



## Six Steps to Help Christians Keep New Year's Resolutions

Many of us are skeptical when it comes to New Year's Resolutions. We may dismiss them altogether. But perhaps we shouldn't. A new year gives the feeling of a fresh start. Maybe you're pessimistic when it comes to New Year's Resolutions. Perhaps you've made and not kept them, so you think, "Why bother?"

### What Good Are New Year's Resolutions?

A professor at Scranton University performed a study on resolutions. In his research, he created and followed two groups of people for several years. Those in the first group didn't connect their goal to the traditional custom of beginning on January 1. As a result, only 50% were still living out the change two weeks after they began. And, after six months, only 4% were living out the change. Those who participated in the second group started making a change on January 1. Two weeks later, 71% were still living out the change. And, after six months, that number decreased to 46%.

**Making A Change Takes Commitment:** Something is compelling about making changes and commitments, especially at the start of a new year. What do you need to succeed in living a new way in 2019? What's one change you know you need to make in your life? Maybe:

- You want to be healthier.
- You want to take better control of your finances.
- You have a character issue you want to improve.
- You want to get closer to God.
- You want to read the Bible consistently this year or, spend more time praying.
- You want to start volunteering.

**Change Requires One Step At A Time:** The problem isn't making a New Year's Resolution; the problem is your resistance to take steps that will help you keep your New Year's Resolution. Try these six steps:

### Step One: I Can't. God Can.

We tend to base our ability to successfully make changes on our willpower. That doesn't represent the Christian life. The Christian life is, "I have been crucified with Christ, and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me" (Galatians 2:20). "Dead" people don't have a lot of power. Making positive changes in our lives honors God. Seeking to make those changes in our power dishonors God. He tells us, "Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit," (Zechariah 4:6). Your strategy for keeping your resolution needs to be total dependence on God, accessing his power through prayer.

### Step Two: Because I'm God's Child, I Give My Life to His Will.

The most important question about our New Year's Resolutions is why. Sometimes we pray, asking God to help us make a change we want to make. We don't understand why our prayers go unanswered. In James 4:3, God tells us, "When you ask, you don't get it because your motives are all wrong. You only want what's pleasing you." A Christian is someone who has decided to live in a way that, "whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God" (1 Corinthians 10:31). Whether we resolve to eat

more vegetables, drink more water, or whatever it is, we seek it for God's glory.

### Step Three: I Ask God to Help Me Own and Release My Past.

What's keeping people from the way they want to live in the future is the way they've lived in the past. In my life, for years I tried to have less anger and more patience. I could never do it until I genuinely dealt with what was causing it. Whatever it is you're doing that you don't want to do, or not doing that you want to do, why? To change, you need to ask God to help you own and release your past.

### Step Four: With God's Help, I Always Forgive and Ask to Be Forgiven.

When we start thinking about the past, we often discover an issue of unforgiveness. It could be guilt about our actions or cynicism about someone else's sin that's keeping us stuck. We don't realize how guilt and resentment can stain our lives and infect everything. May I encourage you? If you have guilt over your transgressions or bitterness about sin committed against you, make forgiveness your top priority. Receiving forgiveness, or giving forgiveness will help you in every other area of your life.

### Step Five: I Stay Connected to God and Others.

I think it's wise to include God and a few close friends in deciding what New Year's Resolutions you need to make. It's also necessary to involve God and a few close friends with keeping those resolutions. Your strategy for faithfully living out the new you is connection. How will you stay connected to God on a daily basis? What's your plan for accessing his power? Who are the friends you'll ask to pray for you and hold you accountable?

### Step Six: I Seek to Get Others Connected to God.

There's a saying in the recovery movement, "There is no healing without helping." There can be something selfish about seeking to get unstuck when our focus is just on us. When we focus on others, it can have a surprisingly positive impact on us. So, what if, instead of seeking to keep your New Year's Resolution, you decide to help others keep theirs?

While we're at it, when you think about how you need to live in 2019, what about living out the highest priority God has given you? Jesus' final marching orders for his followers was, "Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:20).

Your mission is to get others connected to God. If you're not actively engaged in your mission, that needs to be your top New Year's Resolution.

*-Adapted from a blog post by Vince Antonucci on [cityonahillstudio.com](http://cityonahillstudio.com)*

## Our Mission

Meet others where they are and together be transformed into the image of Christ.

