

As we enter the new year it is traditionally a time to make and possibly break new year resolutions.

As Christians what sort of resolutions should we be making? What should we be looking at changing or doing?

What does the Bible say about making resolutions?

The Bible certainly encourages us to examine our lives and resolve to change them if necessary (*although not just at the beginning of a new year*). In the book of Psalms, **Psalm 17:3**, for example, the author made a resolution to keep his speech pure: “I have planned no evil; my mouth has not transgressed”

Common New Year’s resolutions are normally commitments to quit smoking, to stop drinking, to manage money more wisely, and to spend more time with family.

By far, the most common New Year’s resolution is to lose weight, in conjunction with exercising more and eating more healthily.

These are all good goals to set. However, **1 Timothy 4:8** instructs us to keep exercise in perspective: “For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.” The vast majority of New Year’s resolutions, even among Christians, are in relation to physical things. This should not be the case.

Many Christians make New Year’s resolutions to pray more, to read the Bible every day, and to attend church more regularly.

These is nothing wrong with this and they are fantastic goals.

However, these New Year’s resolutions fail just as often as the non-spiritual resolutions, because there is no power in a New Year’s resolution. Resolving to start or stop doing a certain activity has no value unless you have the proper motivation for stopping or starting that activity.

For example, why do you want to read the Bible every day? Is it to honor God and grow spiritually, or is it because you have just heard that it is a good thing to do? Everyone else is doing it – why not me? If our mind set is wrong, we will fail.

Why do so many of our resolutions fail? Sometimes it’s simply because they aren’t realistic. They’re really only wishful thinking, with no way to make them actually happen. For example, you might resolve to make a million euros this year, but if you don’t have any way to earn it, it probably isn’t going to happen. Other resolutions fail because we aren’t willing to make the sacrifices necessary to reach them.

But the real problem is within ourselves—within our own hearts and minds. We’d all like to be better people, but no matter how hard we try, we find ourselves tripped up by our own moral failures and weaknesses. Even the Apostle Paul experienced this: in **Romans 7:18** he says “I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out”

What is the solution? The solution is to turn to God, confessing our weaknesses to Him and seeking His help to live the way we should.

Begin the New Year by turning to Jesus Christ and inviting Him into your life.

Then ask Him to help you become the person He wants you to be.

This is what Paul did, and that's why he could say in **Philippians 4:13**. "I can do all this through him who gives me strength"

And as a Christian I think the best resolution we can make is " I will do more"

Here are some examples of that:

1. I will do more than belong - I will participate.
2. I will do more than care - I will help.
3. I will do more than believe - I will practice.
4. I will do more than be fair - I will be kind.
5. I will do more than forgive - I will encourage.
6. I will do more than earn - I will enrich.
7. I will do more than teach - I will inspire.
8. I will do more than give - I will serve.
9. I will do more than live - I will grow.
10. I will do more than be friendly - I will be a friend.

These are all things that we should be doing and maybe this is the time to take stock and make sure that they are the things we are doing.

The Bible doesn't mention making resolutions at the beginning of a new year—but it does urge us to examine our lives regularly, and to seek God's help to become better persons every day. The Bible says, in **Lamentations 3:40**. "Let us examine our ways and test them, and let us return to the Lord"

Did you ever ask yourself why you found it so hard to keep the resolutions you've made in the past? One reason may have been that they weren't realistic, or you had no clear plan for reaching them. Many New Year's resolutions, I'm afraid, are little more than a "wish list"—a series of things we'd like to change about our lives, but little more. They might also be very self-centered, with little thought about whether or not they are God's will.

Another reason, however, why we fail to keep our resolutions is because we seek to reach them in our own strength instead of with God's help. But we are spiritually and morally weak, and we will never be the people God wants us to be unless we turn to Him for the help we need. In **Psalms 121:2** it is written, "My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth"

As we begin this new year, pause right now and ask God to show you what He wants to do in your life during this coming year. (**1 Timothy 6:11**). Resolve to grow closer to Christ every day, and with the help of His Holy Spirit to "pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness"

So, what sort of New Year's resolution should a Christian make? Here are other suggestions:

- (1) pray to the Lord for wisdom (**James 1:5**) regarding what resolutions, if any, He would have you make;
- (2) pray for wisdom as to how to fulfill the goals God gives you;
- (3) rely on God's strength to help you;
- (4) find a helpful partner who will help you and encourage you;
- (5) don't become discouraged with occasional failures; instead, allow them to motivate you further;
- (6) don't become proud or vain, but give God the glory. **Psalm 37:5-6** says, "Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him and he will do this: He will make your righteousness shine like the dawn, the justice of your cause like the noonday sun."