

Make This the Best Year of Your Life!

Intro: How was your 2022? Some of you may say, "It was great. Lots of good things happened in my life last year." Others may say, "It's a year I'd rather forget, one of the worst years of my life." However you may answer that, I hope that since we've turned a page into a new year we can start afresh and establish some priorities for the new year.

Every year people around the world begin the New Year with various resolutions for a better life. Some of the most popular include: Starting a hobby; making more money; getting more exercise; stopping smoking; losing weight. I can appreciate all these resolutions and see the reason why they are popular with people; and most, if not all of them, would add a measure of enjoyment or benefit to our lives.

However, I would like to suggest four other things that would greatly change and bless your life this coming year. These are not often considered; but implementing these four principles would help make 2023 the best year of your life!

Don't forget to meet the daily needs of your spirit as well as your body!

Paul had an interesting way of describing our personal composition:

Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Thes. 5:23)

He affirms that we have a three-fold nature; and it is reasonable to infer that each of these has unique needs.

Many of our personal goals center upon the body; others center around the basic longings of our inner being--the soul; but we often neglect to meet the needs of our spirit!

We are not the only culture to have emphasized bodily fitness to the exclusion of our spiritual nature. That why Paul urged Timothy: *....discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness; for bodily discipline is only of little profit, but godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come. (1 Tim. 4:7-8)*

Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, For this is man's all. For God will bring every work into judgment, Including every secret thing, Whether good or evil. (Eccl. 12:13-14)

Make this year the best year of your life by doing something for your spiritual nature as well as the longing of your soul and the needs of your body.

Remember that all of us have a spiritual hole that can't be filled with material things!

We can never feel truly “whole” if we neglect an important aspect of our nature as human beings!
Take time for worship, for prayer, for Bible reading, for meditation on spiritual things every day.
Settle unfinished business with God, dealing with sins against His will, and start living for Him!

Tap into the wisdom of God for life's important decisions!

Have you ever consider what life is? Life is a series of decisions.

Some are insignificant; and some are very important (the moral choices we make).

If we want a better life we must learn to make better decisions. Here is where the wisdom of God comes in!

Tap into the wisdom of God!

Acknowledge God as creator of everything and the wise Father He is.

The Lord by wisdom founded the earth; By understanding He established the heavens. (Prov. 3:19)

Realize that God knows more than you and me!

The fear of the Lord is the instruction for wisdom, And before honor comes humility. (Prov. 15:33)

Understand that God’s wisdom is available to us in the Scriptures!

Yet we do speak wisdom among those who are mature; a wisdom, however, not of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are passing away; but we speak God’s wisdom in a mystery, the hidden wisdom, which God predestined before the ages to our glory; (1 Cor. 2:6-7)

Let God have control of the decision-making process.

The fear of the Lord leads to life, so that one may sleep satisfied, untouched by evil. (Prov. 19:23)

Focus on the quality of your relationships!

As I read the resolution list, I sensed that all people have the same basic longings and aspirations. The list reveals a consciousness of how important relationships are—our friends, our family. So much of the Bible is devoted to improving the quality of our relationships.

The central commands of the Scripture focus on first our relationship with God, and then our relationship with everyone around us!

And He said to him, ”You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.” “This is the great and foremost commandment. “The second is like it, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ (Mt. 22:37-39)

The Bible speaks in specific terms about relationships. Paul in Ephesians 5 after speaking in general terms of our lifestyle as Christians focuses in on our relationships: (Our brethren, Our Spouses, Our children, Our “Masters”, our Society)

Focus on the quality of your relationships!

Affirm the value of the people in your life. When you come to the end of your life, you're not going to say, "I wish I had spent more time at the office!"

Agree to do something to enrich the life of someone else each day.

It's not what others do for you, but what you do for others that counts.

Live life a day at a time remembering it could be your last!

I used to conduct a Bible study with a group of ladies in a senior citizen's home. I remember after every study the group would sing, "One day at a time". It had become their "theme song". They had learned the value of an important Biblical principle.

*"Therefore do not be anxious for tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own. (Mt. 6:34)
Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow, we shall go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit." Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away. (Jas. 4:13-14)*

Live life a day at a time remembering it could be your last!

Don't get so wrapped up in tomorrow you can't live today!

Maintain a "no regrets" outlook.

End each day with spiritual evaluation.

Conclusion: The most important thing you can do for your life is committing to be a disciple of Jesus Christ.

"The thief comes only to steal, and kill, and destroy; I came that they might have life, and might have it abundantly. (Jn. 10:10)

We can have this abundant life through Jesus' sacrifice for us and through following His teachings.

Our first priority should be to deal with the problem of sin in our lives. Jesus died to make forgiveness of our sins possible. Through his death on the cross for us we can have God's forgiveness and a new life with Him.

"Of Him all the prophets bear witness that through His name everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins." (Acts 10:43)

And Peter said to them, "Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. (Acts 2:38)

'Happy New Year' is no more than sentimental wishful thinking for those who are still without Christ; but those whose eternal prosperity is guaranteed by their trust in Christ's sacrifice can look forward to a 'Happy New Year' whatever happens to them during it. (P.T Crosby)