



Should I be Committed?

Proverbs 24:16: (NASB) *For a righteous man falls seven times, and rises again, but the wicked stumble in time of calamity.*

Happy New Year! Another year in the books - for some of us, we may look back and think "I'm glad that's over!" For others we may look back and think, "I'm glad that happened!" For all of us, I hope we look forward with hope and anticipation for God's will and blessing in this new year. As we begin 2012, let's take some time and talk about what it takes to make the kind of changes in our lives that will actually be meaningful and hopefully permanent steps forward towards a more effective life as a child of God.

Our Commitment



This will be a four part discussion, the parts of "Our Thoughts" and "Our Attitudes" will be covered today.

 **30 day changes are an easier way, Matt Cutts, TedTV**

- *A few years ago I felt like I was stuck in a rut. I decided to try something new for 30 days.*
- *Think about something you always wanted to add to your life and try it for the next 30 days...there were a few things I learned from this. The first was, instead of the months flying by forgotten, the time was much more memorable.*



Let us find a basis in God's wisdom for our thoughts:

Psalms 104:24: (NASB) *O LORD, how many are Your works! In wisdom You have made them all; The earth is full of Your possessions.*



A compass always points true north. Where does the "compass of our mind" naturally go back to find "true north"?

Does our true north go back to these things?

2 Timothy 3:1-5: (NRSV) *¹You must understand this, that in the last days distressing times will come. ²For people will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, ³inhuman, implacable, slanderers, profligates, brutes, haters of good, ⁴treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, ⁵holding to the outward form of godliness but denying its power. Avoid them!*

Romans 1:28: (NRSV) *And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind and to things that should not be done.*

God allows the true north of many of the human race to be way off, going in the wrong direction. God isn't going to make you find Him; He allows you to make choices with free will. But free will also needs checkpoints for which it can find its way back.

Hopefully our true north goes back to this:

Philippians 4:4-7: (KJV) *⁴Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice. ⁵Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. ⁶Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. ⁷And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*

A rejoicing attitude gives us peace.

Our wisdom should be based on God's wisdom:

Psalms 90:12: (NASB) *So teach us to number our days, that we may present to You a heart of wisdom.*

Job 28:12-13, 28: (NASB) *¹²But where can wisdom be found? And where is the place of understanding? ¹³Man does not know its value, nor is it found in the land of the living... ²⁸ And to man He said, Behold, the fear (the reverence, the respect) of the Lord, that is wisdom; And to depart from evil is understanding.*



What thoughts are we comfortable with?

"Comfort" can be deceiving, as it is not necessarily based upon what is good for us, but instead what is convenient for us. We all like to be comfortable, but we don't want to be lazy.



Luke 12:16-21: (NRSV) *¹⁶Then he told them a parable: The land of a rich man produced abundantly. ¹⁷And he thought to himself, What should I do, for I have no place to store my crops? ¹⁸Then he said, I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. ¹⁹And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry. ²⁰But God said to him, You fool! This very*



night your life is being demanded of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be? ²¹So it is with those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich toward God.

Is our thinking towards "stuff" or on something bigger than we are...the outworking of the plan of God?

Homeostasis, Kelly Traver, MD, SimonandSchuster.com

- Your brain operates on the same principle as your body - homeostasis. This is a fancy word for "don't rock the boat," keep everything the same.
- Just as your body's physiology works to keep parameters like calcium, blood sugar and weight stable, so does your brain work to continue whatever behavior it has become used to. Behavior change is hard, but the good news is, we can change.

Comfortable habits are hard to change. Sometimes the thoughts we are comfortable with are not necessarily the thoughts we should follow because they will keep us from the place we need to be.

Our thoughts must attain unto spiritual comfort:

1 Corinthians 2:1-5: (NASB) ¹And when I came to you, brethren, I did not come with superiority of speech or of wisdom, proclaiming to you the testimony of God. ²For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and him crucified. ³I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling, ⁴and my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, ⁵so that your faith would not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God.

Saul of Tarsus had a lot of personal power and influence. Once he became a Christian, he was humbled. From a physical standpoint, that would not have been comfortable. He walked towards that which he was originally against. *The Apostle Paul made a determined choice to focus on spiritual things!*



Eat more healthy food, All4TubeKidsChannel

- "I'm going to start eating more healthy foods like my dad does because it helps you get more energy. And it helps you run faster and get more exercise."

What thoughts tear us down?



Covetous thoughts!

