

Hi everyone, greetings.

This is the season when we are well into the breaking of our New Year's resolutions. I meet fewer and fewer who actually make New Year's resolutions, and according to Statistic Brain, the top 10 New Year's Resolutions for 2015 were: (1) lose weight, (2) get organized, (3) spend less and save more, (4) enjoy life to the fullest, (5) stay fit and healthy, (6) learn something exciting, (7) quit smoking, (8) help others in their dreams, (9) fall in love, and (10) spend more time with family. Does any of this sound familiar? For sure, I have never met anyone whose resolution was to write more emails each week!

Here are some possible personal spiritual New Year's resolutions. I found them online (<https://www.offthegridnews.com/religion/10-new-years-resolutions-that-will-change-your-spiritual-life/>). Take a look at them. They are more focused on who we are rather than on what we do....

- 1. Pray every day to hear God's will for my life and be obedient to it.** "What other nation is so great as to have their gods near them the way the Lord our God is near us whenever we pray to him?" (Deut 4:7)
- 2. Read the Bible every day to understand God's character and his ways.** "For the Word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart" (Heb 4:12).
- 3. Encourage others to start or continue their journey of faith.** "Finally brothers and sisters, rejoice! Strive for full restoration, encourage one another, be of one mind, live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you" (2 Cor 13:11).
- 4. Invite at least one person from my family or community to my church each week.** "But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called 'today', so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness" (Heb 3:13).
- 5. Join a local year round Bible study.** "I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you" (Ps 119:11).
- 6. Commit to a community outreach for one season.** "He defends the cause of the fatherless and the widow and loves the foreigner residing among you, giving them food and clothing" (Deut 10:18).
- 7. Volunteer at my local church for some departmental responsibilities, e.g. to teach a Sabbath School class.** "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as ransom for many" (Mark 10:45).
- 8. Open my home to times of fellowship and discipleship.** "Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing so some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it" (Heb 13:2)

9. Commit to identifying the needs vs. wants in my budget and increasing my charitable giving. “And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow? They do not labor or spin” (Matt 6:28).

10. Keep a journal to daily or weekly document the progress of my resolutions. “This observance will be for you like a sign on your hand and a reminder on your forehead that this law of the Lord is to be on your lips” (Ex 13:9a).

Whatever your New Year’s resolutions, may the Holy Spirit be close to each of us throughout 2019, and may we find peace for our souls as we follow the Good Shepherd through this coming year.

Conrad.