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A New Year, A New Beginning

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Many people reject the idea or practice of making “New Year's resolutions.” In fact, many will even go out of their way to make sure that people know assuredly that they do not intend to change their ways at all. A vast amount of those willing to allow themselves to be subject to this beginning of the year ritual will do so knowing full well that they intend to break or not keep those things they have committed by mouth to change or resolve. How ease it is simply to *say* that we are going to do something with little if any intention of actually following through. When there is no accountability or expectation placed upon one to accomplish a said task or goal, one will often neglect to put forth much effort or energy to be successful or achieve it.

Brethren, this article is not written to encourage you to make any “New Year's resolutions.” Unless one has a desire or motivation to be successful in any given thing, it is useless simple to write things on a piece of paper and “try your best” to do them. There are many things that we all can be doing in this new year that will not only benefit us in many ways, but also benefit others, all the while bringing glory to God the Father (Mt 5:16). Here are a few:

- 1 Make a conscious effort to give one person a week an invitation to worship with us. This can be done by mouth or by leaving a brochure that tells about the church and gives out times of meeting. We all go out to eat, go to the doctor and dentist, visit many stores, etc. Why not keep some brochures in your vehicle and begin giving them away?
- 2 “Searching for Truth” DVDs are wonderful ways to put the Gospel in the hands of people. Many people look to the new year as a fresh new beginning to life and change. Why not offer to those we come in contact with the greatest gift that gives that fresh new start? It is surprising how many people are so willing to talk about religion. For the most part, the majority of people have some belief and practice for their spirituality. Casual dialog often gives us an opportunity

to talk to others about Christ and the salvation that comes through Him alone (Jn 14:6; Acts 4:12).

- 3 Utilize your talents in one or more of the many evangelistic programs we have in place. In the last two years, we have implemented many wonderful works that allow all of us to get involved in bringing the Gospel to the lost as commanded by our Lord (Mt 28:18ff; Mk 16:15-16). Our youth have been engaged and encouraged to bring comfort and help to those in need. Blankets are made by their hands and love, as well as many dedicated adults who give of their time and talents. These blankets have brought warmth and love to many. Take some time to look at the board in the foyer and read some of the cards written by those who have received them. No doubt our God is well pleased! Our youth have also been involved in home projects for those that have difficulties in maintaining their lawns, homes, etc.

Our visitation program (“Faith in Action”) is a great way to be involved in blessing others by visits, cards, calls, etc. Our Lord has not left us clueless about visiting and caring for others (Mt 25:34ff). While doing good to and for others, our own hearts are filled with joy in this lift as we go about doing good (Acts 10:38).

Our ladies will soon begin “The Dorcas Group” (women helping women) on January 11. This will be a program where our ladies will come together to build, strengthen and renew their spiritual relationships with one another. It will be a time of encouraged, edification, sharing, and learning. Dorcas (also called Tabitha) was a woman that was “*full of good works and charitable deeds which she did*” (Acts 9:36). Just as the old saying goes, “Behind every good man there is a good woman,” this has and always will hold true for the Lord's church. Yes, women do have an important and vital role to play in the church!

“House to House” and “Love thy Neighbor” are both good things to get involved in. These great works go hand-in-hand. At the end of the month, we gather (usually on Wednesday evening) to stick labels on the “House to

House” publication that we send out. We also stuff bags to hang upon the doors of each member's neighborhood. Both of these works are needed and both are equally important. We will eventually get to every member's neighborhood and then start over again.

- 4 Make a better effort to support our meeting times. Being involved will stir your heart to better serve your God. Happy New Year!