old man is the sinful man, a servant of sin (Romans 6:17), but in Christ we are new people! The new man is *“created in righteousness and true holiness”* (Ephesians 4:24). A new man is indeed a Christ-like man (Colossians 3:10). Are we Christ-like? Do people see a difference between the old you and the new you (1 Peter 4:4)?

Eleventh, resolve to (S) Support this congregation! I love the church of our Lord! Have you ever wondered just what you could do to support and help this congregation be what God desires? We can support and help this congregation by:

- Living pure lives.
- Supporting the men of this congregation.
- Promoting love and unity.
- Never bringing shame to this congregation.
- Giving as God as commanded.

- Doing the best you can for the cause of Christ.
- Attending every service.
- Putting God first.

What are you going to do with this new year God has given you?

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