

A New Year

Many consider the beginning of a New Year as a time for making Resolutions. We have all probably made some resolutions only to discover it isn't easy!

Without fidelity of purpose, our lives become ships without rudders and are carried away by the currents in a sea of sin. That is why Paul reminds us that we are pursuing the greatest goal of all: "I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:14). Some people never make plans; they are content to leave everything to chance. However, as followers of Christ, we are doubly blessed because we know both our purpose and our goal. However, we must dedicate ourselves because our goal cannot be achieved by accident or coincidence.

That is why it is crucial for us to be specific in setting goals that will bring us into a right relationship with God, such as: 1. Be more God-like (Live a life of love). 2. Recognize the value of time (Do more for God). 3. Do not become a slave to the past (Let go and let God). 4. Establish Godly priorities (Big things first). 5. Shun the evil of this world (Let your light shine).

To be a Christian is to be part of an intentional and committed community. It is not enough for us to simply make resolutions at the beginning of the year. Christianity requires us to "resolve to grow in the grace and knowledge of the lord" (2 Peter 3:18).

We are doubly blessed because we have Christ as an example and God's inspired word to guide us in our resolve. Just as Paul instructed Timothy in 2 Timothy 2:15, we should resolve to be diligent in our study of the scriptures. "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

Christians never stop learning and a frequent, consistent study of scripture is essential to our growth.

Finally, Peter instructs us to resolve to grow in our faith: "But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love....Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble; for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 1:5-11).

As we go forward, may we "walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time" (Ephesians 5:14).