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# Tower of Strength

**“The name of the Lord is a strong tower  
The righteous runs into it and is safe.”**

**—Proverbs 18:10**

## Some New Year's Resolutions

1.) I will muster more trust and commitment to God. “We walk by faith, not by sight” (2 Cor. 5:7).

2.) I will pray every day. “Pray without ceasing” (1 Thessalonians 5:17).

3.) I will read God’s word every day, even if I have to get up earlier or stay up later. “How blessed is the man [whose] delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law he meditates day and night” (Psalm 1:1–3).

4.) I will come to all opportunities for worship and study. I will attend Bible class Sunday morning. “Let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near” (Hebrews 10:24–25).

5.) I will develop some talent in the church, such as song leading or Bible class teaching. “We are to grow up in all aspects into Him, who is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by that which every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body” (Ephesians 4:16).

**6.)** I will volunteer to help in some way, such as meal preparation. “Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary. So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of faith” (Galatians 6:9–10).

**7.)** I will give up a bad habit or addiction. “By what a man is overcome, by this he is enslaved” (2 Peter 2:19). “I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship” (Romans 12:1).

**8.)** I will give up a sin, even if it requires drastic measures. “Many of those who practiced magic brought their books together and began burning them in the sight of everyone; and they counted up the price of them and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver. So the word of the Lord was growing mightily and prevailing” (Acts 19:19–20).

**9.)** I will stop hanging out with those who are a bad influence on me. “Do not be deceived: bad company corrupts good morals” (1 Corinthians 15:33).

**10.)** I will stop relying upon my credit cards. “The borrower becomes the lender’s slave” (Proverbs 22:7).

**11.)** I will not gossip. “He who conceals a transgression seeks love, but he who repeats a matter separates intimate friends” (Proverbs 17:9).

**12.)** I will limit my time in front of lighted screens. “I will walk within my house in the integrity of my heart. I will set no worthless thing before my eyes” (Psalm 101:2–3). “Be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, making the most of your time, because the days are evil” (Ephesians 5:16).

**13.)** I will give three hours more time weekly to my spouse and children, not distracted by anything else. “Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church” (Ephesians 5:25). “Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord” (Ephesians 6:4).

14.) I will do something kind for my spouse. “Her children rise up and bless her; her husband also, and he praises her” (Proverbs 31:28).

15.) I will stop nagging and criticizing my spouse needlessly. “Better is a dry morsel and quietness with it, than a house full of feasting with strife” (Proverbs 17:1). “It is better to live in a corner or a roof, than in a house shared with a contentious woman... It is better to live in a desert land than with a contentious and vexing woman” (21:9, 19).

16.) I will give God a raise. “He who sows sparingly shall also reap sparingly; and he who sows bountifully shall also reap bountifully” (2 Corinthians 9:6).

17.) I will send one note of encouragement a month to someone who is sick, bereaved, or downtrodden. “Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world” (James 1:27).

18.) I will open my home to other Christians. “Breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart” (Acts 2:46).

19.) I will greet at least three other Christians before sitting down in my pew. “Greet all the brethren with a holy kiss” (1 Thessalonians 5:26). “Greet the friends by name” (3 John 15).

20.) I will invite one person a month to worship services. “Everyone therefore who shall confess Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in heaven” (Matthew 10:32).

21.) I will make it to services on time, even if I have to get up ten minutes earlier in the morning—especially if I teach class. “All things must be done properly and in an orderly manner” (1 Corinthians 14:40).

22.) I will give to the poor. “He who shuts his ear to the cry of the poor will also cry himself and not be answered” (Proverbs 21:13).

23.) I will fast for things of great importance. “The Holy Spirit said, ‘Set apart for Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.’ Then, when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them” (Acts 13:2–3).

—*John Guzzetta*

# Keeping Your New Year's Resolutions

1.) Succeed with one or two of these resolutions rather than fail with many. Solomon says that it is “better that you should not vow than that you should vow and not pay” (Eccl. 5:5).

2.) Hang in there. Sociologists say that if you do something twenty-one times it becomes a habit. So, if you can force yourself to read that Bible every day for about a month, it will finally become second-nature to you.

3.) Schedule something you should do with something you must do. For example, do not allow yourself to eat breakfast until you've read a chapter of the Bible, do not allow yourself to get out of the shower until you pray for the sick, or buy a thoughtful card every time you go to the grocery store.

4.) The same scheduling concept works to help eliminate or limit bad habits, too. For example, vow that you will not watch TV between the time you get home from work and the time the children go to bed.

5.) Replace the bad with good. Find positive things to do with the time you've gained by quitting the bad things. Jesus' illustration in Matthew 12:43–45 shows that it is not enough to eliminate sin and leave a hole. Satan will find a way to fill the vacuum.

6.) Read and appreciate Ecclesiastes 5:4, which says, “when you make a vow to God, do not be late in paying it!”

7.) If necessary, get help from an accountable person or spouse. It's much harder to give up when you know someone is going to ask you about your faithfulness to your resolution.

8.) Meditate upon eternity. All this hard work will be worth it! Read Matthew 25:31–46.

—John Guzzetta

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## Quote of the Week:

“Few things are more dangerous to a person's integrity than having nothing to do and having plenty of time to do it.” —*author unknown*