

A Christian Resolution

(I Pt 2:2; II Pt 1:5-8)

INTRODUCTION

1. Good Morning
 - a. Thankful for the opportunity to worship our God with each of you this morning.
2. Last week:
 - a. We looked at "A Christian Resurrection"
 - i. What it means to become a "new creation" and to "walk in newness of life."
 - ii. I'm reminded of what James Agate said once, "Now there are more overweight people in America than average-weight people. So overweight people are now average... which means, you have met your New Year's resolution."
3. This morning:
 - a. We are going to look at "A Christian Resolution."
 - b. With everyone setting their new year's resolutions we are going to look at what a Christians Resolutions should be.
4. For each Christian **growing spiritually** is the utmost resolution that all others fall into.
 - a. One of Satan's greatest lies is to let us think we are fine
 - i. Satan is a liar
 - a. **Jn 8:44** "You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it."
 - ii. Satan is a deceiver
 - a. **Rv 12:9** "So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him."
 - b. Every Christian should resolve to grow spiritually
 1. Peter wrote...
 - i. **I Pt 2:2** "as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may **grow thereby**"
5. Since we have "all things that pertain to life and godliness" (**I Pt 1:3**), we have been given what we need to know to grow in.
 - a. **II Pt 1:5-8** "But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, 6 to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, 7 to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. 8 For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."

I. Add & Grow In Virtue

- A. Virtue Defined "ἀρετή" - "ōr-ě-tā"
1. "the quality of moral excellence—'outstanding goodness, virtue.'" (Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). Vol. 1: Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament : Based on semantic domains (electronic ed. of the 2nd edition.) (743). New York: United Bible societies.)
 2. "properly denotes whatever procures preeminent estimation for a person or thing; hence, "intrinsic eminence, moral goodness, virtue" (Vine, W. E., Unger, M. F., & White, W. (1996). Vol. 2: Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words (661). Nashville, TN: T. Nelson.)
- B. Thus we see virtue as that person with high moral character.
1. We are Christians must not only be considered moral by worldly standards but by God's standards. That is "high" moral character.
 2. We see some with this characteristic...
 - i. Joseph with Potiphar's wife
 - a. **Gn 39:7-12** "And it came to pass after these things that his master's wife cast longing eyes on Joseph, and she said, "Lie with me." 8 But he refused and said to his master's wife, "Look, my master does not know what is with me in the house, and he has committed all that he has to my hand. 9 There is no one greater in this house than I, nor has he kept back anything from me but you, because you are his wife. How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" 10 So it was, as she spoke to Joseph day by day, that he did not heed her, to lie with her or to be with her. 11 But it happened about this time, when Joseph went into the house to do his work, and none of the men of the house was inside, 12 that she caught him by his garment, saying, "Lie with me." But he left his garment in her hand, and fled and ran outside."
 - b. How many men today do this?
 - ii. Moses leaving the Egyptian life
 - a. **He 11:24-25** "By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, 25 choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin"
- C. Today Christians can show a character of virtue by...
1. Not giving in to poor language found in the world around us.
 - i. **Co 4:6** "Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one."
 - a. This is not easy in some industries...welding, farming...
 2. By working our hardest for our employer
 - i. **Ec 9:10** "Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might; for there is no work or device or knowledge or wisdom in the grave where you are going."
 3. The people around us should be able to say of us we are of the highest moral character.

II. Add & Grow In Knowledge

- A. Knowledge Defined "γνώσις" - "nō-sis"
1. "the content of what is known—'knowledge, what is known.'" (Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). Vol. 1: Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament : Based on semantic domains (electronic ed. of the 2nd edition.) (335). New York: United Bible societies.)
 2. "...to be taking in knowledge..." (Vine, W. E., Unger, M. F., & White, W. (1996). Vol. 2: Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words (346). Nashville, TN: T. Nelson.)
 3. "Since γινώσκειν denotes knowledge of what really is, it comes to have the sense of "to verify"; and since for the Greeks the eye is a more reliable witness than the ear (Heracl. Fr., 101a [I, 97, 15 ff., Diels]; Hdt., I, 8), and sight is ranked above hearing (Plat. Phaedr., 250d; Resp., VI, 507c, → ἀκούω, 216), this verification is primarily by observation; indeed, the link between the verbs γινώσκειν and εἰδέναι shows that knowledge is regarded as a mode of seeing, for εἰδέναι means "to know on the basis of one's own observation." (Vol. 1: Theological dictionary of the New Testament. 1964- (G. Kittel, G. W. Bromiley & G. Friedrich, Ed.) (electronic ed.) (691). Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.)
- B. Thus we have the idea of gathering knowledge. Pulling it into our minds from the outside to the inside.
1. This is reading to learn the material.
 - i. I'm convinced we do not read our Bibles enough.
 2. God wants us to strive to gather all His knowledge He has given us.
 - i. **Ps 119:81** "My soul faints for Your salvation, But I hope in Your word."
- C. We see this type of "want" for knowledge by God's people.
1. **Ne 8** "READ"

III. Add & Grow In Self-control

- A. Self-control Defined "ἐγκράτεια" - "in-crō-tā-uh"
1. "to exercise complete control over one's desires and actions" (Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). Vol. 1: Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament : Based on semantic domains (electronic ed. of the 2nd edition.) (750). New York: United Bible societies.)
 2. "This group takes its sense from the stem krat- denoting power or lordship. Thus enkratés means "having power over all things and the self," enkráteia means "dominion over the self or something," with the nuances of "steadfastness" and "self-control" (opposite akrasía), and enkrateúesthai means "to compose oneself.'" (Kittel, G., Friedrich, G., & Bromiley, G. W. (1995). Theological Dictionary of the New Testament (196). Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans.)
- B. Thus it means to have complete control over one's self.
1. If sin is the transgression of the law and it is...
 - i. **I Jn 3:4** "Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness."
 2. And if we are to strive to sin not and we are...
 - i. **I Jn 1:7** "But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin."
 3. Then we are to strive for perfection.
 - i. **Mt 5:48** "...you shall be perfect...as your Father in heaven is perfect."