Exodus 20:17: (NASB) *You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife or his male servant or his female servant or his ox or his donkey or anything that belongs to your neighbor.*



Lazy thoughts!

Proverbs 6:6-9: (NRSV) ⁶Go to the ant, you lazybones; consider its ways, and be wise. ⁷Without having any chief or officer or ruler, ⁸it prepares its food in summer, and gathers its sustenance in harvest. ⁹How long will you lie there, O lazybones? When will you rise from your sleep?

Think about how if we apply ourselves, our lives could become more valuable to those around us. We need to replace our laziness.



Idolatrous thoughts!

Romans 1:21-25: (NASB) ²¹For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. ²²Professing to be wise, they became fools, ²³and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures. ²⁴Therefore God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, so that their bodies would be dishonored among them. ²⁵For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

These are very deceptive. Our world is built on idolatry. We idolize people and make the people the center of everything instead of God. Ego never brings something good.

What thoughts build us up?



Humble thoughts:

Romans 12:3-5: (ASV) ³For I say, through the grace that was given me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think as to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to each man a measure of faith. ⁴For even as we have many members in one body, and all the members have not the same office: ⁵so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and severally members one of another.

We are part of something much bigger than any one individual. We are to contribute to the body of Christ.



Informed thoughts:

Psalms 25:4-5: (NASB) ⁴Make me know Your ways, O LORD; Teach me Your paths. ⁵Lead me in Your truth and teach me, for You are the God of my salvation; For You I wait all the day.

1 Peter 4:12-14: (NRSV) ¹²Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that is taking place among you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. ¹³But rejoice insofar as you are sharing Christ's sufferings, so that you may also be glad and shout for joy when his glory is revealed. ¹⁴If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the spirit of glory, which is the Spirit of God, is resting on you.

We become aware that trials are lessons for our benefits. The difficulties can be looked at positively. The sting of the pain is taken away.



Daily Power Ritual, the five things for tomorrow, [AmandaMarieBlog](#)

- *The day before, I make a list of five things I want to get done the next day. By doing it the day before, your mind subconsciously works on solutions to those problems so when you wake up in the morning, it's already engrained that those are the things you are going to get done today. More than five becomes daunting.*



Serving and sacrificial thoughts:

Romans 8:35-39: (NASB) ³⁵Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ³⁶Just as it is written, For Your sake we are being put to death all day long; We were considered as sheep to be slaughtered. ³⁷But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us. ³⁸For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.



Philippians 1:21: (NASB) *For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.*



Righteous thoughts:

Philippians 4:8:(NASB) *Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things.*

Patterns to consider:

Ephesians 3:1: Paul's commitment as a "prisoner of the Lord Jesus."

Joshua 24:15: *Chose ye this day whom ye shall serve. As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.*

John 2:17: ...The zeal of your house consumes me...



Watch less TV, All4TubeKidsChannel

- *I want to start watching less TV so I can spend more time with my family.*

Let us find a basis in God's love for our attitudes.



God's love for His creation:

1 John 4:16: (NASB) *We have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us. God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.*

How do we think our thoughts? There is a filter of attitude our thoughts go through. What does that filter keep out and let in? God's love should be our filter.



How do we establish "true north" for our attitude?

Exodus 20:8-10: (NASB) ⁸Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. ⁹Six days you shall labor and do all your work, ¹⁰but the seventh day is a sabbath of the LORD your God; in it you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter, your male or your female servant or your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you.



The Sabbath truly is an attitude - every day should be an attitude of rest and peace in God.



The following is a good contrast relating to the Sabbath attitude:

Luke 6:7-10: (KJV) ⁷And the scribes and Pharisees watched him, whether he would heal on the sabbath day; that they might find an accusation against him. ⁸But he knew their thoughts, and said to the man which had the withered hand, Rise up, and stand forth in the midst. And he arose and stood forth. ⁹Then said Jesus unto them, I will ask you one thing; Is it lawful on the sabbath days to do good, or to do evil? to save life, or to destroy it? ¹⁰And looking round about upon them all, he said unto the man, Stretch forth thy hand. And he did so: and his hand was restored whole as the other.

Their attitude was to trap Jesus.

Success means lots of failure, *Brian Tracy*

- *In order to be successful, you have to fail a lot. The law of probabilities says the more you fail the more likely you are to succeed. Have you ever failed? Does failure hurt you? No, failure makes you stronger.*

This is a different way to look at failure - use a new filter and see your failures as stepping stones to succeeding. God loves us, so our failures can be something valuable from which we can learn.

