**New Year’s Resolutions**

**Let us then pursue what makes for peace**

**and for mutual upbuilding.**

***(Romans 14:19)***

**So often when we launch a new beginning in our lives, we start out by setting goals or making resolutions. But I'd like you to start this journey in a different way. I'd like you to begin by acknowledging yourself for what you've already accomplished and, more importantly, who you've become over the last year. A high-quality life starts with a high-quality you! Don't rush into this new year frantically trying to catch up or make up for what you didn't do in the past. This kind of frenetic rushing and hopeless browbeating keeps you tied to the past and feeling bad about yourself. Get a fresh start on this process by being gentle with yourself. Set aside some time to reflect on all you've done right over the last year by considering the following questions:**
**\* What qualities of character have you strengthened?**
**\* Have you shared an act of kindness or supported others in some way?**
**\* What special memories have you created with those you love?**
**\* What have you achieved or accomplished? *(Cheryl Richardson, in Life Makeovers, p. 9)***

**Hagar: "This year I hereby resolve to do all the dumb things I did last year all over again!" Helga: "New Year's Resolutions are always so simple for Hagar." *(Dik Browne, in Hagar the Horrible comic strip)***

**33% of Americans admit they've already broken or cheated on their New Year's resolutions. *(YouGov.com/Omnibus, as it appeared in The Week magazine, January 25, 2013)***

**Anything goes on New Year's Eve. It's when old acquaintance are forgot -- along with hats, coats and wives. *(Robert Orben)***

**Bad week for: Your New Year's resolution, after a British study showed that evolution programmed mammals to store fat in cold winter months, when food was naturally scarce. "What this suggests," said researcher Andrew Higginson, "is that New Year's Day is the worst possible time to start a new diet." *(The Week magazine, January 15, 2016)***

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**New Year's Day is when your break the resolution you're going to make the next day. *(Harold Coffin, in San Francisco Examiner)***

**Bang! Crash! Clunk! Pow! Soldier: “What was that?" Servant: “I think it's Hagar breaking his New Year's resolutions!" *(Dik Browne, in Hagar The Horrible comic strip)***

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**Little girl: “My New Year's resolution can be summed up in one word: Charity. I'm going to help others manage their money." Little boy: “But I'm guessing your 'Charity' will charge people a fee." Little girl: “Very perceptive. And how did you deduce that?" Little boy: “Call it a charitable deduction." *(Steve Breen, in Grand Avenue comic strip)***

**The object of a new year is not that we should have a new year. It is that we should have a new soul. *(G. K. Chesterton)***

**Your New Year's resolutions are your last year's confessions. *(Fred Smith, Dallas, Texas, businessman and inspirational speaker)***

**Did you hear about the labor leader who went to a New Year's Eve masquerade party dressed as Father Time-And-A-Half? *(Shelby Friedman, in Reader's Digest)***

**New Year’s resolutions don’t work: Millions of Americans will attempt to turn over a new leaf on January 1, pledging to lose weight, spend less money, and quit smoking, said Oliver Burkeman. But despite what the self-help industry might tell you, “radical, across-the-board” changes like New Year’s resolutions rarely work in practice. Willpower, studies have shown, is a “depletable resource.” If you make an overnight change requiring enormous self-discipline, you can quickly use up your stores of willpower, and all your best intentions will fall by the wayside. But “tiny goals, even absurdly tiny ones, can be an effective way to sneak under the radar of your mind.” Exercising for five minutes instead of an hour might sound laughable, but you’re “much less likely to resist it” – and the next day, you can exercise for six. Want a better job? Commit to just two hours a week of networking and investigating opportunities. New Year’s resolutions are based on the fallacy that if only you can find sufficient motivation, you can achieve anything. In reality, motivation is fleeting, and the “biggest barrier to actually getting things done.” Want real change? Take small steps. *(The Week magazine, December 28, 2012 – January 4, 2013)***

**Make this an ecological New Year -- recycle those resolutions. *(St. Louis Bugle)***

**Soon we will have completed our annual list of good intentions – we’ll have passed resolutions as if we’re our own Congress, legislating changes in our lives. Most of us become self-critical as soon as we become self-conscious. We spend January 1 walking through our lives, room by room, drawing up a list of work to be done, cracks to be patched. Maybe this year, to balance the list, we ought to walk through the rooms of our lives a second time, not looking for flaws, but for potential. We ought to pore over the past for the good moments, remembering when we felt most at ease, lucky, elated. Maybe, for once, our resolutions ought to include equal time for that radical greeting: Happy New Year. *(Ellen Goodman, in Washington Post Writers Group)***

