

December 30, 2022

Here's Hope
by Rev. Jerry Rea

Resolutions - Settling into Settling

It's that time of year again. It's time for us all to take a look at where we are, what we've done with 2022 and what we'd like to do in 2023. I'm talking about Resolutions. It used to be quite automatic that we made lists of things we'd like to do in the next year. It was sort of a "Bucket List" for 2023. It's a bit strange to me that resolutions are looked at with such disdain but "Bucket Lists" are all the rage. Nowadays, I hear people saying all over, "well I don't make resolutions anymore." I just never do them anyway; I might as well just not do that. While it is true that statistics tell us the vast majority of people do not follow through with their resolutions, most people don't follow through with anything. So what's our alternative?

Well, we can dispense with the frustrating activity of resolutions. In other words, just don't make resolutions. Well, if that's what you want to do, I can just about guarantee if you have no list, you'll succeed in keeping it every time. Here's another thing that will probably happen. You will settle into settling. It's easy to drift into just... drifting. And, in the end you'll wind up in the muddy marsh of nothing. If you have no direction, you'll get confused every time. If all you want is mediocrity, you'll find it easy to succeed at that. By contrast, if you shoot for the moon, you will always miss, but there is something uplifting about aiming high.

Perhaps people get tired of trying. I understand that. To try and fail sometimes makes us feel like failures. I understand that. To identify our goal just makes it feel that much more unapproachable. To look it square in the face reminds us that we're miles and miles away from what we (ourselves) want to be. That can be a painful reminder especially if you already don't feel good about yourself. However, think about this. To never set a goal (of any type) means you will never be any more than you are right now. Is it true that you don't like yourself if you don't accomplish your goals? Then, it is doubly true that you will not like yourself ten years from now after you've settled into settling and have reached no goals whatsoever. Is that going to make you feel better?

Here's my recommendation. Set some goals but set them this way. Begin by looking up every morning. Let 2023 be the year that every day (hopefully first thing) you'll look up to God and affirm Him as your Father and you His child. As the song says, tell Him, here I am to serve you, in whatever way you see fit and in whatever door of opportunity He opens. By doing that you're bringing Him in on your day, your year and your life. Just looking at Him, helps you find the hope you need to tackle your goals, desires and aspirations. Set some goals. Set some big ones. Those are the ones you feel quite certain you cannot accomplish in one year. Set some small goals. Those are the ones you could do in one day if you set your mind to it. Next, move toward your goals. If you need to fix your house, begin by looking over the problems. If you want to go to school, take a drive down near the campus. If you want to write an unpleasant letter, write

down three things you'd like to say. If you need to lose some weight, go to the grocery and buy two or three things to eat instead of all that candy. Call a friend for support if you have someone you can talk to. Tell them your desires. Share your dream. Or, perhaps better say it out loud to God. Small steps turn into big steps. Little thoughts turn into big ones. Lives can literally be changed by a single helpful thought.

But, today, begin by looking up to God!
Jerry Rea

PS - My goal is to help you every Friday