

Biblical Resolves for Every Christian, Every Year

By Daryl Wingerd

If you're like most people, January 1 brings to your mind the thought of New Year resolutions—using the changing of the calendar as an opportunity to review, and hopefully improve your life in various ways. Perhaps you will decide this year to improve your diet, or lose weight, or exercise more, or give up some bad habit, or adopt a good habit. If you resolve to make such changes, I hope you succeed.



But there's another way to think of reviewing and improving your life as a Christian. It doesn't involve starting or stopping optional (even if beneficial) activities. Instead I am thinking of reviewing and improving a few integral aspects of your life as a follower of Christ—things that apply to every believer, every year . . . every day. And don't worry; if you don't read this until April or May, or even until 2022, it's never too late to think and act on these biblical exhortations, straight from the mouth of Jesus and the pens of his New Testament writers. Consider these commands and exhortations carefully, and reset your walk with Christ accordingly.

A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another (John 13:34-35).

Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good. Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor. Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight. Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. If possible, so far as it depends on you, live at peace with all (Rom. 12:9-18).

Flee from sexual immorality (1 Cor. 6:18).

Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain (1 Cor. 15:58).

I, therefore, a prisoner of the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness,

with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Eph. 4:1-3).

Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you must also forgive. And above all these, put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony (Col. 3:12-14).

Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving (Col. 4:2).

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise prophecies, but test everything; hold fast what is good. Abstain from every form of evil (1 Thess. 5:16-22).

Let brotherly love continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares. Remember those who are in prison, as though in prison with them, and those who are mistreated, since you also are in the body. Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous. Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you" (Heb. 13:1-5).

Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness (James 1:2-3).

Know this my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God (James 1:19-20).

As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy" (1 Pet. 1:14-16).

Take care that you are not carried away with the error of lawless people. But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen (2 Peter 3:17-18).