IV. Add & Grow In Perseverance

- A. Perseverance Defined "ὑπομονή" - "who-pō-mō-nā"
 - 1. "capacity to continue to bear up under difficult circumstances—‘endurance, being able to endure.'" (Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). Vol. 1: Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament : Based on semantic domains (electronic ed. of the 2nd edition.) (307). New York: United Bible societies.)
 - 2. "denotes “to abide under, to bear up courageously”" (Vine, W. E., Unger, M. F., & White, W. (1996). Vol. 2: Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words (200). Nashville, TN: T. Nelson.)
- B. Thus it means that no matter what happens buck up and stand firm for God
 - 1. Just look at what others went through for God...
 - i. **He 11:37** "They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented"
- C. How many Christians today would endure this type of persecution?
 - 1. We if we are doing what we should be doing will be persecuted.
 - i. **II Ti 3:12** "Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution."
 - 2. With the luxury Christians have today it makes one wonder if they are growing in perseverance.

V. Add & Grow In Godliness

- A. Godliness Defined "εὐσέβεια" - "ū-seb-ē-a"
 - 1. "denotes “pious, devout, godly,” indicating reverence manifested in actions" (Vine, W. E., Unger, M. F., & White, W. (1996). Vol. 2: Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words (273). Nashville, TN: T. Nelson.)
 - 2. "behavior reflecting correct religious beliefs and attitudes—‘piety, godliness.’" (Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). Vol. 1: Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament : Based on semantic domains (electronic ed. of the 2nd edition.) (531). New York: United Bible societies.)
- B. Thus godliness is showing reverence by actions.
 - 1. Isaiah showed this type of reverence at being in the presence of God.
 - i. **Is 6:5** "So I said: “Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, The LORD of hosts.”"
- C. Today we can show or godliness in many ways however there is one way to show a lack of reverence that is prominent today...our clothing while worshiping.
 - 1. Today it seems that people will save their best clothing for everyone other than God.
 - i. Funerals, weddings, restaurants, meeting important people...
 - ii. However getting them to wear their best for God is like pulling teeth.
 - 2. This does not mean people have to wear suits to every service!!!
 - i. However if we are not wearing our best we are not giving our all to God and showing proper reverence.

3. **Ma 1:6-8** "'A son honors his father, And a servant his master. If then I am the Father, Where is My honor? And if I am a Master, Where is My reverence? Says the LORD of hosts To you priests who despise My name. Yet you say, 'In what way have we despised Your name?' 7 "You offer defiled food on My altar, But say, 'In what way have we defiled You?' By saying, 'The table of the LORD is contemptible.' 8 And when you offer the blind as a sacrifice, Is it not evil? And when you offer the lame and sick, Is it not evil? Offer it then to your governor! Would he be pleased with you? Would he accept you favorably?" Says the LORD of hosts.

VI. Add & Grow In Brotherly Kindness

- A. Brotherly Kindness (love) Defined "φιλαδελφία" - "fē-la-del-fē-a"
 1. "affection for one's fellow believer in Christ—"love for one's fellow believer, affection for a fellow believer." (Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). Vol. 1: Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament : Based on semantic domains (electronic ed. of the 2nd edition.) (292). New York: United Bible societies.)
 2. "fraternal affection:—brotherly love (kindness), love of the brethren." (Strong, J., S.T.D., LL.D. (2009). Vol. 1: A Concise Dictionary of the Words in the Greek Testament and The Hebrew Bible (75). Bellingham, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.)
- B. Thus it means we need to grow in love for our fellow brethren.
 1. This means we need to like each other.
 - i. To many brethren do not like fellowshiping with each other outside of worship.
 2. We need to get together at every opportunity.
 - i. Will it be easy...no.
 - ii. Will it be convenient always...no.
 - iii. Will it be uplifting...yes.
 - a. This is why attendance and every other form of biblical fellowship are necessary - **He 10:25; I Jn 1:7**.

VII. Add & Grow In Love

- A. Love Defined "ἀγάπη" - "ā-ga-pā"
 1. "to have love for someone or something, based on sincere appreciation and high regard" (Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). Vol. 1: Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament : Based on semantic domains (electronic ed. of the 2nd edition.) (292). New York: United Bible societies.)
 2. "There is, however, one significant clue to possible meaningful differences in at least some contexts, namely, the fact that people are **never commanded to love one another with φιλέω or φιλία, but only with ἀγαπάω and ἀγάπη**. Though the meanings of these terms overlap considerably in many contexts, there are probably some significant differences in certain contexts; that is to say, φιλέω and φιλία are likely to focus upon love or affection based upon interpersonal association, while ἀγαπάω and ἀγάπη focus upon **love and affection based on deep appreciation and high regard**." (Ibid)

- B. Thus this is to love the spiritual more than the physical.
 - 1. That means we care more for some ones soul more than their feelings.
 - i. This isn't easy...but it is necessary.
 - ii. **Ga 6:1** "Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted."
 - iii. **Ja 5:19-20** "Brethren, if anyone among you wanders from the truth, and someone turns him back, 20 let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins."

CONCLUSION

- 1. Eric Zorn "Making resolutions is a cleansing ritual of self-assessment and repentance that demands personal honesty and, ultimately, reinforces humility..."
 - a. Let us this new year each make "A Christian Resolution" as we should.
- 2. Invitation