

-NEW YEAR RESOLUTIONS, A CHANGED LIFE-

Wednesday, December 29, 2010

Text:Philippians 3:7-20

INTRODUCTION:

We stand on the threshold of a new year. Most people generally look at the new year as a fresh beginning, as an opportunity to kind of start over, to overcome a habit, or do a better job of something they see as important and that needs improvement. It may be parenting, being a better spouse, losing weight (which, by the way, is the number one resolution according to polls taken). It may be developing different priorities, using our time better, or a whole host of things that people would like to change.

So, we usually hear a lot about New Year's resolutions, resolutions which are usually broken in a matter of weeks. Many people are very pessimistic about the whole issue of making resolutions, and rightly so, because so many good intentions are followed by a history of past failures.

But the new year is a time to reflect and think about what the past year has brought and what the new year could bring. It is a time to stop and analyze, to take stock of our priorities, values, pursuits, and goals. We need to ask questions like "Who am I, what am I doing with my life? What should I be doing as a Christian with my life and the stewardship God has given me?" After all, according to the Word of God, all of life is a stewardship--a stewardship of our time, talents, treasures, and God's truth. In other words, since God's plan and our stewardships revolve around and through the life of His Son, Jesus Christ, we need to each ask "How well am I responding to the Savior and the spiritual life that He has given me?" Paul puts it into perspective in the third chapter to the Philippians.

*7 But what things were gain to me, these **I have counted loss for Christ.***

*8 Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, **that I may gain Christ***

9 and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith;

*10 **that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death,***

11 if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

*12 Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but **I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me.***

*13 Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; **but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead,***

14 I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

15 Therefore let us, as many as are mature, have this mind; and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal even this to you.

-NEW YEAR RESOLUTIONS, A CHANGED LIFE-

16 Nevertheless, to the degree that we have already attained, **let us walk by the same rule, let us be of the same mind.**

17 Brethren, join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern.

18 For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ:

19 whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame-- who set their mind on earthly things.

20 For **our citizenship is in heaven**, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, **(Philippians 3:7-20).**

Now that 2011 is almost officially here, many of us are in the process of thinking about making New Year's resolutions. The concept of making New Year's resolutions is commonplace in our society; however, we all know how difficult it is to actually follow through. This list of Bible verses is designed to help you more specifically approach your New Year's resolutions. The purpose of providing Bible verses is to establish a biblical grounding for the goals you set out. Moreover, rather than merely compiling Bible verses for New Year's resolutions, I've included practical ways that you can use these verses to achieve your New Year's resolutions. With all of that said, here are 5 Bible verses for New Year's resolutions.

#1 New Year Resolution

Colossians 3:12-13 - New Year's Resolution: Mend a Broken Relationship

"Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; Colossians 3:13 bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do." (Colossians 3:12-13 NKJV)

Practical Application: When we make New Year's resolutions, it is common that we first look to ways that we can improve ourselves. Chances are, however, there are broken or severed relationships in our lives that we've given up on. Maybe you've been hurt by a loved one or close friend. The concept of forgiving and forgetting isn't one you'll find in Scripture, but forgiveness is. Consider making it a New Year's resolution to forgive someone who's hurt you or seek forgiveness from someone whom you've pained.

-NEW YEAR RESOLUTIONS, A CHANGED LIFE-

#2 New Year Resolution

Matthew 25:34-40 - New Years Resolution: [Actively Seek Out to Help the Poor, Homeless, and Needy](#)

“Then the King will say to those on His right hand, “Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: 35 for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; 36 I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.’

37 “Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? 38 When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? 39 Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?’ 40 And the King will answer and say to them, “Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.” (Matthew 25:34–40 NKJV)

Practical Application: The Bible continually reminds us to take care of the poor, the widowed, and the less fortunate. Make it a New Year's resolution to consciously go out and help those in need. Whether you decide to serve at a soup kitchen or visit the elderly, this New Year's resolution is all about serving. If you're looking for more practical ways to go about following through with this New Year's resolution, 5 great items that you can keep in your car and give to the homeless.

1. SOCKS
2. RECYCLABLES
3. UMBRELLA
4. HAND SANITIZER
5. GLOVES
6. WATER BOTTLES

#3 New Year Resolution

1 Corinthians 6:13-20 - New Years Resolution: Improve Your Physical Well-Being

1Cor. 6:13 Foods for the stomach and the stomach for foods, but God will destroy both it and them. Now the body is not for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body.

-NEW YEAR RESOLUTIONS, A CHANGED LIFE-

1Cor. 6:14 And God both raised up the Lord and will also raise us up by His power.

1Cor. 6:15 ¶ Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a harlot? Certainly not!

1Cor. 6:16 Or do you not know that he who is joined to a harlot is one body with her? For "the two," He says, "shall become one flesh."

1Cor. 6:17 But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him.

1Cor. 6:18 ¶ Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body.

1Cor. 6:19 Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?

1Cor. 6:20 For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

Practical Application: Ever considered that God actually wants you to take care of your body? While in context this verse is actually dealing with sexual immorality, the overarching theme is often missed. We ought to honor God with our bodies through everything that we do; thus, taking care of bodies physically falls under this umbrella and ultimately is a matter of good stewardship. If your New Year's resolution is to get in shape, use this Bible verse to remind you that you're working to improve something that you ought to make the best anyways.

#4 New Year Resolution

Matthew 14:22-23 - New Year's Resolution: Consciously Set Aside Time to Spend with God

Matt. 14:22 ¶ Immediately Jesus made His disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side, while He sent the multitudes away.

Matt. 14:23 And when He had sent the multitudes away, He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray. Now when evening came, He was alone there.

Practical Application: Jesus understood the value of time spent with God in solitude. If you do not currently devote time to being alone with God, make it a New Year's resolution to set aside some period of time to God. You can spend this time in prayer, reading your Bible, journaling, singing a worship song, etc. While this can definitely be a difficult New Year's resolution, we have to remember that being in tune with God requires of us to actually spend time investing in the relationship.

-NEW YEAR RESOLUTIONS, A CHANGED LIFE-

#5 New Year Resolution

Mark 12:29-31 - New Year's Resolution: Loving God = Loving Others

Mark 12:29 ¶ Jesus answered him, "The first of all the commandments is: 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one.

Mark 12:30 And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' This is the first commandment.

Mark 12:31 And the second, like it, is this: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."

Practical Application: You've probably heard this particular verse numerous times, but have you ever considered what it is really saying? The concept behind these commandments is twofold. One, loving God requires loving Him with all that you are. The second is a direct result of the first: if you love God, you will love others. The practical application here is very open because this Bible verse and corresponding New Year's resolutions take all the previous options into account. All of the aforementioned New Year's resolutions and Bible verses are essentially summed up through this passage. The question then is whether or not we are going to make these New Year's resolutions much more than annual attempts to better ourselves, but daily convictions that stem from a true desire to love the Lord.