



Step 1: Make a Commitment

- 1. Create a Plan** - Setting a goal without formulating a plan is merely wishful thinking. In order for your resolution to *have resolve*, (as the word "resolution" implies), it must translate into clear steps that can be put into action. A good plan will tell you A) What to do next and B) What are all of the steps required to complete the goal.
- 2. Create Your Plan IMMEDIATELY** - If you're like most people, then you'll have a limited window of opportunity during the first few days of January to harness your motivation. After that, most people forget their resolutions completely.
- 3. Write Down Your Resolutions and Plan** – putting pen to paper help solidify and make the goals more concrete. Commit your resolution and plan to writing someplace, such as a notebook or journal.
- 4. Think "Year Round," Not Just New Year's** - Nothing big gets accomplished in one day. Resolutions are set in one day, but accomplished with a hundred tiny steps that happen throughout the year. New Year's resolutions should be nothing more than a starting point. You must develop a ritual or habit for revisiting your plan.
- 5. Remain Flexible** - Expect that your plan can and will change. Life has a funny way of throwing unexpected things at us, and flexibility is required to complete anything but the simplest goal. Sometimes the goal itself will even change. Most of all, recognize partial successes at every step along the way. Just as a resolution isn't accomplished the day it's stated, neither is it accomplished the day you reach your goal. Rather, it's accomplished in many small increments along the way. Acknowledge these incremental successes as they come.

Resolution: to be clear, make a firm decision

Many people look forward to the New Year for a new start on old habits.

➤ **Inspiration: a passion for **Christ** and his **Church****

Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and to know that you are the Holy One of God.” John 6:68-69 Pay me now, pay me later

➤ **Investment: Honor God with our **Best Life****

“Don't be misled: No one makes a fool of God. What a person plants, he will harvest.” Gal 6:8 → worship, stewardship, generosity, compassion

➤ **Invitation: Don't ask God to **bless** what you're doing, instead do what God is **blessing****

“My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I too am working.” Jn 5:17

Important Biblical Resolutions

Tongue: “Though you probe my heart and examine me at night, though you test me, you will find nothing; I have **resolved** that my mouth will not sin. Ps 17:3

Body: “Daniel **resolved** not to defile himself with the royal food and wine, and he asked the chief official for permission not to defile himself this way.” Daniel 1:8

Spiritual - For I **resolved** to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. 1 Corinthians 2:2

NEW BEGINNINGS

Isaiah 43:16-24

This is what God says, the God who builds a road right through the ocean, who carves a path through pounding waves,

The God who summons horses and chariots and armies— they lie down and then can't get up; they're snuffed out like so many candles:

"Forget about what's happened; don't keep going over old history.

Be alert, be present. I'm about to do something brand-new.

It's bursting out! Don't you see it? There it is! I'm making a road through the desert, rivers in the badlands. Wild animals will say 'Thank you!' —the coyotes and the buzzards— Because I provided water in the desert, rivers through the sun-baked earth, Drinking water for the people I chose, the people I made especially for myself, a people custom-made to praise me.

"But you didn't pay a bit of attention to me, Jacob. You so quickly tired of me, Israel. You wouldn't even bring sheep for offerings in worship. You couldn't be bothered with sacrifices. It wasn't that I asked that much from you. I didn't expect expensive presents. But you didn't even do the minimum— so stingy with me, so closefisted. Yet you haven't been stingy with your sins. You've been plenty generous with them—and I'm fed up.

New Year New You!

If you Google the statement “A New Year, a New You” you will find a myriad of companies making the promise that their product is exactly what you need for a better new year.

Each year, millions of people make a list of resolutions for the New Year. The fitness center fills up, budgets are made, and diet plans are forged. Come February, the gym is half empty, you've lost track of your checkbook, and that cheeseburger tasted delicious at lunch.

According to Opinion Corporation of Princeton, 8% of people are always successful in achieving their resolutions, 19% achieve their resolutions every other year, 49% have infrequent success, and 24% (one in four people) NEVER succeed and have failed on every resolution, every year. Whew, that's depressing.

It's the same with our spiritual life. We all have good intentions, but often times lack the structure to follow through on our resolutions to grow deeper in our relationship with God.

Recently, we talked to John Ortberg, author of *The Me I Want to Be*, about unique plans for your spiritual growth. He said,

"What would grow an orchid would drown a cactus. What would feed a mouse would starve an elephant. The key is not treating every creature alike. It is finding the unique conditions that help each creature grow. God never grows two people the same way."

This year, a worthy resolution is to be intentional about discovering the unique conditions that help you grow closer to Christ.

"God is a Hand-Crafter not a Mass Producer." John Ortberg