

"I Am Resolved..."

(David's resolutions for a holy life--Psalm 101)

Intro: I always like to see the coming of a new year. I like the idea of a fresh start; I like the idea of the renewed purpose and resolve of New Year's resolutions. Without doubt, no person can successfully live the Christian life without a healthy resolve to do the Lord's will—to be able to look at life ahead and say, "I will serve the Lord better in the future than I have in the past".

Today let's take a look at a passage from the great king, David that I hope will guide us in making excellent spiritual resolutions. Turn to Psalm 101.

It is often difficult to establish a context for a particular psalm; but Delitzsch offers this as a possible scenario for Psalm 101: David had become King of Israel; and he wanted to bring the Ark of the Covenant back to Jerusalem after it had been captured by the Philistines and then returned to Israel many years before. His first attempt was disastrous. While transporting the ark back to Jerusalem, Uzzah touched it in violation of the Lord's commandment and lost his life. David was clearly frustrated and said, "How can the ark come unto me?"

David eventually realized the reason why his plan had been frustrated and Uzzah had die. "We sought Him not according to the ordinance"—that is they did not carry the ark in God's prescribed way. And now since David had seen that the Lord had blessed the house of Obed-Edom where the ark had remained, he wanted to bring it to Jerusalem that it might become the dwelling place of God and that His kingdom might be blessed by the Lord's presence.

So then it appears that David wrote this psalm to express his thoughts about the return of the ark. In this Psalm David's frustrated cry, "How can you come unto me" is now changed to the expectant longing, "When will you come unto me?" (v. 3)

But David knows that the Lord will only dwell where His people have a determined resolve to do His will. And so in this psalm we hear him express that resolve to live out as king the principles upon which God's kingdom is founded so that God can dwell with him! David gives impressive insight into the kind of life that is worthy of the Lord's presence.

We like David want the Lord to dwell with us. And He will if we possess the same determination to be faithful to Him that David did. And so maybe we can learn something of what we need to resolve to do by looking at David's vows of resolution. David in this psalm pledges to...

Praise God

I will sing of lovingkindness and justice, To Thee, O LORD, I will sing

praises.

In this first pledge David vows with great resolve to worship Jehovah. He mentions two features of God that are integral to his rule as king.

Loving kindness—The Hebrew word *chesed* suggests God's loyalty to His promises or His covenant commitment. It is often translated loving kindness or steadfast love.

Justice—God's impartial and uncapricious commitment to what is right and good

David vows to acknowledge God's character and praise Him for who He is!

Will you also say "I am resolved to praise God for His wonderful character?"

Through Him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name (Heb. 13:15).

Resolve today that you will:

Be present to worship God in the assemblies of His people.

Honor God in your home in song and prayer day by day.

Admiring God's character is the first step in becoming like Him. Thus David follows with this resolution with the pledge to...

Follow God's Guidance

I will give heed to the blameless way.

David said he would thoughtfully reflect upon and pursue the way of God.

God had provided for this by commanding the kings of Israel to read the book of the law.

So also we need to study or be careful to know the truth.

"Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth." (2 Timothy 2:15, NASB)

Resolve that you will strive to learn the Lord's will for every area of your life.

If you make reading God's word a part of your daily life, you will be gaining the knowledge you need to know the blameless way.

Third we see David resolve to...

Live with integrity at home.

I will walk within my house in the integrity of my heart.

David here promises to be sincere; to live in integrity in his palace.

The Hebrew word "tamim" suggests "completeness" or "wholeness."

David is not promising to be morally perfect, but rather to be completely committed to what is right.

Note the place—"within my house."

Like David we need integrity in our house.

Sometimes people's home life bears little resemblance to the public profession they make on Sunday. "If these walls could speak..." what would they say about us?

(but if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how

will he take care of the church of God?) (1 Tim. 3:5)

Purpose to live as well privately before those who are closest to you as you do before those who know you publicly!

Today will you say, "I am resolved to walk within my house in the integrity of my heart."

Fourth we see David resolve to

Make no provision for sin

I will set no worthless thing before my eyes;

David would not bring before Him the evil deeds and schemes of the wicked with a view of doing them.

How important that is for us in view of our pervasive media culture!

I once heard of someone who cut this scripture out and put it on their television!

One cannot sometime keep from seeing evil; but he does not have to invite it into his home. Or as a proverb says it, "You can't keep the birds from flying over your head, but you don't have let them build a nest in your hat!"

But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts (Rom. 13:14)

Let us resolve to keep out of sight those things that would encourage us to do wrong! That present sin in a favorable light. Will you like

David say, "I will set no worthless thing before my eyes."

But if David was resolved to keep evil from before him, he also was resolved not to let sin get a grip upon him.

Overcome temptation

I hate the work of those who fall away; It shall not fasten its grip on me.

David simply resolves to overcome temptation to do as evil men do. He will resist any appeal to do wrong.

Likewise see must be resolved to overcome temptation. Realistically we know we'll be tested.

Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, that you may be able to endure it. (1 Cor. 10:12-13)

Resolve to overcome temptation, to look for the way of escape (1 Cor. 10:12-13)

Will you like David say, "I resolve to hate the work of those who fall away, it will not fasten its grip upon me?"

Be pure in motive

A perverse heart shall depart from me; I will know no evil.

Earlier David had spoken of living well before others. Here he looks within. He wants his intentions and motives to be pure and devoted to the Lord as

well.

Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God. (Mt.5:6)

Resolve not only to do what is right, but do for the right reason, because your heart is in it!

Finally turns from speaking about his own life to his intentions toward those who were a part of his kingdom. He speaks now as an administrator of the kingdom of God . As head of the nation, he pledges to...

Oppose the enemies of God’s cause and be partners with the faithful.

Whoever secretly slanders his neighbor, him I will destroy; No one who has a haughty look and an arrogant heart will I endure. My eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with me; He who walks in a blameless way is the one who will minister to me. He who practices deceit shall not dwell within my house; He who speaks falsehood shall not maintain his position before me. Every morning I will destroy all the wicked of the land, So as to cut off from the city of the LORD all those who do iniquity.

In this section we discern two key principles:

First David had no intention of tolerating evil people in his administration. As king of Israel he wanted righteousness to prevail in the land. Wicked men, criminals, would be punished. He would deal with them according to the Law speedily and decisively. Further, He did not want to choose his servants from among the proud and wicked—those who slander others with their tongue and who are lifted up with pride.

Second David would partner with the faithful. He would be served in his court by people of honesty and godliness.

Of course, we do not have the judicial power that David did; but we can choose what kind of relationships we will have with others. We can turn away from people who use slander to destroy others. We can choose to associate with people of good moral character.

Do not be deceived: “Bad company corrupts good morals.” (1 Cor. 15:33)

That's not only a good lesson for young people; it's a good lesson for all of us. Even in adulthood we can be influenced by people who do not share our values and be pressured to compromise.

Conclusion: Let me urge you to make good spiritual resolutions like David. These are resolutions worth striving for. They will make a difference in our lives and make us an influence for good wherever we are. And living by them will assure us that God will dwell among us.