True north as described by Jesus - the will of God:

John 4:31-34: (NASB) ³¹Meanwhile the disciples were urging him, saying, Rabbi, eat. ³²But he said to them, I have food to eat that you do not know about. ³³So the disciples were saying to one another, no one brought him anything to eat, did he? ³⁴Jesus said to them, My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work.

True north as described by the Apostle Paul:

Philippians 3:7-11: (NASB) ⁷But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. ⁸More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ, ⁹and may be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith, ¹⁰that I may know him and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his sufferings, being conformed to his death; ¹¹in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

His filter was the will of God through Jesus. Christ was the only value in his life, all else was meaningless.

Clean up our messes, *All4TubeKidsChannel*

- *I'm going to start cleaning up my messes. They are my messes and not my daddy's messes.*

What attitudes bring us down? Where do they come from?



Entitlement: **John 11:47-50:** (NASB) ⁴⁷Therefore the chief priests and the Pharisees convened a council, and were saying, What are we doing? For this man is performing many signs. ⁴⁸If we let him go on like this, all men will believe in him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation. ⁴⁹But one of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to them, You know nothing at all, ⁵⁰nor do you take into account that it is expedient for you that one man die for the people, and that the whole nation not perish.



A lazy, entitled attitude is damaging. We need our filter to add in the flavor of humility!



Gradual stepwise changes, Kelly Traver, MD, SimonandSchuster.com

- *We know that if you practice a new behavior over and over for a long enough period of time, your brain will eventually decide that this new behavior is the one that needs to be protected and continued.*
- *Too rapid a change is interpreted by most brains as a stressful event. People who are ultimately successful in making and maintaining major behavioral changes do so through gradual step-wise changes.*



Pride: Proverbs 18:11-12: (NRSV) ¹¹The wealth of the rich is their strong city; in their imagination it is like a high wall. ¹²Before destruction one's heart is haughty, but humility goes before honor.

Proverbs 27:1-2: (NASB) ¹Do not boast about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring forth. ²Let another praise you, and not your own mouth; A stranger, and not your own lips.

Proverbs 16:17-19: (NASB) ¹⁷The highway of the upright is to depart from evil; He who watches his way preserves his life. ¹⁸Pride goes before destruction, And a haughty spirit before stumbling. ¹⁹It is better to be humble in spirit with the lowly Than to divide the spoil with the proud.



Anger: Ephesians 4:25-27: (NASB) ²⁵Therefore, laying aside falsehood, speak truth each one of you with his neighbor, for we are members of one another. ²⁶Be angry, and yet do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, ²⁷and do not give the devil an opportunity.

Proverbs 27:4: (NASB) Wrath is fierce and anger is a flood, but who can stand before jealousy?

We need to properly filter anger. It's okay to have anger, but it can't overwhelm you. Our attitude should be based upon the love of God. Our anger should filter through God's love and then we can put it in perspective.



Greed: Luke 12:15: (NRSV) And he said to them, Take care! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; for one's life does not consist in the abundance of possessions.

What a profound statement! If wealth brought happiness then the wealthiest people in the world would be the happiest people in the world.

Luke 16:14-15: (NASB) ¹⁴Now the Pharisees, who were lovers of money, were listening to all these things and were scoffing at him. ¹⁵And he said to them, You are those who justify yourselves in the sight of men, but God knows your hearts; for that which is highly esteemed among men is detestable in the sight of God.



Laziness: Proverbs 26:12-16: (ASV) ¹²Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? There is more hope of a fool than of him. ¹³The sluggard saith, There is a lion in the way; A lion is in the streets. ¹⁴As the door turneth upon its hinges, so doth the sluggard upon his bed. ¹⁵The sluggard burieth his hand in the dish; It wearieth him to bring it again to his mouth. ¹⁶The sluggard is wiser in his own conceit than seven men that can render a reason.



Play outside more, [All4TubeKidsChannel](#)

- *We are going to start playing outside more instead of playing on the computer.*



What attitudes encourage us? Where do they come from?



Happiness/Contentment: 1 Timothy 6:6-7: (NASB) ⁶But godliness actually is a means of great gain when accompanied by contentment. ⁷For we have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either.

1 Peter 4:12-14: (NASB) ¹²Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you; ¹³but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that also at the revelation of his glory you may rejoice with exultation. ¹⁴If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you.

Contentment doesn't mean we are excited about a difficult trial, but we are able to accept it because it is there for our growth.



