

“Resolutions and such” Revelation 21:5

'Tis the season of resolutions, and some of us may be a bit sceptical about making any. A toastmaster once began his speech with: "May all your troubles during the coming year be as short-lived as your New Year's resolutions."

Personally, I like resolutions. They remind me that it is never too late to start again, that I am never too old to be given a brand new beginning, another chance to find meaning and wonder in my life. Resolutions, to me have to do with evaluating what I've been doing with my life and setting about making any adjustments that I believe need to be made to bring my priorities in line with what I value most.

Someone once posed the question: "How do we make the new year new and not just a repeat of the same old mistakes, habits and attitudes that have gone before?"

In any number of passages, the Bible offers a great deal of guidance in this.

1. Put the past in perspective. It is important to remember the past, for the "learning experiences" we have had. It is important to bring these what we've learned into the new day and the new beginning. But too many of us insist on bringing far more. We lug around heavy baggage - guilt, failure, self-judgment. Perhaps it is because there are confessions we have not had the courage to utter to the Lord; perhaps there are relationships that we have never resolved one way or another. Or perhaps it's because we've glorified "the good old days." And when we lose ourselves glorifying the past, we not only forget that there were HARD times to endure, but we have no time or energy to embrace the brand new beginning, the brand new day, the brand new opportunities that God has prepared for us, for our lives now.

2. Embrace the fact that God gives you and I any number of second chances. Our faith ancestors, were not always the flawless paragons of faith and virtue that we were introduced to in Sunday School. Abraham and Sarah, parents of our faith, doubted plenty. Abraham, in fear for his life, failed to tell the foreign king that Sarah was his wife. Moses was guilty of murder in Egypt and when God chose him for a task, Moses did everything he could to weasel out of it. The Israelites were delighted to be free of the Egyptians and worshipped God who rescued them, until Moses disappeared for awhile. Then the golden calf seemed a more preferable god than Yahweh. David committed adultery, and to cover his sin, arranged another man's death. The list goes on - and ultimately includes your name and mine.

Like our spiritual ancestors, no matter our past, God is not finished with us yet. Perhaps we could see our 2022 calendars, with most of the pages yet unmarked, as a visual reminder that this is a brand new year, a brand new beginning, that God is giving us another second chance, that things can be different, that we can be different.

3. Celebrate the opportunity to make a firm and sure commitment to the future.

It's funny how often the things we attempt to avoid in our lives are the very things that provide the greatest meaning, that fill us with a sense of worth. It's ironic how some of what we want, wish for, set our hearts on are the very things, if attained, that leave us feeling empty and dead inside.

The Apostle Paul said, "let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith." [Hebrews 12:1-2]



It's a brand new year, a brand new day. We are being offered a brand new beginning. How do we make the new year new, and not just a rehearsal of all that has already been?