**"A New Year's Revolution" - Just one letter makes a world of difference!**

***By Andy Acreman 29th December 2024***

**Introduction**

* Most New Year’s resolutions don’t go the distance. Only 36% make it beyond January, and only 9% survive the whole year. Experts say that the best chance of keeping to your resolutions is to ***set realistic goals that you really believe in***, ***track your progress,*** and ***get an accountability partner.***
* 95% of resolutions are health- or fitness- related.
* *1 Timothy 4:8 NIV. For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.*
* What does godliness look like in our daily lives? It can revolutionize them and make a *huge* difference to the local church and the Kingdom of God!
* What kinds of actions and changes could we make in 2025 to achieve our *New Year’s Revolution,* then? Here are some ideas that came to me. Don’t necessarily try them all at once, though!

1. **Divine Dissatisfaction**

*Philippians 3:10-14 NIV. I want to know Christ – yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, 11 and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead. 12 Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. 13 Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.*

* Paul knew that he hadn’t ‘arrived’. He was not content with his current level of godliness and was hungry for more. He was not comfortable, complacent, or content with where he was in Christ. *“I press on toward the goal…”* he tells us.
* Let’s examine ourselves for signs of contentment or complacency; are we comfortable with our current spiritual state? Do we like TCF the size it is, with the people in it that we know well? Do we secretly *fear* spiritual progress, church growth and big changes imposed on us from heaven?
* Let’s ask the Holy Spirit to shake us out of our comfort zones and into a fresh vision! Let’s ask Him to make us dissatisfied with our status quo and to hunger for greater godliness.

1. **Set our hearts and minds on the things above.**

*Colossians 3:1-3 NIV. Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2 Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. 3 For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.*

*Ephesians 2:6 NIV. And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus…*

2 Corinthians 4:18 NIV. *So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.*

* It is the devil’s main objective to take our hearts and minds *off* heavenly things and to invite us to fix them on almost anything else! One of his best tools is this device: the so-called smart phone! Whenever we have a free space in our lives, the devil tries to feed us with what is on it – to avoid us being alone in our heads – because then we might begin to think heavenly thoughts. It’s by far the best spiritual anaesthetic around! If we have the mind of Christ, then it is in Satan’s interest to distract us from thinking Christ’s thoughts. *“If you eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. If your smart-phone causes you to sin…”.* ***[Take a hammer to it!].***
* So let’s ask God to make us heavenly-minded and heavenly-focussed. Let’s give ourselves some head-space in 2025 to allow the Lord to speak to us unhindered!

1. **Desire, expect, and rely on the supernatural. We need divine power!**

*Galatians 3:5 NIV. So again I ask, does God give you his Spirit and work miracles among you by the works of the law, or by your believing what you heard?*

*Hebrews 2:3b-4 NIV. …This salvation, which was first announced by the Lord, was confirmed to us by those who heard him. 4 God also testified to it by signs, wonders and various miracles, and by gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will.*

* Demonstrations of supernatural power – signs, wonders and miracles – are an integral part of the gospel. In our spiritually-sceptical age, they are more vital than ever. Miracles did not die out during the First Century AD! And *without* these, we are not preaching the full gospel of Christ.
* Let’s pray for a fresh Pentecost, a fresh measure of power from heaven. Let’s resolve to take risks with the Holy Spirit and give Him room to demonstrate the truth of the gospel in our land.

1. **Avoid Idols – Ancient *or* Modern**

*1 John 5:21 NIV. Dear children, keep yourselves from idols.*

*Matthew 10:37 NIV. Anyone who loves their father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves their son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.*

* Anything that detracts from our allegiance to Jesus, or which seems to have a greater call on our attention or focus or priority – is actually an idol.
* ‘Fones’, Football, Facebook, Food, Friends & Family, Newspapers etc… (nothing wrong with these in themselves – but it’s how they are positioned relative to Jesus).
* Let’s examine ourselves, asking the Holy Spirit to pinpoint any modern idolatry in us - anything holding back God’s power and our effectiveness. (Psalm 139:23-24).

1. **More Spiritual Training for 2025 – where do *we* need to improve spiritually?...**
   * **Prayer and Waiting on God** – our time is all that we can give him as a gift!
   * **Development of supernatural spiritual gifts** – undeserved, but vital
   * **Building a ministry to serve God's Bride** – using these gifts to serve others
   * **Gossiping the gospel** – including it in everyday ‘natural’ conversations
   * **Becoming a worshipper** – God seeks true worshippers (John 4:23)
   * **Financial Generosity** – including our tithes and offerings to God’s work
   * **Bible reading, study and meditation…**

* John Lennox video on Reading the Bible…
  + Professor John Lennox is a Northern Irish mathematician, philosopher of science, and Christian apologist who is Professor of Mathematics at the University of Oxford. He holds a PhD from Cambridge, a DSc from the University of Wales in Cardiff, and a DPhil from Oxford. John Lennox speaks English, Russian French, German, and Spanish.
  + He has written a number of books on the interface between science, philosophy and theology.  A modern-day C.S. Lewis.
  + He is one of the most intelligent men on the planet and he has successfully debated the truth of Christianity with Richard Dawkins, Christopher Hitchens and other famous atheists.
  + He was asked what his final words of wisdom would be to the world…
* If you read the Bible and think about it, you have done Bible study; if you do this most days, you are a theologian!" We are all called to be theologians!
* Big Picture reading plan and notes for 2025. Free hard copy ‘Bible In One Year’…

1. **RECAP. For 2025, why not ask the Lord for…**
   * **Divine Dissatisfaction**
   * **A Heavenly Focus**
   * **Reliance on the Supernatural**
   * **Avoiding Idolatry**
   * **Further Spiritual Training that we need personally, *including* Scripture Reading**
   * **A Revolution in our walk with God and our effectiveness for His Kingdom!**

1. **Let’s PRAY...**