Small sustainable changes more likely to stick, Matt Cutts, TedTV

- *Small sustainable changes - things that I could keep doing - they were more likely to stick. There is nothing wrong with big, crazy challenges, but they are not likely to stick. What are you waiting for? I guarantee you, the next 30 days are going to pass whether you like it or not. So why not try something you always wanted to try. Give it a shot for the next 30 days!*



Joy: Philippians 4:4-7: (NRSV) ⁴Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. ⁵Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. ⁶Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Joy = Heart and Mind being guarded by God's peace

Nehemiah 8:10: (NASB) Then he said to them, Go, eat of the fat, drink of the sweet, and send portions to him who has nothing prepared; for this day is holy to our Lord. Do not be grieved, for the joy of the LORD is your strength.



Reverence/Humility: John 13:13-17: (NASB) ¹³You call me Teacher and Lord; and you are right, for so I am. ¹⁴If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. ¹⁵For I gave you an example that you also should do as I did to you. ¹⁶Truly, truly, I say to you, a slave is not greater than his master, nor is one who is sent greater than the one who sent him. ¹⁷If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.

Jesus took the position of the lowest servant and is our example. How can we go out and be helpful to someone every single day?

Proverbs 1:7: (NASB) The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; Fools despise wisdom and instruction.

Psalms 111:10: (NASB) The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; A good understanding have all those who do His commandments; His praise endures forever.

We can safely say that knowledge and wisdom come from reverence.



80/20 rule not perfection, Kelly Traver, MD, SimonandSchuster.com

- *The 80/20 rule: If you follow healthy guidelines and principles 80% of the time, you'll be healthy. You don't have to be perfect to have good health.*



Perseverance/Determination: Romans 8:38-39: (NASB) ³⁸For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.



Compassion: Matthew 9:11-13: (NASB) ¹¹When the Pharisees saw this, they said to His disciples, Why is your Teacher eating with the tax collectors and sinners? ¹²But when Jesus heard this, he said, It is not those who are healthy who need a physician, but those who are sick. ¹³But go and learn what this means: 'I desire compassion, and not sacrifice,' for I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners.

Attitude is the filter through which our thoughts go. What is our attitude built upon? It should be the love of God. Our thoughts should be built upon the wisdom of God. We will talk in a future program about our words and actions. These together provide a very concrete way to change our lives to honor God.

*Should I be committed?
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...
Think about it...!*



*And now even more to think about...
only in the **Full Edition** of CQ Rewind!*

First, coming up in the next installment of this program - the other two pieces to the commitment puzzle:

Our words: Let us find a basis in God's justice for them, tempered with love and wisdom



- What kinds of words are in our list of "10 most used phrases"?
- What words do we not want to hear related to our lives?
- What words do we want to hear related to our lives?
- Which words do we use most often while relating to others?



Our actions: Let us find a basis in God's power for them, also tempered with all of the above

- What habits do we have?
- Which of these habits weaken us?
- Which habits make us stronger?



Second, all of this is really about focusing on the little things in life so they fit into the context of what the big picture of your life is all about:

Song of Solomon 2:15: (NRSV) *Catch us the foxes, the little foxes, that ruin the vineyards-- for our vineyards are in blossom.*

This text teaches us to be aware of subtlety. In Biblical times, foxes would enter grape orchards in search of food and spoil the crop. However, the little foxes were too small to reach the grape bunches so they would chew on the vines and kill the whole vine. Instead of the farmer just losing the crop, he would lose the entire vine, which was much more disastrous.

Spiritually the same lesson applies. We tend to overlook the little things as not so important - yet, sometimes these little things end up having the potential to wreak havoc in our lives.

God is faithful in what He has given us:

Matthew 6:24-33: (NRSV) ²⁴*No one can serve two masters; for a slave will either hate the one and love the other, or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.* ²⁵*Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?* ²⁶*Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?* ²⁷*And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life?* ²⁸*And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin,* ²⁹*yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these.* ³⁰*But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you--you of little faith?* ³¹*Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear?'* ³²*For it is the Gentiles who strive for all these things; and indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.* ³³*But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.*

So we also should be faithful in what we are given:

