

# WHY ARE YOUR NEW RESOLUTIONS NOT WORKING?

*Bro Chris Afekolu (Bishop)*

## INTRODUCTION

Resolution is;

1. The state or quality of being resolute; firm determination: *faced the situation with resolution.*
2.
  - i) A firm decision to do something: *made a resolution to get more exercise.*
  - ii) A course of action determined or decided on: *His resolution is to get up early.*
3. The act or process of resolving, determination, decision.
4. Something that is resolved; made a resolution to emend my ways.



A **New Year's resolution** is a tradition, most common in the world, in which a person makes a promise or resolve to do an act of self-improvement or something slightly nice. **Self-help**, or **self-improvement**, is a self-guided improvement—economically, intellectually, or emotionally—often with a substantial psychological basis.

Some examples of New Year Resolutions include;



Examples of Resolutions made in the Bible

**Jos 24:15** *And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.*

Then King David said to Ornan, "No, but I will surely buy it for the full price, for I will not take what is yours for the LORD, nor offer burnt offerings with that which costs me nothing." (**1 Chronicles 21:24** NKJV).

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego answered and said to the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter. "If that is the case, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us from your hand, O king. "But if not, let it be known to you, O king, that we do not serve your gods, nor will we worship the gold image which you have set up." (**Daniel 3:16-18** NKJV). For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified. (**1 Cor. 2:2** NKJV)

*"But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God. (Acts 20:24* NKJV)

*Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 3:13-14* NKJV).

New Year Resolutions are a bit like babies; they are fun to make but extremely difficult to maintain. It's hard to keep up the enthusiasm months after months, but it is not impossible. Hence I tend to call it goal setting! Better to approach it as setting goals. Goal setting is obviously a powerful process. It's based on the principle of focus that allows us to concentrate rays of diffused sunlight into a force powerful enough to start a fire. It's a concentrated energy towards achieving a set goal or purpose. It's the manifestation of the creative imagination and independent will. It is the practicality of translating vision into achievable, actionable doing.

Goal setting is a superb tool for measurement of successful Individuals and organisations. The question is - Why is your New Year Resolutions or Goal setting not working. This is the subject of our discussion today.

**Building character strength is like building physical strength.** When the test comes, if you don't have it, no cosmetics can disguise the fact that it just not there. You can't fake it. An Athlete must engage in rigorous training and resilience in order to have the desired strength to win a medal. He can't be sleeping away and expects to score a goal in the pitch. It takes training and sacrifice to achieve success.

Building Character strength requires great effort. You can't wake up one morning and expect to be transformed in your character. It takes strength to set heroic goal, to work

on chronic problems instead of going for the quick fix, to stay with your commitments when the tide of popular opinion turns against you.

There are many reasons why we don't achieve our New Year resolutions. First, the resolutions or goals we set are unrealistic. We create expectations that don't reflect any sense of our self-awareness. Self-awareness is an awareness of one's own personality or individuality.

Many don't know they are disciples, or whose disciples they are and that Discipleship must cost you something. Self-awareness prompts us to start where we are – no illusion, no excuses – and helps us to set realistic goals. **Self-awareness is ear to the voice of conscience. It helps us to recognize that there are principles independent of us. It helps us to be humble and open to growth and change. Self-awareness empowers us to ask: Am I allowing the good to take the place of the best?** The best may be the set goal or resolution. The best may be the new exposition of the scripture, the new knowledge or the new options created by increased understanding.

**If change is driven primarily by urgency, mood (disposition), or opposition (hostility, conflict or resistance), it takes away the best. If change is driven by mission, conscience, and principles, it moves us toward the best.**

**Most New Year resolutions are sudden. Not well thought-through.** No consideration or reflection upon a decision in order to arrive at a solution for thorough understanding of it. We expect to change the way we do things or our behaviour simply because the calendar has changed from December 31 to January 1.

It's like expecting a newly born child to learn to crawl, eat with cutlery, and drive a car all in the same date. Our New Year resolutions are based on illusion (misconception or deception) with little self-awareness or regard for the principle of natural growth and spiritual growth. It just can't happen overnight!

Sometimes we set goals and work to achieve them, but either the circumstance changes or we change. Example, part of your New Year resolution is to save 20% of your income, mid-year the inflation rate climbs to 15%, how I can achieve my resolution with this variation.

It could be a new opportunities surfaces, there's a shift in the economy; another person comes into the picture; we get a different perspective. If we hold on to our goals, they become masters instead of servants. But if we let them go, we often feel uneasy or guilty that we didn't keep our commitment.

Another major reason while our New Year resolutions are not working is because the set goals are not connected to our inner life. Conscience is very powerful because it creates alignment between mission and principles and gives guidance in the moment of choice.

The moment we set a goal or resolution ...the moment we consciously decide to focus our time and energy toward a particular purpose – is moment of choice. A deep, principle-based, conscience-connected, contribution-focused fire within; thus creates the power of passion and principle to deliver result. When this inner fuel is lacking, set goal or

resolution will just be for academic purpose – No result. **One of the best ways to access the power of passion and principle is to ask three questions: *What? Why? and how?***

**What?** What do I desire to accomplish? What is the contribution I want to make? What is the end I have in mind?

**Why?** Why do I want to do it? Does my goal grow out of mission, need and principles? Does it empower me to contribute through my role? In the context of mission and vision, the '**what**' may be easier to identify than the '**why**' and '**how**'.

Without the deep connection, we go through life feeling duty-bound to develop sufficient self-control to achieve our goals, to endure to the end, to crawl battered and bruised over the finish line, if it is the last thing we do – because there is no connection to our deep energy sources, our convictions and our experiences. We are working against ourselves, not sure why (or even if) we want to accomplish a particular goal. **This is why the commitments we make in a moment of enthusiasm don't have the sustaining power to carry us all the way to successful achievement of our New Year resolutions.**

The key to motivation is motive. It's the "**why**". It's what gives you the energy to stay strong in hard moments. It gives us the strength to say "no" because we connect with a deeper "yes" burning inside.

**The stronger the connection, the stronger and more sustained the motivation.** No wonder Children of God are advised to renew their inner mind daily. *Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. (2 Corinthians 4:16 NKJV).*

*For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, (Ephesians 3:14-16 NKJV).*

How? How am I going to do it? What are the key principles that will empower me to achieve my purpose? What strategies can I use to implement these principles?

## CONCLUSION

We have been discussing the reasons why our New Year Resolutions are not working. The chief reason for our New Year resolutions' failure is that the resolutions are driven primarily by urgency, mood, or opposition. Instead of being driven by mission, conscience, and principles (doctrines).

Most resolutions reached in the Bible were immediate and not tied to the end of the year or **waiting for the changing of calendar date** December 31 to January 1. **There is no spiritual bearing to** these specific dates **and as well as no** examples in scriptures to support this but rather tied to the world. Not a bad practice for your planning on physical things, but things that relates to spirituality and godliness must be treated differently. As you receive the power of God's word with the Help of the Holy Spirit requesting for a change, such change or repentance should be immediate and not waiting for 31<sup>st</sup> December. Such a delay could be very dangerous.

We do not know the hour of our Saviour's coming or when we will depart this world. A general advice for believers is given **Ephesians 5:14-17**

*Therefore He says: "Awake, you who sleep, Arise from the dead, And Christ will give you light." See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is. (Ephesians 5:14-17 NKJV).*