

From the Pastor

Do you bother with New Years resolutions? You know like quitting smoking, or losing some weight, or spending more time with family? Personally, I sympathize with the guy who was working on his resolutions for the New Year, one of which was to clean up his desk. So, he did ... and found last year's list of resolutions. I love Mark Twain's resolution - "This year I'm going to live within my means ... even if I have to borrow money to do it."

Tell you what. How about this year resolving to live in grace! Do you remember what the Apostle Paul wrote in the beginning of his first letter to the church in Corinth? "Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" If we take those words and the words following, we can find some pretty fruitful direction for resolution building.

Like it says in the hymn "Amazing Grace"...

*'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear
And grace my fears relieved;
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed.*

New year begins with grace ... God's unmerited favor. We have grown up in a society that tells us, "You get what you pay for. There is no such thing as a free lunch." But grace is never paid for, never earned. It is just there.

A Pennsylvania fellow traveling in the south stopped by a mom-and-pop restaurant for breakfast. He ordered eggs, bacon, and toast, only to be surprised by a blob of white mass on his plate when the food was served. "What's this?" he asked.

"Grits," replied the waitress.

"I didn't order grits," said the traveler.

"No matter," said the waitress, "they just come."

Grace is like grits. It just comes.

So this New Year's make a resolution to show grace to each other and the world at large. This year make a resolution to seek peace by being as positive with one another as you can. This year make a resolution to honor God by putting your spiritual gifts to use in God's service. This year, make a resolution to be fully and genuinely Christ-centered,. both as an individuals and a church.

May God grant us the strength and the resolve to follow through on all these resolutions.

Oh, and of course, Happy New Year!

All of you in worship!

Pastor Fogle