

Title: Resolutely Following Christ

Scripture: Philippians 2:1-16

Series: Topical

1. Introduction:

- a. It is of no surprise, that at this time of year, many people are making New Year's resolutions.
 - i. The thought behind such promises to self is that we are endeavoring to make the upcoming year a better year than the one that we are leaving behind.
 - ii. It seems that as a people, we are looking to establish changes that we perceive are needed in our lives. This is done in order to make our lives more meaningful and fulfilling.
- b. A recent study revealed the top New Year's resolutions in the United States. The most popular New Year's resolutions are:
 - i. **Exercise to get in shape – Get Healthy**
 1. Quit smoking
 2. Drink less alcohol
 - ii. **Diet to lose weight**
 - iii. Find love
 - iv. Save money – manage debt
 - v. Get a better education
 - vi. Get a better job
 - vii. Manage stress
- c. As we reflect on the most popular resolutions, we are immediately confronted with the fact that none of the most popular resolutions are centered on living a more Godly and spiritually mature life. Each and every resolution mentioned has self at the center.
 - i. Brethren, America is dying spiritually and yet it is true that we are concerned with things that, although might be important, are not crucial.
 - ii. Beloved, as the church of God, we should not think in the same manner that the world thinks. Consistently Scripture calls us to be of a different mindset and not think as the world does.
 1. **Romans 12:1-2** I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your

bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. (2) Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

- d. I want to challenge you today to make resolutions, or better yet, set goals that will contribute to a spiritually healthy you, family, church, and community.
 - i. God wants us to resolve to be like Mary, abiding in the presence of our Lord and making our relationship with him, the one needful thing.

2. Verses 1-2 – Resolving to be Like minded – So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, (2) complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.

- a. One of the first resolutions we should make as Christian is to be like-minded with other bible-believing Christians.
 - i. The plea that Paul makes is based on several factors:
 - 1. Is there any encouragement in Christ
 - a. Is there any weight of value in Christ’s encouragement in our lives? Ask yourself, “Have I ever been encouraged by Jesus Christ and His ministry in my life?” If so, should I not afford that same encouragement to my fellow Brothers and Sisters?
 - 2. Any comfort from love – Have I experienced comfort in knowing the love of Christ?
 - 3. Any participation in the Spirit – Do I have, by Christ’s death for me, participation with the Holy Spirit?
 - 4. Any affection and sympathy – Has not the spirit brought the affection and sympathy of God into my life?
 - ii. The thought here is that as we experience Christ and the blessedness of salvation, we ought to love our brothers and sister for which Christ has done the very same thing!
- b. Verse 2 – complete my joy by – the joy of the minister

- i. Same mind – striving together to think rightly
 - ii. Same love – Striving together to love Christ and His people rightly.
 - iii. In one accord – Having the same spirit and desires?

- 3. Verse 3 – Resolve to be selfless – Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.
 - a. Selfish ambition – This command forbids us to do anything, or attempt anything as the mere result of strife or anger
 - b. Conceit – any vain opinion about oneself – a mere desire to honor ourselves, to attract attention, to win praise, to make ourselves uppermost, or foremost, or the main object.
 - c. In humility – lowliness – it is a willingness to take the place which we ought to take in the sight of God; servant slave
 - i. This type of mindset will lead us to a willingness to perform lowly and humble works for the benefit others
 - d. count others more than yourself – we can only see the outward conduct of others but in our case we can look within. We should not project our thinking and our feelings, often so sinful, unto others.

- 4. Verse 4 – Resolve to seek your brothers well-being – Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.
 - a. Looking out for the interest of others.
 - i. As Christians we have an affirmative duty to look out for one another.
 - ii. A Christian’s care for a fellow Christian is a duty that is sacred and one to which God demands adherence.
 - 1. **1 John 4:20** If anyone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen.

- 5. Verse 5-8 – Resolve to be Christ-minded – Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, (6) who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, (7) but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. (8) And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

- a. Verse 5 – We are to have the mind of Christ – we have been given said mind when we came to Christ
 - i. This is a call to think on an entirely different plain than the world thinks. How could this impact your life?
 - b. Verse 6 – did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped
 - i. Christ renounced his prerogative as God and came in order to save us – this is the mind of Christ
 - c. Verse 7 – he emptied himself – The king becomes a servant
 - i. Taking the form of a servant
 - 1. He gave up heavenly authority
 - d. Verse 8 – he became obedient to the point of death – Obedience to the Father was of the utmost importance
6. Verse 12-13 – Resolve to be obedient to God – Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, (13) for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.
- a. Obedience – to his commands and word
 - i. **John 14:23** Jesus answered him, "If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.
 - b. Working out our salvation – resolve to live holy
 - i. Sanctification with fear and trembling
 - 1. **1 Peter 1:15** but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct,
 - c. God is working in us – resolve to know God's electing love
7. Verse 14 – Resolve not to complain– Do all things without grumbling or disputing
- a. All things – what does this mean to you and I, practically?
 - b. Without grumbling – a secret displeasure not openly shown
 - c. Without disputing – without hesitation because of internal strife
8. Verse 15 – Resolve to be Blameless – that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world,
- a. **1 Peter 3:16** having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame.

9. Verse 16 – Resolve to hold fast to the word – holding fast to the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain.

- a. **Psalms 119:105-106** Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. (106) I have sworn an oath and confirmed it, to keep your righteous rules.

10. Practice –

- a. Admit you need help, and ask God for it.
 - i. God will honor your prayer. It is God’s heart that you should walk worthy of His holy calling.
- b. Start with one step at a time – Add something to your life and then continue adding as God gives you victory.
- c. Make the changes a part of your everyday routine –
 - i. **Joshua 1:8** This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.
- d. Keep track – Keep a journal
 - i. **2 Timothy 4:7** I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.

11. Benediction –

- a. **Philippians 4:8** Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.

Public Reading of Scripture

Psalms 119:33-40