

Resolutions

by Bryan Gibson

Planning to make some resolutions for the new year? If you do, don't just think about this life; think about the one to come (1 Timothy 4:8). Here's some we need to carefully consider, some made by different Bible characters.

Joshua: "But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD" (Joshua 24:15). You may not be able to change what everyone else is doing, but you can set the proper course for your own family.

The Israelites: "The Lord our God we will serve, and His voice we will obey" (Joshua 24:24). According to Joshua 24:31, this particular generation of Israelites followed through with this resolution: "Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua." Resolutions aren't worth much if we don't keep them.

Hannah: "If You...will give your maidservant a male child, then I will give him to the Lord all the days of his life" (1 Sam. 1:11). Children are a blessing from the Lord (Psalms 127:3), so it's only proper that we "give them back." It's not showing a whole lot of gratitude to be given a child by the Lord, and then refuse to bring that child up in the ways of the Lord.

David: "I will meditate on Your precepts, and contemplate Your ways. I will delight myself in Your statutes; I will not forget Your word" (Psalms 119:15-16). Let's all resolve to spend more time in His word this year than we did last year.

Isaiah: "Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying: 'Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?' Then I said, 'Here am I, send me'" (Isa. 6:8). The Lord's kingdom needs more workers with this kind of resolve. Need someone to visit the sick? "Here am I, send me." Need someone to teach that class? "Here am I, send me." Need someone to teach the lost? "Here am I, send me."

Habakkuk: "Though the fig tree may not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines; though the labor of the olive may fail, and the fields yield no food; though the flock may be cut off from the fold, and there be no herd in the stalls; yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation" (Habakkuk 3:17-18). Habakkuk resolved that the lack of material things would not keep him from rejoicing in the Lord. He understood that "one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses" (Luke 12:15)—that we "have a better and enduring possession...in heaven" (Hebrews 10:34).

The Prodigal Son: "I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you'" (Luke 15:18). We, too, need to resolve that whenever we do wrong, we will go to our Father in humility and openly confess our wrong. We will not try to hide it, or deny it, or explain it away, because we understand that one day we will have to answer for it (2 Corinthians 5:10).

Paul: "For I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 21:13). Now that's commitment!