



From the Pastor
January 2020

Keeping Resolutions?

As the year starts many people try to improve their lives by making New Year's resolutions. Many will fail. Here is what one study says about keeping resolutions.

By the second week of February, some 80 percent of those resolution-ers are back home with a new kind of remorse staring back at them in the mirror – the remorse of disappointment ¹

We all want to better ourselves. We struggle with that, but we are not alone. The apostle Paul also struggled with doing good. Here is what he wrote in his letter to the church in Rome.



Romans 7:15-19 ¹⁵ For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. ¹⁶ Now if I do what I do not want, I agree with the law, that it is good. ¹⁷ So now it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. ¹⁸ For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in

¹Joseph Luciani, *Why 80 Percent of New Year's Resolutions Fail*, USNews.com, December 29, 2015, at <https://health.usnews.com/health-news/blogs/eat-run/articles/2015-12-29/why-80-percent-of-new-years-resolutions-fail>, accessed on 12/23/19.

my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out.¹⁹ For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. (ESV)

When it comes to being good and doing the right thing, Paul found it impossible. We are the same way. Shortly after we make our New Year's resolutions, we face our weaknesses. We fail.

What is the answer? Paul gives us the answer further on in his letter. Look at what else he wrote.

Romans 8:3-6 ³ *For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh,⁴ in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.⁵ For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit.⁶ For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. (ESV)*

The answer to doing what God commands, what our hearts desire to do, is found in what God has made possible. God sent Jesus to us. When Jesus came, He came in flesh like us, but He did not sin. Jesus was condemned for our sin, and when we accept Jesus and what He did, we receive the Holy Spirit. In the power of the Holy Spirit we find the hope to live the life that we desire to honor God.

This year, as you desire to do what is God's desire, do it by depending on the Holy Spirit. Allow God to live in and through you, giving you the power to do as He commands. Keep your resolutions this year by keeping your mind set on God.

In Him and for His glory,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pastor Art". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly stylized font.