



RESOLUTIONS

A new year has begun and many have made resolutions. Each person has another opportunity to do things he failed to do in the past year or to quit things he was doing. Each person begins with a "clean slate" so to speak regarding the new year. As Christians we have the opportunity to do things for Christ in this year that we failed to do last year. It could be that we passed up opportunities to teach others about Christ. Or it could be that we were not living the Christian life. There are any number of things that we may have done or have not done in the past year that we can do or improve upon.

Rather than just making a resolution to lose those few extra pounds, earn

more money, travel more or less, spend more time with family, or any number of things, why don't I make a resolution to better serve Christ? Why am I here? Why did I obey the Gospel? Or if I have not obeyed the Gospel, why not? What have I got to gain from living the life of sin and what do I have to lose by failing to obey? What are some resolutions that I should make regarding my spiritual life?

Questions are asked every day at school and in the work place regarding religious matters. What do I do when those questions come up? Peter tells us, "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:...." (1 Peter 3:15). What does this verse tell me? It tells me to set God apart in my heart. When I set God apart, when I set Him above all else, I will earnestly seek to serve Him. And if I have set Him apart in my heart, I will be ready always to give an answer for those questions that are asked. And so when someone at work or at school asks me why I believe what I believe, I should be able to respond with the correct and concise answer. Well, how do I get ready? This is the big part of this resolution. 2 Timothy 2:15 states, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." When I study, I see that I must be a worker for the Lord and that I am not to be ashamed of God and Christ. James 2 tells us that merely attending services each time the doors are open is not enough. Faith without works is dead. We must work for Christ.

It may be that someone has not been living the Christian life as he should. John 15:1-8 warns of the danger of a branch in the vine that does not bear fruit. That branch will be taken away and burned. In the analogy, the branch, the Christian who is unfaithful, will be taken away and cast into Hell. One can be restored, however. Acts 8 reveals what occurred with Simon the sorcerer. Simon had been baptized in Christ but when he saw the miracles and wonders that were done, he desired the gift so that he could make money from it. Here is someone who has obeyed the gospel and then fallen away. He is rebuked by Peter (verse 20-23) and he immediately repents and returns to his rightful place in the service of the Lord. This account clearly teaches that one can fall from grace and that he can be restored.

"What if I am not a Christian?", one may ask. If you are not a Christian, there are certain things that you must know and obey so that you may become one. It could be that you have never heard the gospel. Romans 10:17 states, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." If you have not heard the gospel, then you cannot believe. Once you have heard, then the latter part of verse 17 shows that one must have faith or believe. Next, one must confess before witnesses with the mouth that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God (Romans 10:9,10). Once you have heard the gospel, believed that Christ is the Son of God, and have confessed that faith, then you must repent of your sins (Acts 2:38). When one repents one must turn away from that way of sin. He must make a conscious decision to walk no more in that way. Along with the decision to walk no more in sin, he must make the decision to follow Christ. Once you have made that decision, you must be baptized into Christ for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38, Mark 16:16). Then and only then will God add you to His church. And after baptism, you must live the Christian life continuously, even unto death (Revelation 2:10).

Many folks make resolutions concerning their physical lives. I urge each one of us to make resolutions concerning our spiritual lives. May we all do better and greater things for the glory of our Lord throughout this year.

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LIGHTPOST CALENDAR

TODAY!!! SUNDAY, JANUARY 4

- ◆ TEEN'S 1ST PRINCIPLES●4:30PM●Room 118
- ◆ L2L BIBLE BOWL PRACTICE●7PM●MPB

TUESDAY, JANUARY 6

- ◆ TUESDAY LADIES' VISITATION●11:30AM●MPB●Bring a lunch!

THURSDAY, JANUARY 8

- ◆ SENIOR'S GAME DAY●1-5PM●MPB●Bring Snacks!

SATURDAY, JANUARY 10

- ◆ HOME BUILDERS -GAME NIGHT!●6:30-8:30PM●MPB●ALL are Welcomed to attend! Please bring your favorite cards, dominoes, board games & favorite snacks to share!

TUESDAY, JANUARY 13

- ◆ TUESDAY LADIES' VISITATION●11:30AM●MPB●Bring a lunch!

