

Happy New Year

Joseph Carty / General

Holidays / New Year / Philippians 3:13–14

Are New Years Resolutions a Biblical Concept? If not, what is the Christian way of approaching the New Year. What should we be focusing on as we turn a new leaf this year?

I am the New Year. I am an unspoiled page in your book of time.

I am your next chance at the art of living. I am your opportunity to practice what you have learned about life during the last twelve months.

All that you sought and didn't find is hidden in me, waiting for you to search it but with more determination.

All the good that you tried for and didn't achieve is mine to grant when you have fewer conflicting desires.

All that you dreamed but didn't dare to do, all that you hoped but did not will, all the faith that you claimed but did not have—these slumber lightly, waiting to be awakened by the touch of a strong purpose.

I am your opportunity to renew your allegiance to Him who said, "Behold, I make all things new."

- A New Year
 - A New Opportunity

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Philippians 3:12–14 ESV

Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

- Theme to meditate

2020

- Contemplate
- Some rush ahead
 - “forget what is behind”
- Starts with”

Philippians 3:12 ESV

Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own.

- He is talking about
 - striving for perfection

- That takes introspection.
 - we have to think about it.

Lessons Learned

- This year,
 - one for the record books
 - in a bad way.
- Many Felt:
 - Fear
 - Death
 - Conflict
 - Brokenness
 - Depression
 - Loneliness
 - Heated Politics

- Controversies
- With hard times
 - come lessons learned!
- How to weather the storm.
- Holding on to God

Psalm 9:9-10 ESV

The LORD is a stronghold for the oppressed,

a stronghold in times of trouble.

And those who know your name put their trust in you,

for you, O LORD, have not forsaken those who seek you.

- Like Jesus
 - during the storm
- You want Him
 - in your boat.

- Though it looks
 - all is lost
 - will sink
 - no hope

- Jesus
 - stops storm
 - gives peace

- Lessons learned.

Proverbs 24:16 *ESV*

for the righteous falls seven times and rises again,

but the wicked stumble in times of calamity.

- Hang on.
 - Get back up.

- Speaking of

- “righteous falling”
- another area
- contemplation:

Areas of Failure

One New Year’s Day, in the Tournament of Roses parade, a beautiful float suddenly sputtered and quit. It was out of gas. The whole parade was held up until someone could get a can of gas. The amusing thing was this float represented the Standard Oil Company. With its vast oil resources, its truck was out of gas.

Even though Christians have access to God’s omnipotence, if we do not avail ourselves to it we will run out of power.

- Stop and think
 - failings
 - short-comings
- Ways that we
 - “did not obtain perfection”

Psalm 73:26 ESV

My flesh and my heart may fail,

but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.

- Sometimes we fail.
 - We contemplate
- So
 - don't replicate
 - next year...

Galatians 6:7 ESV

Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap.

- Choose to start
 - new year
 - good seed.

Repentance

- Remember
 - even if 2020
 - worst year.

- Worst
 - emotionally
 - financially
 - socially
 - spiritually

- It is now over.
 - God forgives
 - God heals
 - God cleanses

1 John 1:9 ESV

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

- God loves

- new starts.
- But condition...?
 - confess
 - repent

Acts 2:38 ESV

And Peter said to them, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

- For those who
 - confess
 - repent
 - we can truly:

Forgetting What is Behind

Philippians 3:13 ESV

Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead,

- By God's grace
 - we can overcome.
- So God will
- Also
 - Forget what is behind
 - Blot it out.

2021

Teacher

Everyone has an A!

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Resolutions

Only Resolution He could Keep:

gain weight,

stop exercising,
read less
watch more TV,
procrastinate more,
quit giving money
time to charity,
not date any member of the cast of Baywatch,
never make New Year's resolutions again.

- Many fail...
 - why do it???
- What is "Resolution?"

Resolution - "when a person makes a decision to continue good practices or change an undesired trait or behavior."

- Now you know
 - why we had to
 - contemplate.

- Your 2021 resolution
 - based on 2020.

- What went well.
 - what failed.

- Rearrange Priorities.

- In order to
 - make a priority
 - something else
 - must move.

“You look like a monk,” the pilgrim said.
 “I am that,” said the monk.
 “Who is that working on the abbey?”
 “My monks. I’m the abbot.”
 “It’s good to see a monastery going up,” said the pilgrim.
 “They’re tearing it down,” said the abbot.
 “Whatever for?” asked the pilgrim.
 “So we can see the sun rise at dawn,” said the abbot.

Plans and Dreams

Philippians 3:14 **ESV**

I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

- “Press on”
 - toward what?
 - THE GOAL!
- What Goal?
 - heaven.
- How?

“The great purpose that constrained Paul to press forward in the face of hardship and difficulty should lead every Christian worker to consecrate himself wholly to God’s service.” - OHC 371

- Of all resolutions!
 - #1 Should Be
 - Spiritual!

We sometimes miss the great opportunities of life because we get sidetracked. I once heard the tale of a talented and gifted bloodhound in England that started a hunt by chasing a full-grown male deer. During the chase a fox crossed his path, so he began now to chase the fox. A rabbit crossed his hunting path, so he began to chase the rabbit. After chasing the rabbit for a while, a tiny field mouse crossed his path, and he chased the mouse to the corner of a farmer's barn. The bloodhound had begun the hunt chasing a prized male deer for his master and wound up barking at a tiny mouse. It is a rare human being who can do three or four different things at a time—moving in different directions.

Trust

- 2020
 - has been
 - a year of fear!
- Bible says:

2 Timothy 1:7 ESV

for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.

- For 2021
 - don't let fear
 - dictate your life.

Promises

- Endless Promises
- God
 - God's Provision
 - God's Care
 - God's Protection
 - God's Grace
 - God's Empowering
- Speaking of new plans
 - "will I be able...?"

Philippians 4:13 ESV

I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

- My favorite Promise
 - Newness:

2 Corinthians 5:17 ESV

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

Appeal

- New Year = New Start
- Use this Chance
- To Start Well

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