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**27: Percentage of resolution-makers who say exercise is their top priority in the coming year. *(AARP magazine, January / February, 2008)***

**If exercise is on your list of New Year's resolutions, all you have to do is laugh. Laughing uses more muscles at one time than any other activity. In fact, 15 muscles are required just to smile. (Ben Franklin's Almanac, p. 8)**

**Half the people who start exercising programs quit within six months. *(L. M. Boyd)***

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**Ziggy: “I know my first new year’s resolution should be to stop procrastinating because I haven’t gotten around to making last year’s list yet!” *(Tom Wilson, in Ziggy comic strip)***

**Mother Goose: “Grimmy, I thought you stopped eating out of trash cans.” Grimm: “I'm giving up my new year's resolution for Lent.” *(Mike Peters, in Mother Goose & Grimm comic strip)***

**Some of those New Year's Eve hangovers last longer than some of those New Year's Eve resolutions. *(Earl Wilson, in Reader's Digest)***

**It's hard to make New Year's resolutions when you're already perfectly behaved. *(Judith Martin "Miss Manners", in Writer)***

**Blanch: “Happy New Year, Wiz.” Wiz: “Happy New Year, Blanch.” Blanch: “Ready for our traditional New Year resolves?” Wiz: “All set, you read yours first.” Blanch: “Ok. I resolve to make a home-cooked meal every night of the year. Your turn.” Wiz: “How ironic. I resolved to take you out to dinner every night of the year.” Blanch: “Oh, darn! Lost again.” *(Parker and Hart, in The Wizard of Id comic strip)***

**How did New Year’s Resolutions begin? They have their roots in the very earliest new year’s festivals. During Akitu, Mesopotamians would make vows to the gods to work hard, pay their debts, and return borrowed items. In Caesar’s day, on January 1, Romans would make sacrifices and vow to behave honorably in the coming year. In The Middle Ages, during Christmas week knights would place their hands on a peacock and renew their vows of chivalry. John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, established in the mid 18th century a New Year’s tradition of renewing one’s commitment to God, a counterpoint to the more earthly celebrations in which others indulged. There are no hard markers for when religious resolutions gave way to vows to shed pounds, drink less grog, and engage in personal improvements, but a Boston newspaper article from 1813 contained what’s considered the first documented use of the phrase “new year’s resolution.” It referred to the “multitudes” who will “sin all the month of December,” then start the new year with reforms they hope will “expiate and wipe away all their former faults.” *(The Week magazine, December 31, 2021 / January 7, 2022)***

**The reason why we cannot keep our good resolutions is that we count too much on ourselves. *(St. John Vianney)***

**If exercise is on your list of New Year’s resolutions, all you have to do is laugh. Laughing uses more muscles at one time than any other activity. In fact, 15 muscles are required just to smile. (Ben Franklin’s Almanac, p. 3)**

**Mooch’s New Year’s Resolutions List: “Do less. Oooh – That’s going to be tough!” *(Patrick McDonnell, in Mutts comic strip)***

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**May all your troubles during the coming year be as short-lived as your New Year's resolutions. *(Mary Jamison, in Friendswood News)***

**In the New Year, may your right hand always be stretched out in friendship, but never in want. *(Irish toast)***

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**Lars: “What's the first thing you're going to do in the new year, Al?” Al: “Have a midnight snack. Then cross off ‘no more midnight snacks' from my list of New Year's resolutions.” *(J. C. Duffy, in The Fusco Brothers comic strip)***

**Money is like a New Year's resolution -- easier made than kept. *(Quoted by Earl Wilson, in Reader's Digest)***

**Man: “Did you make any New Year’s resolutions, Ernie?” Ernie: “Yep! I’m going to start being more giving and generous to my fellow man!” Man: “Did you make any New Year’s resolutions, Sid?” Sid: “I’m going to start hitting up Ernie for bigger loans.” *(Bud Grace, in Piranha Club comic strip)***

**A Mother’s New Year’s Resolutions:**
**\* When I forget to go to the store, I won’t boil the macaroni necklaces my kids made for me in preschool.**
**\* When I hear one of my kids wake in the middle of the night, I will run upstairs to supervise before he relieves himself in the sink.**
**\* I will resist the urge to explain to strangers why my son is wearing winter boots, a bathing suit bottom, and an inside-out and backward pajama top. I will be grateful that he is able to dress himself.**
**\* I will not tell my children that the Play-Doh dried up just because I don’t**

