

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS

James 4:13-14 ... "Come now, you who say, 'Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit;' whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away."

Many people, perhaps yourself, make resolutions for the new year. They believe that January 1 marks a new beginning for them; an opportunity to start over and correct some behaviors in themselves that they (or others) do not like. You may say, "Starting January 1, I will go on a diet," or "I resolve to be on time at my job in 2017." You may make a resolution to read your Bible every day, or pray every day, or invite people to church. You may resolve to study harder, work harder, cook better or drive more safely. These are all excellent resolutions.

So, if resolutions are good, why wait until January 1? Are the months of the year (January, February, March and so on) on God's calendar? Does God need a calendar? Did God invent the calendar? God created the earth and moon and placed them in space so that a full moon occurs once each month. We might speculate that God did that to give man a tool for measuring time. However, in God's kingdom, time has no bearing. We use the calendar today, which was put in place by the Roman emperor Julius Ceasar before Christ was born, to designate time for work, time for worship, and time for rest.

If there is something in your life that you know should be changed, why wait until January 1 to do so? Today's verse reminds us that we do not know what will happen tomorrow. It also reminds us that our lives are very short. Is midnight when 2016 transitions to 2017, a magical event?

I have never understood the significance of the New Year and the festivities that mark it. I wake up every morning with a new chance to make things right, to be a better person, and to correct bad behaviors. I urge you to do the same. If you feel the need to resolve to do something, do not wait until January 1. Do it today. If you want to lose weight, start today. If you want better grades in school, begin using better study habits today. If you want to be more kind to others, do it now.

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