

Sermon on the Mount: New Year, New Focus

Top 10 Most Common New Year's Resolutions:

1. Exercise more
2. Lose weight
3. Get organized
4. Learn a new skill or hobby
5. Live life to the fullest
6. Save more money / spend less money
7. Quit smoking
8. Spend more time with family and friends
9. Travel more
10. Read more

“It’s so tempting to make self-improvement our New Year’s resolution but what we need is Self-sacrifice. Don't give up a habit, give up your heart.”

-Rend Collective

“But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.”

-Matthew 6:33

1. Others-Focused

- a. Reconcile Relationships – **Matthew 5:24**
 - i. Harboring anger and unforgiveness is detrimental, it hinders our worship
 - ii. Do not let the sun go down on your anger, it gives the devil a foothold (Eph. 4:26-27)
- b. Turn the cheek, go the extra mile – **Matthew 5:38-42**
 - i. It is hard, but one thing I am trying to teach my children is to not react in a way that adds fuel to the fire
 - ii. Do more than expected and bless others (**Rom. 12:17-21**)
 - iii. Watch how people change when you don’t fight back but bless back
- c. Love and pray for enemies – **Matthew 5:43-48**
 - i. It is not enough to ignore them
 - ii. If there is someone you have a hard time with, I challenge you to begin to pray for them and see how your attitude changes
- d. Give to the needy – **Matthew 6:2-4**

- i. Jesus assumes that we will give
- ii. We are not drawing attention to ourselves for a temporary reward and recognition, which leads to our next point...

2. Eternity-Focused

a. Treasures in Heaven – Matthew 6:19-21

- i. The kingdom of God is eternal
- ii. Look to God's eternal reward, not man's temporary reward – 6:4, 6, 18 (giving to the needy, prayer, fasting – The Father sees and rewards).
- iii. Money and possession are tools, but they cannot be our master – 6:24 – Gotta Serve Somebody

3. God-Focused

a. Through good deeds – Matthew 5:16

- i. Letting our light shine is about reflecting Jesus, the light of the world
- ii. Our good deeds are not to draw attention to ourselves but about pointing others to Jesus

b. Through Prayer – Matthew 6:9-10

- i. Honor/praise his name
- ii. It is about seeking his will not our own

c. Through Obedience – Matthew 7:24

- i. Be wise, his ways are the best