**feel like cleaning up after them.**
**\* I will always protect the rights of my children, especially their right to remain silent.**
**\* I will learn to accept the outbursts and tantrums as a part of life. After all, I promised to love my husband for better or worse.**
**\* When my husband and I go to a restaurant without the kids, I will not roll up his sleeves or move the knives from his reach. I will not accompany him to the bathroom and remind him to wash his hands with soap.**
**\* I will pack the kids’ lunch boxes the night before so I don’t throw in a slab of frozen lasagna as they’re running for the bus.**
**\* When I’m tired of hearing “mommieeeeee!” a thousand times each day, I will resist changing my name to “Please pass the spinach.”**
**\* I will develop an ability to have a conversation with an adult that doesn’t revolve around labor pains or children’s toilet habits.**
**\* I will be more flexible about children’s nutritional requirements by counting the ketchup and green crayon as vegetables.**
**\* When my children beg for a pet, I will buy them each a hutch for the dust bunnies that have multiplied under their beds.**
**\* I will count how often I repeat the phrase “You’d better listen because I will not repeat myself,” until my kids actually notice that I’ve spoken.**
**\* I will be a good, fair, and loving parent, giving my children a solid foundation on which to build their lives. After all, they may be responsible for choosing a nursing home for me to live out my final days. *(Tidbits)***

**It is always in a passing state of mind that we make lasting resolutions*. (Marcel Proust)***

**Woman: “My new year’s resolution is to fit into my college blue jeans again.” Man: “Mine is to win a $100 million lottery.” Man: “Resolutions are supposed to be realistic goals, silly.” Woman: “OK, college sweat pants.” Man: “$50 million.” *(Bill Amend, in Foxtrot comic strip)***

**Dennis: “Boy! You should hear the revolutions everybody's comin' up with this year!” Mom: “I think you mean resolutions.” Dennis: “Mister Wilson wants to be thinner, Joey wants to be taller. Margaret wants to be smarter, an’ Gina wants to be stronger! I just wanna be better!” Mom: “Good for you!” Dennis: “How about you, Dad?” Dad: “I want to make your Mother as happy as I can all year!” Dennis: “What about you, Mom?” Mom: “My resolution is to make sure you two keep your resolutions!” *(Hank Ketcham, in Dennis The Menace comic strip)***

**Resolutions are like rules. They're just made to be broken. (Justin Timberlake, in St. Louis Post-Dispatch)**

**The trouble with making too many New Year's resolutions is that, if you stick to them, you could become impossible to live with. (Tony Zarro, in Reader's Digest)**

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**Grandpa says to Nelson: “My New Year’s Resolution is to try to be more like my dog. Dogs find joy in such simple things. As long as he can find a sunny spot on the floor and lie there for a few hours, he’s happy. Unfortunately, the cat usually finds it first.” *(Brian Crane, in Pickles comic strip)***

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**Man: “It's New Year's eve resolution time, Garfield.” Garfield: “Go for it.” Man: “This year I resolve to grow a moustache! A big, honking moustache! And I resolve to work out! And to let my hair grow long and wavy! And to put you on a diet. Heck with it. Wanna order a pizza?” Garfield: “Make it two.” *(Jim Davis, in Garfield comic strip)***

**First woman: “What're you looking for?” Second woman: “My list of New Year's resolutions I wrote last January. I want to see how many I did. But I can't find the stupid list! I've looked everywhere” First woman: “Do you remember any of the resolutions?” Second woman: “Yeah. Number one was 'get organized'.” *(Greg Evans, in Luann comic strip)***

**Good resolutions are simply checks that men draw on a bank where they have no account. *(Oscar Wilde)***

**Wife: “Guess what I found. Your New Year's resolutions from last year. Interesting reading. Number one, I will be more helpful around the house.” Husband: “I wasn't, was I?” Wife: “Two, I will bring home flowers for no special reason.” Husband: “I guess I didn't do that either.” Wife: “Three, I will lose ten pounds.” Husband: “Gained five.” Wife: “Four, I will spend more time talking to my wife and less time watching TV.” Husband: “Forgot about that one.” Wife: “I've got an idea. Why don't we just advance the date one year and try this all over again?” Husband: “Oh well. I'm a work in progress.” Wife: “Without the progress.” *(J. P. Toomey, in Sherman's Lagoon comic strip)***

**It seems like all my New Year's resolutions just go in one year and out the other! *(Tom Wilson, in Ziggy comic strip)***

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