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 14

- ◆ TEENS' DEVO●5:30PM●MPB

FRIDAY, JANUARY 16- SUNDAY, JANUARY 18

- ◆ CHAT CYC (CHALLENGE YOUTH CONFERENCE) DALLAS, TX
 - Van(s) leave MPB @12PM●(Please bring or eat lunch before arriving) Vans/Teens return on Sunday, 1/18

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 17

- ◆ TEENS' DEVO●5:30PM●MPB

SUNDAY, JANUARY 18

- ◆ L2L BIBLE BOWL PRACTICE●7PM●MPB

TUESDAY, JANUARY 20

- ◆ TUESDAY LADIES' VISITATION●11:30AM●MPB●Bring a lunch!

THURSDAY, JANUARY 22

- ◆ SENIOR'S GAME DAY●1-5PM●MPB●Bring Snacks!

SATURDAY, JANUARY 24

- ◆ DEALING WITH GRIEF SEMINAR WITH BRO. JERRY MARTIN
 - 10AM-3PM●Auditorium & MPB●Lunch provided in MPB
 - Invite your friends & family!

Prayer Requests

MEMBERS

Phyllis Allen●Charlie Burns●Bob Garner
Billie Gregory●Jean Kazimier
Bob Johnston●Walton/Elaine Kyle
Christie Landrum●Carla March
Ricky/Zandra Mendenhall
Glenda Pannell●Karen Pate
Leslie Pate●Stuart Reeves
Freddie Sharpe●Neva Tharp
Diana Ward●Patricia Wireman

- ◆ Dale, Sherry -Home now
- ◆ Dean, Martha -In a lot of pain, MRI scheduled for January
- ◆ Hudgens, Drew -Home now
- ◆ Kyle, Walton/Elaine -Prayers for safe travels to & from south Texas (near Houston) for a funeral
- ◆ Parker, Virginia - @CHI St. Vincent's w/pneumonia. No calls or visits at this time please
- ◆ Romo, Ashley -Home now
- ◆ Wedsted, Kenneth -Surgery scheduled for Tuesday, 1/9 @CHI St. Vincent's in Hot Springs
- ◆ Wireman, Patricia -Hip revision surgery scheduled for Tuesday, 1/16

ALL MILITARY & FIRST RESPONDERS

- * Schuler, Tommy (Army) Fort Johnson, LA
- * Schuler, Tracy (Navy) Meridian, MS
- * Spellings, Randy (Army Nat'l Guard) Jackson, TN
- * Tombs, Levi (AF) Home now
- * Vincent, Tyler (VF) Garland County
- * Wethington, "A.J." Anthony (AF) Whitman AFB, MO
- * Wells, Andrew & Madison-GCPD/HSPD
- ◆ Constant, Allen (Steve Brooks' son-in-law) Diagnosed with kidney cancer

MISSIONS (Matthew 28:18-20)

- ◆ Kakinada, India-Ronnie Gootam
- ◆ Nigeria -Chad Wagner
- ◆ Pacific Islands -Randy English

SHUT-INS

- Craig Archer●Mike/Shirley Baka
- Henry Cook●LaVonne Depew
- Ola Freibolt●Debbie Frenzel
- Marcelle Green●Lorene Mount
- Charles/Virginia Parker
- David Pendleberry●Wes Poole
- Pat Richens●Judy Walters
- Linda Woepel
- ◆ Freibolt, Ola -having to keep legs elevated as much as possible now. The biopsy is not back yet but doctors believe it's cancer

FAMILY & FRIENDS

- Jim Haught●Becky McCombs
- Gloria Miller●Jerry Reeves
- Don Rutherford●John Smith●Judy Straut
- Bob Troutman●Harrel Walters●Kay Ward
- ◆ Butler, William (Willie's son) Prayers for health
- ◆ Dishongh, Breanna (Dishongh's granddaughter) Will have hip surgery on 1/15. She has been in pain for over a year

BATTLING CANCER

- Jennifer Baker●June Beach●JL Bice
- Jim Blagg●Nona Barton●Sherry Daniel
- Denise Drennan●Ella Fisher
- Sheree Gallagher●Patti Genow
- Jerry Harris●Jack Haywood●Terry Horne
- Kirsten James●Jeff Janus●Alvena Jones
- Sandy Land●Brenda Lavender
- Daryl Macon●Phyllis Madlen
- Eugene Pipkins●Delorius Tolleson
- Bettie Lou White