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2 **What happened to your resolutions?**

3 **Should we give up on resolutions?**

- If you keep doing what you've always done, you'll keep getting what you've already got
- I don't know about you, but I want a different year in 2020
 - This last year was full of pain – both emotional and physical
 - This last year I connected too little with others due to that pain
 - This last year I made too little forward progress in my life
 - In 2019, there were too few moments that took my breath away
 - I don't want to get to the end of next year and just say, "I survived!"

4 **In the New Year, I need to be INTENTIONAL**

5 **Resolved**

- to deal with successfully : clear up (resolve doubts or resolve a dispute)
- to find an answer to
- to make clear or understandable
- to reach a firm decision about (resolve to get more sleep)
- to declare or decide by a formal resolution and vote
- to break up or separate into components (a prism resolves light into separate colors)
- to bring about a cure or solution for something

6 **I want to resolve some things**

- I want to eliminate doubts about where I stand with regard to God's will
- I want to find answers to the problems that most pain me
- I want to make understandable what the Word of God says
- I want to reach wise and firm decisions
- I want to declare my faith for others
- I want to clearly see each component of my life
- I want to cure the things that are wrong in my life

7 **Is it biblical to make resolutions?**

- Jesus commended a dishonest manager for making a plan to restore the master's favor toward him -- *I am resolved what to do, that, when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses.* (Luke 16:4)
- Mordecai had resolve (Esther 3:4) -- *They spoke to him day after day, but he did not listen to them, and they informed Haman to see if Mordecai's resolve would prevail; for he had told them that he was a Jew* (LEB).

8 **Is it biblical to make resolutions?**

- *Now Daniel resolved that he would not defile himself with the fine food of the king, and with the wine that he drank, and so he requested from the commander of the court officials permission so that he would not defile himself.* (Daniel 1:8, LEB)
- *But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself.* (Daniel 1:8, KJV)

9 **Is it biblical to make resolutions?**

- *Now when these things were completed, Paul resolved in the Spirit to go to Jerusalem, passing through Macedonia and Achaia, saying, "After I have been there, it is necessary for me to see Rome also." (Acts 19:21, LEB)*
- *In the same way God, because He wanted to show even more to the heirs of the promise the unchangeableness of His resolve, guaranteed it with an oath, (Hebrews 6:17, LEB)*
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A New Year

-- Are you prepared for it?

11 **3 approaches to the New Year**

Take inventory

Make resolutions

Establish a correct focus

12 **TAKE INVENTORY**

Is Jesus making a difference in your life?

13 **Colossians 1:3-5 KJV**

- *We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which ye have to all the saints, for the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel;*

14 **Colossians 1:6-8 KJV**

- *Which is come unto you, as it is in all the world; and bringeth forth fruit, as it doth also in you, since the day ye heard of it, and knew the grace of God in truth: As ye also learned of Epaphras our dear fellowservant, who is for you a faithful minister of Christ; Who also declared unto us your love in the Spirit.*

15 **Is JESUS the center of your faith?**

- *We heard of your faith in Christ Jesus*
 - How many have heard of your faith in Christ? Are you known FOR your faith in Christ?
 - "Christ Jesus" emphasizes heavenly ministry
 - "Jesus Christ" emphasizes earthly ministry
 - Our faith is to be in Christ, not in the church, not in religion or religious ceremonies.

16 **Is your love for the brethren evident?**

- *and of the love which ye have to all the saints*
 - Are you known for investing your time, energy, and \$\$ into the lives of others?
 - People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care.

17 **1 John 2:9-11**

He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now. He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him. But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes.

18 **Does your faith rest in the hope of heaven?**

- *for the hope which is laid up for you in heaven*

- Do you focus on eternity or the “here and now?”
- Do others know you as one whose focus is on heavenly things?
 - This is often difficult to maintain when earthly circumstances are becoming desperate around us.
 - “When you do stupid, you reap desperate.” – Dave Ramsey

19 **An incorruptible and eternal inheritance**

- 1 Peter 1:4 -- *To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you.*
 - Heavenly riches cannot be ruined.
 - Heavenly riches cannot get dirty or defiled.
 - Heavenly riches are not subject to inflation or taxation.
 - Heavenly riches cannot be lost or stolen, but CAN be forfeited.

20 **Romans 8:18**

For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

- Sufferings = *and it came to PASS*
- Glory = *forever and ever and ever. . . .*
- Sufferings are insignificant, inconsequential, and irrelevant compared to the glory we will one day enjoy.

21 **Does God's Word penetrate your life?**

- “*bringeth forth fruit*”
 - If you were the only Bible people saw, how much Gospel would they know?
 - Do you just talk the talk, or do you walk the walk?
 - “*The Word became flesh and dwelt among us.*” -- Christ embodied the will of the Father.
- Do you read or listen to God's Word each day?
 - *Alexa, ask Daily Bible reading for the latest episode*
 - Audio Bibles, a reading plan, or Dad reading it aloud at breakfast

22 **Romans 10:17 (NASB)**

- *So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.*
- Do you:
 - HEAR the Word of God being read aloud in your home?
 - Do you HEAR the Word of God being preached often – at church AND home?
 - Do you HEAR the Word of God being discussed often in your home?

23 **Romans 10:17 (NASB)**

- *So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.*
- “Faith” and “Faithfulness” are same Greek word – think about Romans 10:17 again!
- *So faithfulness comes from hearing and hearing by the word of Christ.*
 - So, if you or members of your family lack faithfulness in your commitment to Christ, start by examining whether you HEAR the word on a consistent basis.
 - HEARING, not just listening.

24 **Acts 9:31**

Then had the churches rest throughout all Judaea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied.

