

# CHIEF MINISTRIES

January 2009

As the New Year is now upon us, we always hear of men making resolutions to be a better person. Aristotle spoke of 'the difference between actuality and potentiality.' the difference between what is and what can be.

Everyone from L. Ron Hubbard (Scientology) to Oprah (The Secret) has tips to a better life. I feel a lot of these men and women self-help gurus have good intentions, but remember the adage "The road to hell is paved with good intentions?"

There was a man named Jonathan Edwards back in 1722 who wrote a book called "Resolution" in New York City. He had just moved there as a young man facing tense moments in his life, brought about by a new environment. He prefaced his "resolutions" by stating "Being sensible that I am unable to do anything without God's help, I do humbly ask Him by His grace to enable me to keep these resolutions, so far as they are agreeable to His will for Christ's sake."

To resolve to do something is one thing, but to always preface it with that kind of a statement surely will help you. It's noble to try and be a better person, but let's live a life that counts, not just a life of putting in time.

His first resolution out of 70 was basically Matthew 10:39 whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it". (ESV

Jonathan Edwards's goals were distinctly different from all the self-help ideals we come up with i.e. "I'm going to stop eating sweets, or no more smoking for me, I'm going to exercise this year and lose weight, I 'm going to stop cutting in the chow line and eating twice", etc, etc.

In resolution #28 Edwards said "Resolved to study the scriptures, so steadily, so constantly and frequently, that I may find, and plainly perceive myself to grow in the knowledge of them."

Resolution #29 that his prayers never be counted as such unless he had the hope that God would answer them or a confession offered that God would accept.

Can we be so devoted to God that we realize every word we speak has eternal purpose? They do and we can!

# 31 "Resolved, never to say anything at all against anybody, but where it is perfectly agreeable to the highest degree of Christian honor and of love to mankind. "

# 33 “Resolved to do always what I can towards making, maintaining and preserving peace.”  
These three alone would change the world. We are human I know, as was Mr. Edwards.

# 34 “To speak not only the truth, but to speak it with kindness.”

His # 36 says. “Resolved, never to speak evil of any, before adding-- unless I have some partially good call for it.” We all have sinned.

His #56 “Resolved, never to give over, or in the least to slacken my fight with my corruptions, however unsuccessful I may be.”

Do you continue to fight the sin in your life or do you just give in over and over again? What, continue in sin that grace may abound? God Forbid!

A strong dose of humility and an abiding sense of our own humanity, frailty and short coming should help us in the making and keeping of our own resolutions this year. Take the time to ask God what He wants to do with your life this year.

Remember, Rome wasn't built in a day. Billy Graham wasn't always the great evangelist Billy Graham. Paul started out as Saul a man who killed the Christians.

The thing that's most important is that we all resolve to be on the road of change for the better, through the work of the God-Man Jesus Christ. He made the ultimate resolution to redeem us so we could be reconciled to the Father and pursue a life of holiness.

I'll close this with a quote from Jonathan Edwards as the best advice of all.

“In all your course, walk with God and follow Christ as a little, poor, helpless child, taking hold of Christ's hand, keeping your eye on the mark of the wounds on His hand and side.”

May you be blessed beyond measure this year.

**Time to shine in 2009!**

Fight the good fight of faith my fellow warriors. Be Blessed! Be God's! I am resolved, to pray for you all,

*Chief*