Luke 19:12-26: (NRSV) ¹²*So he said, A nobleman went to a distant country to get royal power for himself and then return.* ¹³*He summoned ten of his slaves, and gave them ten pounds, and said to them, 'Do business with these until I come back.'* ¹⁴*But the citizens of his country hated him and sent a delegation after him, saying, 'We do not want this man to rule over us.'* ¹⁵*When he returned, having received royal power, he ordered these slaves, to whom he had given the money, to be summoned so that he might find out what they had gained by trading.* ¹⁶*The first came forward and said, 'Lord, your pound has made ten more pounds.'* ¹⁷*He said to him, Well done, good slave! Because you have been trustworthy in a very small thing, take charge of ten cities.* ¹⁸*Then the second came, saying, Lord, your pound has made five pounds.* ¹⁹*He said to him, 'And you, rule over five cities.'* ²⁰*Then the other came, saying, Lord, here is your pound. I wrapped it up in a piece of cloth,* ²¹*for I was afraid of you, because you are a harsh man; you take what you did not deposit, and reap what you did not sow.* ²²*He said to him, I will judge you by your own words, you wicked slave! You knew, did you, that I was a harsh man, taking what I did not deposit and reaping what I did not sow?* ²³*Why then did you not put my money into the bank? Then when I returned, I could have collected it with interest.* ²⁴*He said to the bystanders, Take the pound from him and give it to the one who has ten pounds.* ²⁵*(And they said to him, Lord, he has ten pounds!)* ²⁶*I tell you, to all those who have, more will be given; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away.*



Third, this is a great article that gives a very practical look at making those changes in your life that can sometimes be so elusive. It follows along with some of the things we discussed in today's program:

Many people start the New Year making a resolution or two. It's symbolic of a fresh start and a new beginning toward self-improvement.

Usually the day after the New Year, I will arrive at the gym and find dozens of new people. Where these folks come from is a mystery. But you can be sure that by mid-February they will disappear, and the gym will return to its regulars. It happens every year.

This group of mysterious strangers made a New Year's resolution to exercise regularly. That can be quite a challenge. I have often heard that few of those who make resolutions make it beyond February.

Entrepreneurs don't take defeat well, and we will invest valuable energy beating ourselves up because we failed to keep those promises we make to ourselves.

I had that experience once. And once was plenty. About 25 years ago, all in one breath, I resolved to give up smoking, eat healthier, weight train three days a week, do cardio six days a week and practice feeling love, compassion and kindness to all I came into contact with.

That last resolution did me in. All was fine when I found myself with pets. But trying to feel love and compassion for some of the folks who came in and out of my office and my life was driving me to smoke more and eat like there was no tomorrow.

The smoking and eating left me too exhausted to exercise. After about a month I felt beaten but not defeated, and decided I had to make a few adjustments in future New Year's resolutions.

I managed to construct a pretty good system. If you have been unable to maintain your goals and resolutions, perhaps you can get something from my method.

Mine is a two-part system. Part one is the short-term version. Part two is the yearlong version.

For those difficult resolutions like ridding yourself of bad habits, exercising regularly or eating for health, I use the monthly (short term) system. It works wonderfully well. You resolve to do a particular thing from the first of one month to the end of that same month. A day or two before the upcoming new month, evaluate how things have progressed and if all looks well, keep going for another cycle. Otherwise pitch it. It's a lot easier to deal with a tough situation one month at a time.

This system has allowed me to establish a healthy eating pattern, exercise five days a week and not smoke. So far I have managed to keep these things going for 24 years. And feeling more compassion has come a lot easier.

Now let's look at the traditional annual resolution, which is the long version. Anything that I resolve to do for an entire year must be fun, enjoyable and as exciting as a 5-year-old anticipating Christmas morning. Now, that's a great resolution! It makes those short-term resolutions easier to do.

I repeat the same resolution each year: to do something wonderful for myself every week.

One day a week I have a date with myself – alone, no company allowed. This annual resolution has opened a whole new world for me.

I have taken myself to movies, zoos, museums, art galleries, amusement parks and plays. I have experienced rock climbing, hiking, bird watching, pottery classes, acting lessons, cooking lessons, ridden in a hot air balloon and even taken part in a mid-air jet refueling....These outings have brought much joy to my life and enhanced my mind, body and spirit. I look forward to these weekly dates.



I once read "The great essentials of happiness are something to do, something to love, and something to hope for." Those sound like the ingredients for what a New Year's resolution should be.

So, if you decide to make resolutions this year, make your yearlong commitment the kind that will bring you joy and happiness. Make the more difficult goals short term, so you can review them month-to-month.

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Gladys Edmunds

Have a happy and God Blessed New Year
from all of us at Christian Questions!!!