



# Resolutionary Problem Solved

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What comes to mind when you hear the phrase,  
*New Year's Resolutions*?

Are you excited for January 1st, with grandiose plans for significant improvements in the coming year?

Or do the very words *New Year's Resolution* make you cringe, roll your eyes, and admit defeat before the next year has even begun?

Maybe you don't bother setting resolutions because you know you won't keep them. Maybe you're reading this well after the 1st of the year and are discouraged by having failed to keep the ones you'd set.

You are not alone.

According to Pewresearch.org, 30% of Americans made at least one resolution in January 2024. When the remaining 70% were asked why they chose not to make any resolutions, 56% of them said they simply don't like to do so.

Pew Research also reported that, just a few weeks into the new year of 2024, only 59% of those who had made New Year's Resolutions had kept *all* the ones to which they'd committed. Twenty-eight percent had kept *a portion* of the goals they'd established, and 13% had *discontinued* theirs altogether. *They hadn't even made it through the first month.*

I can relate to these statistics.

I've set goals, met goals, not set goals, and not met goals. I've set them and made them;  
I've set them and not made them.  
I've tried and succeeded, tried and failed,  
and I've failed to try to succeed.  
I've both embraced resolutions *and* shunned resolutions.

I've stood on both sides of the  
New Year's Resolution problem,  
for that is exactly what it is: a problem.  
But I've got good news:  
A problem presents the opportunity  
for a solution, right?

This blog presents a solution to the problem of New Year's Resolutions. I'm calling it the Resolutionary Problem Solved, and I pray it leaves you with both freedom and peace to walk forward into 2025 as the Lord has designed you to do.

Let's start with some definitions so that all of us, wherever we fall within this dilemma, can operate on the same plane.

*Note: if you're about to stop reading because you've already resolved to never make resolutions and therefore consider this topic doesn't fit you, please stay with me. That exact determination within myself is what led me to write this blog.*

## Definitions

First, you'll notice I'm using the phrase 'New Year's Resolutions' and the word 'goals' interchangeably, for they are essentially the same, apart from timing. So, this message is designed for everyone, regardless of the month during which it's being read.

**Resolve:** Decide firmly on a course of action;  
To find a solution or solve a problem

**Solve:** Find an answer to or explanation for a problem

**Re-Solve:** Repeat the process of finding an answer to  
or explanation for a problem

**Resolution:** A firm decision to do or not do something

Let's firmly decide to solve the problem of New Year's Resolutions by now defining what that problem actually is.

## Problem:

If we commit to resolutions, they often end prematurely or fail altogether, leading to frustration, disappointment, and self-pity,

ultimately concluding with the self-protective decision to not set any goals at all. On the other hand, if we don't set any resolutions, we increase the risk of falling into an aimless disposition that can breed an underproductive and even apathetic lifestyle.

A brief scouring of research on the internet overwhelmingly reveals goal-setters as more motivated, more focused, performing better, and operating with a sharper sense of decision-making than those who do not set goals.

As you read this, you may perceive what I realized while pondering this topic: the issue at hand isn't necessarily about whether or not to set goals; rather, it's about how we handle failure.

A couple years ago,  
I decided not to make New Year's Resolutions.  
I felt like they set me up for defeat and only resulted in discouragement. I was recently convicted though, when I sensed a personal challenge to reconsider this mindset.

What I thought gave me freedom  
actually held me back from accomplishing more.  
Yes, the Lord was still doing mighty things,  
but a few areas of my life had been neglected  
as a result of not setting intentional, specific goals.

Here's the bottom line:

You can choose to *not* set goals,  
or you can choose *to* set goals.

If you choose not to, you'll likely not reach any (or at best, haphazardly accomplish something small). On the other hand, if you *do* choose to, you'll at least

reach a portion of those goals. You may even reach all of them-- or even more.

So, why not dare to set goals, accomplish more than you would have without them, and choose to be okay with some failure?

The thought of 'being okay with some failure' may send a surge of fear through your soul. Again, you are not alone in that. It may be good to ask why our resolutions may fail. There are many explanations:

Maybe our goals weren't realistic,  
we didn't establish a system of accountability, or  
unforeseeable disruptions impeded our ability  
to do what we thought we could.

Whatever the reason, it's important for us to accept that it's possible we may not achieve exactly what we set out to do. And that's okay.

Benjamin Franklin himself declared, *"I didn't fail the test. I just found 100 ways to do it wrong."* I don't know about you, but I'm exceedingly thankful for Franklin's 'failures,' as they paved the way for a multitude of successful inventions that still improve our quality of life today (including the eyeglasses I need to wear in order to type this right now).

