

## How to Start the New Year Out Right

Now that Christmas is over we naturally tend to think about the New Year. The start of the New Year is the time where we normally give ourselves a new start on certain things. We call them resolutions. We resolve to lose that weight we gained over the Holidays. We resolve to work out more, to eat better, to spend more time with our families or other various commitments. We might even resolve to attend church more frequently. There is nothing wrong with resolutions. They can help motivate us to change or becoming better.

If there is one problem with resolutions it is that they never seem to stick. Can you remember what last year's resolutions were? Unless it is to lose weight, which we yearly resolve to do most of us cannot remember from one year to the next what we resolved. Studies show that most resolutions are broken before the month is out. We mean well we simply struggle to fulfill on the commitments we make.

The failure of resolutions does not mean there is not value in setting them. The failure might be that we are not serious about that which we resolve to do. The truth of the matter is we do what we want to do. If you truly want to lose weight bad enough for instance you can. If you truly want to save money you can. God has given us the ability to achieve a host of things through the power of our wills.

This year while you are considering the resolutions you are setting for yourself, why not consider some spiritual resolutions. One might be to attend church more regularly. A better one yet might be to commit to spend more time reading the Bible or praying. As we come to our first offering of the New Year here is another resolution to consider, giving more to God's work.

Before you dismiss that idea as unattainable think about your budget and where you spend your money. Do you eat out a lot? Do you play sports or any other recreational activities that require payments? All of us can set aside money in our budgets so that we could give if we truly wanted to.

Why would you want to do that? Consider what Malachi 3:10 says, "Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me with this," says the LORD Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it." So what God is saying is that when you give faithfully He will in return bless your life. What a great way to guarantee that your New Year gets off to the best start possible. Of all the resolutions you could make, the resolution to give to God, thereby putting him first in your life is guaranteed to bring you rewards.

We have a chance this morning to end the year well and get a jump on a resolve to be more generous in the New Year. So as our ushers come forward this morning resolve to give to God's work.