

New Year's Message
"Some Negative New Year's Resolutions"
Text: 2 Corinthians 4:1-18

I. Introduction

II. Some things we resolve not to do

1. Resolved: We will not lose heart (vs. 1, 16-18)

2. Resolved: We will not tamper with God's Word (v. 2)

3. Resolved: We will not utilize deceitful practices (vs. 2-4)

4. Resolved: We will not have delusions of personal power (vs. 5, 7)

5. Resolved: We will not be discouraged by God's difficult providence (vs. 8-12)

III. Conclusion: a final word

QUOTES

1. Darren Carlson:

So, should we make resolutions? Yes, we should, because the opposite of resolution is not neutrality. The opposite is drifting. And no one drifts toward holiness while habits, fears, and distractions quietly make decisions for us. And whether we realize it or not, we are all living out resolutions already – some purposeful and stated, others passive and unstated. The question is not whether you will live by resolve; it's what will shape your resolve, what your resolve will aim at, and what power you will rely on to pursue it.

2. Dave Harvey:

- *Don't lose heart when setbacks come. Grieve your loss. Resist self-pity. Focus your faith. Embrace the call to suffer. Await the redemptive twist... God has promised to accomplish his purposes in you and through you.*
- *Sure, clouds of trouble may darken your life right now. But remember the lyrics to "God Moves in a Mysterious Way" – "Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take; the clouds ye so much dread are big with mercy and shall break in blessings on your head."*

3. James M. Boice:

What has happened to many segments of the evangelical church is that we have forgotten to focus on that which is eternal. Too much attention is being paid to growing large congregations, increasing already enormous budgets, erecting ever more elaborate buildings, and gaining more and more recognition from the world, and not enough attention to what really matters, namely: God Himself, truth, spiritual rebirth, holiness in church members, and glorifying God in our doctrine, worship, and church life... it is only people who live with their eyes on what is unseen who ultimately make any real difference in the world.

4. Kent Hughes:

- *The apostle therefore ministered by lifting Christ up. Preaching Jesus Christ as Lord left no doubt about the full work of the incarnate Son, the Messiah, and his lordly sovereignty established by his resurrection. When a man or woman exalts Christ, there is no room for self-exaltation. Instead of self-promotion, there is servanthood.*
- *Paul's critics imagined that the difficulties and reversals that dogged his ministry had disheartened him, as they would any man. But Paul was energized for ministry.*

5. John MacArthur:

...when God chose the men through whom He would give His Word to mankind, he did not choose the learned scholars of Alexandria, the distinguished philosophers of Athens, the eloquent orators of Rome, or the self-righteous religious leaders of Israel. He passed them all by in favor of simple Galilean fisherman like Peter, James, John, and Andrew, despised traitors like Matthew the tax collector, and obscure men like Philip, Mark and Nathaniel. Even the educated people he chose, such as Luke the physician, and Paul, the rabbinic scholar, were humble, unimposing people. To those common, jars of clay God entrusted the priceless treasure of the gospel.

6. D. A. Carson:

One dare not measure Jeremiah's ministry by how many people he convinced, how many disasters he averted, or how many revivals he experienced. One must measure his ministry by whether or not he was faithful to God, by whether or not God was pleased with him. And so, finally, it is with each of us.

SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE

- Ps. 42:5; Ps. 62:5; Ps. 103:1-2; Ps. 104:35; Ps 116:7
- 1 Tim. 1:12-17; Ex. 33:18-19; Rom. 9:15; Phil. 1:6; Eph. 2:10; Rom. 8:28; 2 Cor. 1:8-9; 1 Jn. 3:2; Is. 66:2; Matt. 5:16