

put the past behind us. We can start off with a clean slate. On January 1st, there is absolutely nothing negative on our journal of life. We can start writing 2020 any way we desire.

Perhaps you were not as faithful in your attendance of Bible classes and worship services as you should have been in 2019. Resolve to be faithful in 2020. Keep in mind the admonition not to forsake the assembly (Heb. 10:25). Seek to follow the example of Jesus whose custom was to attend the synagogue on the Sabbath day (Luke 4:16). Remember that God is truly worthy of our praise and adoration because of who He is and what He has done for us (Rev. 4:11; 5:12).

Perhaps you did not dedicate yourself to increasing your knowledge of the Word of God in 2019. You let other things take precedence over time needed to learn God's will for your life. Resolve to do more study in 2020. The Bible commands us to study in II Timothy 2:15. "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." Don't forget that study makes us strong, helps to protect us against sin, and causes us to grow into more mature children of God. Our knowledge makes us more fit for the Master's use.

Perhaps you did not labor in the vineyard of the Lord the way you should have in 2019. It is now a good time to resolve to become a diligent worker in 2020. We need to realize that God needs diligent laborers to do His work. Jesus said: "Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest" (Matt. 9:38). If we do not labor as we should, we could fall from our steadfastness. This was the warning of the writer of Hebrews in Hebrews 4:11. "Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief." Find several works of the church in which to be involved. Invest your time, your talents, and your money in them. Work as hard as you can to make them a success.

Perhaps you did not shun sin the way you should have in 2019. For some reason, you allowed yourself to yield to the temptations of the evil one. 2020 is a good time to resolve to put away sin in your life. Sin is not a positive thing. It is the transgression of God's will (I John 3:4). Too, it separates us from God (Isa. 59:1-2). Paul's words found in Romans 6:19b are something to consider as you make this resolve. "...for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness." Make holiness your goal in the New Year. Make it your goal to become more like God. "As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: but as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy" (I Pet. 1:14-16).

There are many areas of our Christian lives wherein we may have fallen short in 2019. But, just think, we can change. We can be better husbands or wives. We can be better examples to others. We can be individuals who are more compassionate towards others. We can be better soul-winners. We can invest ourselves more in our prayer life. We can be more generous givers. We can take our roles in the body of Christ more seriously. We can love more, forgive more, and make our lights shine brighter. Whatever you did not do in 2019 resolve to do in 2020. Why not? Why not?

New Year's Resolutions

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Yes, it's that time again. It is the time of year when we usually commit ourselves to several worthy goals. We do this because we want to make our lives and faith better. We want to improve, and that is a worthy goal. I have noticed that most of our resolutions revolve around money, health, and family.

While these are worthy goals, what would it look like if you could set the resolutions for the church or your family? I would venture to say that we would set a much more rounded, holistic set of resolutions. As I reflected on this question, I came up with a list that I think is a good start. It is not perfect by any means but these are the things I would like to see myself and others focus on.

- Pray more (1 Thess. 5:17).
- Invest in your God given talents (1 Tim. 4:14-15; Matt. 25:14-30).
- Get more intentional about evangelism (1 Cor. 9:19-23).
- Care for yourself spiritually (Phil. 3:12-16; M.k 6:31; Ex. 20:8-11).
- Be willing to make the tough decisions (Acts 20:22-24).
- Confront the sin in your life (Heb. 12:1-2).
- Be forgiving of others and myself (Matt. 6:14-15).
- Love people without boundaries (1 Co. 13:1-3).
- Quit comparing myself to others (Jn. 21:20-23; 2 Cor. 10:12).
- Read more (2 Tim. 4:9, 13).
- Make family a priority (Col. 3:18-21).
- Stay focused on the Lord and his church (Acts 2:42-47).
- Continue to grow (Eph. 4:15-16; 2 Pet. 3:17-17).
- Treat others like I would like to be treated (Matt. 7:12; Isa. 1:16-17).
- Seek heavenly things above all else (Col. 3:1-2).

This is a difficult list that could take a lifetime to master, and yet, we are called to be Christ-like in every aspect of our life. Let's use our resolutions to ensure that we become the best Christians possible.