



The Good News

January 7th, 2018

Volume 18, Issue 1

New Year's Resolutions - 2018 Version

By Michael McCleary

Almost one year ago we had a sermon on New Year's Resolutions in which we considered several resolutions that each of us should establish for 2017. These were **a) Read and study your Bible more, b) Identify and fortify your weaknesses, and c) Look for ways to express love for the brethren.** So, looking back on last year's resolutions, how would you rate your progress? Certainly, there is always room for improvement but, hopefully, we had some success in focusing on these three areas this year. So are you ready for some new New Year's Resolutions??? Excellent! Here are a few to consider for 2018:

Improve your people skills! (Personal Evangelism) – Talking to people about the Bible can sometimes be an awkward and difficult task, especially if we have difficulty explaining to others what we believe and why we believe it. However, it is a necessary task that God gives us and one that truly does get easier with practice. So what if people laugh at you or completely reject what you have to say? Eventually, you may find someone who truly does care, and you never know if those who did reject you might eventually come around in wanting to learn more about what the Bible says. Set a goal this year to invite at least one person a week to church. You never know who might say “yes”.

Lose some weight! (Cast off sin and temptation) – In **Heb. 12:1** the Hebrew writer encourages us to “*lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us...*” Part of the process of accomplishing this will be to update our “strength and weakness” list. Understanding our own shortcomings will help us this year to flee from temptation. We should have a few things in

mind as we seek to achieve this: 1) Control your thoughts! We realize that every sin starts in our own hearts and minds first. If we can nip these thoughts in the bud by practicing self-control and mental discipline, we can avoid a lot of problems for ourselves. 2) Avoid compromising situations. We can read **Gen. 39:11-12** and find that Joseph was faced with a compromising situation. His solution? He ran. When all else fails, we must not be too proud to run away, as sometimes it may be the only way to avoid sin. Be aware of your surroundings and always think ahead to make sure you don't willfully put yourself in temptations way. We all know the saying about those who play with fire...

Look for ways to help the congregation – Ultimately, while we each are to seek our own salvation we realize we can't go it alone. We must have help. Individually, we have the brethren to help us along life's uneven pathways. Collectively, we are called the church of Christ. Each congregation has its own strengths and weaknesses. Everyone should establish a goal to examine the congregation's needs and wants and consider ways that we can use our personal strengths to help the congregation to grow and be more effective. Most importantly, we must never assume that someone else will take care of a need. While each of us has particular strengths, we do not all have the same strengths. For all you know, you may be the only one able to address a particular need. So, look for ways in which you can help, and commit yourself to aiding the whole.

Let's take these new resolutions, add them to the three from last year, and make ourselves even stronger and more complete Christians in 2018 than we were in 2017.