**Resolutions for 2017**

*Philippians 3:12-14*

**Introduction**

1. As the new year – 2017 – draws nigh, so does the day of judgment.
   1. ***“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad” (2 Corinthians 5:10)***.
   2. Every man will hear one of two things in that great day:
      1. ***“Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world” (Matthew 25:34)***.
      2. ***“Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels” (Matthew 25:41)***.
2. Christians have the hope of salvation – God has ***“begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead” (1 Peter 1:3)***.
3. However, hope implies we have not yet attained the object of our desire – ***“hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees” (Romans 8:24)?***
4. Since we have not yet attained, we must press on as did Paul (**cf. Philippians 3:12-14)**.
   1. *We must constantly add to our faith, growing in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior.*
   2. *We must constantly improve in areas of weakness.*
   3. *We must give ample time to introspection to discover what needs improvement.*
5. Many at the end of the year like to make new year’s resolutions.
6. **This is something we should do as Christians even more so. The following are a few to consider:**
7. Resolutions for 2017
8. Bible Study
   1. ***“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” (2 Timothy 2:15)***.
      1. ***“Study to shew thyself approved unto God” (KJV).***
      2. The word is ***“diligent,”*** but the verse implies diligence in study.
      3. **We must become diligent studiers of God’s word.**
   2. **Psalm 119:33-40** – The psalmist had a deep interest and affection for God’s word.
      1. Do we delight in God’s commandments?
      2. Are we devoted to fearing God? *If so we must be studious.*
      3. Do we long for God’s precepts?
   3. ***“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled” (Matthew 5:6).***
      1. **We must have an insatiable appetite for righteousness.**
      2. It can only be fed with God’s word.
9. Prayer
   1. ***“pray without ceasing” (1 Thessalonians 5:17*** – prayer is commanded).
   2. ***“Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak” (Matthew 26:41*** – Jesus to disciples in Gethsemane – Prayer is NEEDED).
   3. **James 5:16-18** – Prayer is effective. (When Ahab forsook the commandments of God and began worshiping the Baals.)
   4. **We must be in constant contact with our God.**
10. Meditation
    1. **Meditation, study, and prayer are all closely related. They must be present together, and constant in our lives.**
    2. **Philippians 4:8-9** – We must dwell on things that are of moral virtue.
       1. Meditate – *logizomai* – to take an inventory, i.e. estimate.
       2. More than simply thinking, but considering the proper estimation of these things in our lives.
       3. **How do they apply? How can we incorporate these things in our lives?**
       4. **Searching for the deeper, and more applicable meaning of scripture.**
11. Attendance
    1. **Hebrews 10:24-25** – Do we have a habit of forsaking the assembly? We should break that habit ASAP.
       1. Not only on the first day of the week.
       2. On Wednesday night worship.
       3. Gospel meetings.
       4. **Work schedules around God’s time, not time for God around your schedule.**
    2. ***“I was glad when they said to me, ‘Let us go into the house of the Lord’” (Psalm 122:1).***
       1. Do we look forward to assembling?
       2. Do we delight in worship?
12. Exhortation (Outside of the assembly)
    1. **Hebrews 3:12-14** – Exhortation must be given daily.
    2. We must be mindful of our brethren in Christ, and seek to give them encouragement as often as the opportunity is present.
    3. **Christians must be involved with each other’s lives outside of the assembly.**
13. Evangelism
    1. **2 Corinthians 5:9-11** – We should have the attitude of the attitude of Paul and the other apostles.
       1. We as Christians know of the coming judgment, and know there will be no person who slips by undetected.
       2. **Because we know how serious this will be, we must persuade men!**
    2. **Matthew 28:18-20** – we must heed the Lord’s great commission.
14. **We need to resolve to be better in 2017 than we were in 2016.**

**Conclusion**

1. Our spiritual new year’s resolutions should outweigh our physical. They should be our priority.
2. We must have a resolve to be better as we press on toward the goal.