

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS

The practice of making New Year's resolutions goes back over 3000 years to the ancient Babylonians. There is just something about the start of a New Year that gives us the feeling of a fresh start and a new beginning. In reality, there is no difference between December 31st and January 1st. Nothing mystical occurs at midnight on December 31st. The Bible does not speak for or against the concept of New Year's resolutions. However, if a Christian determines to make a New Year's resolution, what kind of resolution should he or she make?

Common New Year's resolutions are: to quit smoking, to stop drinking, to manage money better, and spend more time with family. By far the most common New Year's resolution is to lose weight, in conjunction with exercising more and eating healthier. These are all good goals to set. However, [1 Timothy 4:8](#) instructs us to keep exercise in perspective: "For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come." The vast majority of New Year's resolutions, even among Christians, are in relation to physical things. This should not be.

Many Christians make New Year's resolutions to pray more, to read the Bible every day, and to attend church more regularly. These are fantastic goals. However, these New Year's resolutions fail just as often as the non-spiritual resolutions, because there is no power in a New Year's resolution. Resolving to start or stop doing a certain activity has no value unless you have the proper motivation for stopping or starting that activity. For example, why do you want to read the Bible every day? Is it to honor God and grow spiritually, or is it because you have just heard that it is a good thing to do? Why do you want to lose weight? Is it to honor God with your body, or is it for vanity, to honor yourself?

[Philippians 4:13](#) tells us, "I can do everything through Him who gives me strength." [John 15:5](#) declares, "I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he

will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing." If God is the center of your New Year's resolution, it has chance for success, depending on your commitment to it. If it is God's will for something to be fulfilled, He will enable you to fulfill it. If a resolution is not God honoring and/or is not in agreement in God's Word, we will not receive God's help in fulfilling the resolution.

So, what sort of New Year's resolution should a Christian make? Here are some suggestions: (1) Pray to the Lord for wisdom ([James 1:5](#)) in regards to what resolutions, if any, He would have you make; (2) Pray for wisdom as to how to fulfill the goals God gives you; (3) Rely on God's strength to help you; (4) Find an accountability partner who will help you and encourage you; (5) Don't become discouraged with occasional failures; instead allow them to motivate you further; (6) Don't become proud or vain, but give God the glory. [Psalm 37:5-6](#), "Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him and he will do this: He will make your righteousness shine like the dawn, the justice of your cause like the noonday sun."

(from www.gotquestions.org)

WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to the following couples on their anniversaries:

Robert & Ann King – January 1st
Tommy & Linda Groves – January 10th
Robert & Virginia Swinson – January 12th
Joey & Kathy Carter – January 14th
David & Barbara Hardison – January 16th
William & JoAnn Pierce – January 20th
Nancy & Don Lowe – January 28th
Willie & Billie Coston – January 29th

If you have ideas, suggestions or articles for the next newsletter, please give them to Shannon Sessions.

The next newsletter will be available February 7, 2010

ECHOES FROM BLAKE'S CHAPEL JANUARY 2010



Naomi -- What type of a woman was she? I think her daughter-in-law, Ruth, summed it up nicely in a brief statement:

Ruth 1:15-18 (NIV) ¹⁵"Look," said Naomi, "your sister-in-law [Orpah] is going back to her people and her gods. Go back with her." ¹⁶But Ruth replied, "Don't urge me to leave you or to turn

back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God. ¹⁷Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried. May the LORD deal with me, be it ever so severely, if anything but death separates you and me." ¹⁸When Naomi realized that Ruth was determined to go with her, she stopped urging her.

Both Ruth and Orpah were free to go. Their husbands had died. But Ruth's love and devotion to Naomi was so strong that she would not leave her widowed mother-in-law by herself. We often marvel at Ruth. The one to marvel at is Naomi. Think about it, to have such a life devoted to God reflecting His mercy and grace that others want have you to be nearby?

Hummmm – something to ponder.

Pastor Steve



GETTING TO KNOW...



*Dan & Carole
Ligotti*
by Dan Ligotti

When I was asked to write about Carole and me, I knew it would be hard. It's a long and very funny story that we love to tell people who have a few spare days to whittle away.

Carole and I met at J. Watson Bailey S.H.S where we taught across the hall from each other. After 5 years, I thought it was safe to get to know her better. I was surprised at how much we had in common though our backgrounds were somewhat different. However by that time we had decided that we were not going to marry. Carole bought a house and she helped me plan a 30 day tour of Europe for the coming summer. One problem- I proposed to her on June 30th and we married August 26, 1978 to no one's surprise except me! No, I never made it to Europe until last year, but it was worth the wait.

Our first visit to North Carolina was in the early 1980's and we quickly fell in love with the area and the people. We managed to move down (as quickly as we could) in 1996 and in 2002 began attending Blake's Chapel. Our experiences throughout our married life are a testimony to the mercy, grace and love of almighty God. We have been so blessed in so many ways. We stand amazed that He's always there for us.

"No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, He will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it." 1 Corinthians 10:13



A FRIEND IN NEED

I have a friend named Betty that I met as a freshman in high school. We became instant friends. Betty is one of those friends that no matter how long it's been since we've talked, it's like we had just finished a conversation an hour earlier. Betty has 3 beautiful daughters; Jessica, Krista and Kamerin and a wonderful husband named Danny.

Krista was born with cystic fibrosis; however, she was not diagnosed until years later. At this time, there is no cure for this disease. This family needs help right now! Krista, who is only 20 years old, is in need of a double lung and liver transplant. Her life depends on it. The doctors on the transplant team said, "Her lungs and liver are at the end of the road." Krista is on oxygen 24/7 now and she has to have someone with her at all times.

The family meets with the transplant team at Duke on January 12th and they want Krista and her mom to move there after that visit. However, there is one BIG problem, Krista needs \$10,000 before they will do the transplants and the family must come up with this amount of money in a short amount of time. So PLEASE find it in your hearts to help save Krista's life.

A fund has been set up at Bank of America for all contributions. Donations can be made at any Bank of America. Just let the teller know that you would like to donate to "The Krista Haigler Breathe Fund." If they have any questions, they can contact the Bank of America branch in Lenoir, North Carolina. The account has been set up so any donations made are tax deductible. No donations are considered too small and all will be welcomed.

I am also asking for prayers for this family. Please pray that not only will the money be raised, but that it be raised quickly. But mainly, please pray that God will restore

Krista's health. This is an amazing family. The love they have for each other is a beautiful thing to see and their faith in God is enormous, despite their dire circumstances.

If you would like to send words of encouragement to the family, send them to The McQueen Family, 958 Sunrise Circle, Lenoir, NC 28645.

Please share this information with as many people as you can – your friends, family, social organizations, email list, Facebook friends, etc. The more the word is spread, the better.

Shannon Sessions

PHONE TREE



We made our very first phone tree call on December 31st! We hope that most of you received your call successfully. Please be patient as we continue to learn the ropes of this new system.

CHURCH HAPPENINGS

- January 5th – Men's Fellowship (all men invited)
- January 6th – Official Board Meeting
- January 6th – Men's Fellowship to serve supper
- January 7th – WH&FM (all ladies invited)
- January 10th – Echoes of Christmas
- January 17th – Lunch & Annual Business Meeting
- January 17th – Worship Service at Woodbury
- January 20th – Lunch for Hospice
- January 31st – 5th Sunday Hymn Sing @ Blake's

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