## Our Schedule

### Sunday

9:00 am Bible Classes  
10:00 am Worship

### Wednesday

7:00 pm Bible Classes

### Office Hours

Tuesday - Friday  
8:30 am - 4:30 pm

## Last Week

Bible Class	199
Worship	259
LIFE Groups	Did not meet
Wednesday	Did not meet

# This Week's Prayer Requests

## Prayer Requests:

**Karelle Pierre-Jacques:** Doctors found a small cancer in her right side and she will have a sentinel biopsy on Jan. 3rd to determine whether or not she'll need chemo. Karelle is asking for prayers for healing.

**Judy Fitzpatrick,** Chris Fitzpatrick's wife, had surgery this past Monday to put in a feeding tube, so she will be able to have nourishment while she is going through radiation treatments for throat cancer. She is in a lot of pain, so prayers for relief from pain would be appreciated.

**Young Angel** was treated at the ER for an accelerated heart rate and released. He is now back work.

**Sr. Angel** has been admitted to Virtua Hospital, Voorhees division on Rt. 73 for a combination of lung and heart issues. He is requesting prayers that doctors are able to determine the cause of the uncontrollable cough. He would welcome visitors.

**Aunt Betty,** Fran Point's 87 year old aunt, had a fall and broke her hip. She has had surgery and is doing well and is expected to go to rehab soon.

**Larry Kellum Sr.,** is home continuing with his regular doctor visits and waiting to begin a new treatment regimen. He is continuing to receive periodic blood transfusions and feels much stronger in the days following the transfusion.

**Steve De Prince** had nerve and tendon transfer surgery on his right arm and is recovering at home.

**Pat Moore,** Judi Campbell's sister, is at home now.

**Penny,** Melody Schools' 7 mo. old granddaughter, had eye surgery on December 21.

**Jessie Burrell,** Mary Collier's sister, recovery from toe amputation.

**George Kenner** is recovering at home.

**Debra Bryant,** Barbara Robinson's sister, recovering from surgery for a brain tumor.

**Debby Durham** at home recovering from foot surgery.

**Amanda Collier,** sister of Lee Collier, heart surgery recovery.

**Bill Carney,** Barbara Carney's husband, heart surgery recovery.

**La'Verne Daniels** at home recovering from foot surgery.

Please continue to remember in your prayers **Doug Oliver, Gwen Phillip, Dwight Thompson, Linda Prenger, Patti Frambes, and Doug Oliver** as they receive treatment for cancer, as well as **Kareem Rutledge, Jr. and Je'Ani Lyles** in the rehabilitation from life changing injuries.

## Ministers

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**Elder on Call for January and February: Dave Perine**

## Serving Us Today

Nursery	Lori Hernandez
Kids For Christ	Yvonne Pearl
Jr. Worship	Brian Mansdoerfer/Harry Ake
Greeters: Front Entrance	Horatio & Jackie Fenton
Greeters: Back Entrance	Frank & Sandy Sheehan
Information Center	Mary Lea Thompson
Ushers	John Peoples & Pat Monteleone
Shepherd's Call	Dave Perine
Song Leader	Mike Broyles

LIFE Group	Location	Contact
Ageless	Winter Break/Resumes Jan. 6	
Brook Besor	Winter Break/Resumes Jan. 8	
Circle of Sisters	Winter Break/Resumes Jan. 7	
Covenant	Winter Break/Resumes Jan. 6	
Hammonton	Winter Break/Resumes Jan. 6	
Life Challenges	Winter Break/Resumes Jan. 6	
Men's Bible Study	Winter Break/Resumes Jan. 7	
Solid Gold	Winter Break/Resumes Jan. 6	
Teens	Winter Break/Resumes Jan. 6	
Vineland	Winter Break/Resumes Jan. 6	
Women in the Word	Winter Break/Resumes Jan. 15	
Young Married	Winter Break/Resumes Jan. 6	

## Find Us on Social Media:

 @pitmanroadcoc  www.facebook.com/pitmanroadchurchofchrist  @pitmanroadchurch

## NEW BABY



**Gabriel and Justice Rodriguez** welcomed their baby boy, **Xzavier**, into the world on Sunday, December 23, 2018. He weighed 8 lbs.1 oz. and was 21 inches long. Justice and Xzavier came home on Christmas Day. Mom and baby are well.

## What an outstanding day we shared together this past Sunday!

We will share a detailed update in next week's bulletin.

For now, a HUGE thanks to **Tim, Melody and their team** for a beautifully, and efficiently served pancake breakfast.

And, a HUGE thanks to **Diana H., Mandy Mansdoerfer and Emma Drummer** for their work in putting together the dramatic presentation. Dan