- They were edified – being built up; growing spiritually
- They walked in fear of the Lord – they conducted themselves in a constant awareness of God's presence in their lives
- They had the comfort of the Holy Spirit – they were under the control of the Holy Spirit
- God multiplied their number

25 **How do we compare?**

- Are you known for growing spiritually? Or for repeating failure?
- Do people know you fear the Lord? Do they see you considering HIM in every decision?
- Do you demonstrate confidence in the Holy Spirit?

26 **Are you an Epaphras?**

- *As ye also learned of Epaphras our dear fellowservant*
 - Are you faithful?
 - Are you a minister?
 - Are you an encourager?
 - Is Jesus making a difference in your life?

27 **MAKE RESOLUTIONS**

Words for good or evil: "I will"

28 **Psalm 101:1-3**

- *{A Psalm of David.} I will sing of mercy and judgment: unto thee, O LORD, will I sing.*
- *I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way. O when wilt thou come unto me? I will walk within my house with a perfect heart.*
- *I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside; [it] shall not cleave to me.*

29 **Psalm 101:4-6**

- *A froward heart shall depart from me: I will not know a wicked [person].*
- *Whoso privily slandereth his neighbor, him will I cut off: him that hath an high look and a proud heart will not I suffer.*
- *Mine eyes [shall be] upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with me: he that walketh in a perfect way, he shall serve me.*

30 **Psalm 101:7-8**

- *He that worketh deceit shall not dwell within my house: he that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight.*
- *I will early destroy all the wicked of the land; that I may cut off all wicked doers from the city of the LORD.*

31 **Not so serious resolutions...**

- "I have resolved not to do drugs anymore, because I get the same effect just standing up really fast."
- "I have resolved to live in my own little world, because at least they know me here."
- "I have resolved to stay married, because it is so great to find that one special person you want to annoy for the rest of your life."

32 **I WILL LIVE A LIFE OF PRAISE (v. 1)**

- *I will sing of mercy and judgment: unto thee, O LORD, will I sing.*

- *Kindness and justice are the theme of my song; To thee, O Lord, will I thus tender praise.*
 - For God
 - For those who demonstrate godly character
 - Difference between flattery and praise.
 - Praise is the most important part of correction.

33 **I WILL LIVE A LIFE OF PURPOSE (v. 2)**

- *I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way.*
 - David says that he will make an effort to live "*the blameless way.*"
 - Is that your purpose? It won't happen automatically. You must "take heed" -- plan a strategy -- take steps of action!
 - If you fail to plan, you are planning to fail.
- What is your life's purpose in 2020?

34 **I will live a life of purity (vv. 2b-8)**

- IN MY HEART (verse 2b) – *I will walk within my house with a perfect heart.*
 - Proverbs 4:23--*Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it [are] the issues of life.*
- IN MY HOME (Matthew 12:29)
 - *Or else how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house.*
 - Especially important for Dads!

35 **A life of purity (2)**

- You are to TALK of God's Word with your family at 4 different times (Deuteronomy 6:6-13)
 - When sitting at breakfast / dinner – make this a priority
 - When working or running errands
 - Before going to bed
 - Upon arising in the morning

36 **A life of purity (3)**

- In my friendships (3b-8)
 - Proverbs 13:20 -- *He that walketh with wise [men] shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed.*
- The key aid for the heart and home (v. 3a)
 - *I will set no worthless thing before my eyes.*

37 **ESTABLISH A CORRECT FOCUS**

Keeping your eye on the prize

38 **Focus is the secret to success**

- If you do too many things, you won't do any of them well.
- The brain cannot focus on more than about 2 things at any one time without creating stress.
- What two things could you focus on to improve in the New Year.
- The Apostle Paul suggested one idea.

39 **Philippians 3:13-14**

- *Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,*
- *I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.'*

40 **Paul had goals**

- Though Paul was a spiritual giant in the eyes of the Philippian saints, he wanted them to know that he had not yet attained the goals stated in Phil 3:10 -- *so that I may know him and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his sufferings, being conformed to his death*, (Philippians 3:10, LEB)
 - Wanted to KNOW Christ
 - Wanted to know Christ's power in his life
 - Wanted to share in the sufferings of Christ so that he could die to his fleshly nature

41 **Paul pursued these goals**

- He was still actively pressing on toward them. He had by no means reached the final stage of his sanctification.
- Paul's salvation experience had taken place about 30 years before he wrote to the Philippians. He had won many spiritual battles in that time. He had grown much in those years, but he candidly confessed he had not obtained all this, nor was he yet made perfect (v. 12). He still had more spiritual heights to climb.

42 **Do not accept plateaus**

- We should never let there be a stalemate or plateau spiritually in our lives.
- Paul pursued Christlikeness with the enthusiasm and persistence of a runner in the Greek games.
 - Unlike the Judaizers, whose influence was prevalent among the Philippians, the apostle did not claim to have attained spiritual maturity.
 - He was still pressing on, pursuing that for which Christ Jesus took hold of him.

43 **Do not cling to heritage or past performance**

- Paul determined that he would forget the past and, like a runner, press on toward the goal.
- Paul refused to be controlled or absorbed by his past heritage (Philippians 3:5–7) or his attainments (v. 8).
- Vigorously and with concentration Paul sought to win the prize to which God had called him heavenward (v. 14). Paul thinks of life like the Greek games in which the winner in those games was called to the place where the judge sat in order to receive his prize.

44 **What is your focus?**

- What one discipline could make you more like Christ in the New Year? (Daily Bible reading, fervent prayer?)
- What attitude could you change to move you toward your "upward calling?"
- How could you be more useful to the Kingdom of God?
- How can you be of greater service to your own family?
- Would you resolve today to eliminate spiritual plateaus in your life and passionately pursue Christ?
- How can you finish the new year as a better person?