I love what Proverbs 24:16 says.

***For a righteous man may fall seven times  
and rise again, but the wicked  
shall fall by calamity.***

Life is unpredictable.

We're going to fumble and bumble our way through some things.

If you stumble, rise again.  
Then resolve to re-solve whatever prompted the fall:

Look back at what needs to change,  
fix any new issues,  
address any impediments,  
make necessary adjustments,  
then move forward.

Let's not forget God's promises and all the examples throughout the Bible of people who made mistakes or fell short of God's vision for them, then got back up and on the right track and ended up in the Hall of Faith in Hebrews 11.

That said, there are a few practical tips worth mentioning that successful goal-setters view as critical:

- Ensure your desired achievements are specific, measurable, and achievable.
- Establish a system of accountability, with someone who knows you'll report to them with progress updates.
- Write down your goals and keep them in front of your face daily.

Above all else, seek the Lord for His will,  
and surrender your plans to Him.  
The most extraordinary achievements in my life  
have been a result of God's guidance  
by His Holy Spirit and through His Word.

We can set goals all day long, but if those accomplishments are rooted in vanity or selfish gain, things won't end well for us. Let's resolve together to keep the following Scriptures at the core of all we endeavor, entrusting our future to the One who holds tomorrow.

***A man's heart plans his way,  
but the Lord directs his steps.***

*Proverbs 16:9*

***But seek first the kingdom of God  
and His righteousness, and  
all these things shall be added to you.***

*Matthew 6:33*

***Trust in the Lord with all your heart,  
and lean not on your own understanding;  
in all your ways acknowledge Him,  
and He shall direct your paths.***

*Proverbs 3:5-6*

As Philippians 4:13 states, we can do all things through *Christ* who strengthens us. Not through ourselves, not through fancy goal-setting seminars, not through hopes for fulfilled New Year's Resolutions, but *through Christ alone, who strengthens us.*

## **CHALLENGE**

What I'm going to say next may blow your mind if you haven't heard it before. Did you know that all your days were written in God's book before any of them came to be? Psalm 139:16 says,

***Your eyes saw my substance, being yet  
unformed. And in Your book they all were  
written, the days fashioned for me,  
when as yet there were none of them.***

Ephesians 2:10 makes this point as well.

***For we are His workmanship,  
created in Christ Jesus for good works,  
which God prepared beforehand  
that we should walk in them.***

God prepared all your good works before you had the mind to think of them. All your days were written before any of them came to be. How fantastic is this!

Hearing this though, may leave us assuming we need not bother with setting goals or striving for excellence. After all, God has things already set in place. That couldn't be farther from the truth. In fact, it is *because* He has already written our days that we *must* pray and seek His face so we may know His revealed will and specific plans for us. As the Scripture above says, the Lord prepared beforehand all the good works we'd do, and now we are to *do* them-- we are responsible to find out what those are, get up off the couch and *walk in* them. Today. Tomorrow. Next year.

We partner with God, as He works His will through us. What a glorious, divinely arranged relationship.

So, how may we summarize the solution to the Resolution Problem?

**Solution:**

Ask the Lord what goals *He wants* you to follow.  
Search *His Word and His Spirit* for counsel.  
Ask Him what *His timing* is for each pursuit.  
It may be January 1st, mid-March, or late September.

*Freely walk by His Spirit, not by worldly pressures.*



Above all, pursue *Him*: His presence, His character. Walk forward in faith with no fear, learning from mistakes. Jesus will use those mistakes for good! (Romans 8:28)

Resolve to solve and re-solve issues as they arise, then give God glory and celebrate resolutions as they are fulfilled.

Ta-da! Resolutionary Problem Solved.

Go have fun setting some New Year's (or mid-year's) Resolutions!

***Trust in the Lord, and do good;  
dwell in the land, and feed on His  
faithfulness. Delight yourself also in  
the Lord, and He shall give you the desires  
of your heart.***

***Commit your way to the Lord,  
trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to  
pass. He shall bring forth your  
righteousness as the light,  
and your justice as the noonday.***  
*Psalms 37:3-6*

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### **Bonus: Time Remaining**

Here's a cool story that weaves two testimonies together, presenting a timely message from a clock and a carwash. God can use anything!

Time Remaining:  
Blog

Time Remaining:  
Podcast

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## **Double Bonus: *The Zone***

The Zone: Blog

Make sure to read or listen to *The Zone*, as it compliments this blog beautifully! Question your comfort zone, step into *The Zone*, and go places you never thought you'd go.

The Zone: Podcast

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