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# Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

**The Oaks  
Baptist Church**  
Grand Prairie, Texas



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## Making Some New Year's Resolutions Exodus 20:3-17; 2 Peter 1:5-8

As the New Year starts, we must remember that **God has all our time in His hands**. We are not promised the next moment or success of any of our own plans. **We must trust God to provide and enable us every moment**. We need to remember how God has blessed us the past year as well as how He has worked in our life. We must **THANK GOD** with all our being for His love, grace, mercy, provisions and protection. We must trust God not only with the plans for our life, but we must show our trust in Him by **completely yielding our will and desires to Him**. With God, we will never fail or be forsaken. As we look to the future, we are reminded by Ecc 3:1-8 that there is a time for everything and all things are totally controlled by God. In God's hands, we cannot go wrong. **All we should do is be obedient to His guidance, make the most of every opportunity (Eph 5:16) and use all the time that God gives us wisely (James 3:13)**.

### NEXT MINI SERIES

**"PRAYER"**

In his painting "An Allegory of Prudence," 16th-century Venetian artist Titian portrayed Prudence as a man with three heads. One head was of a youth facing the future, another was of a mature man eyeing the present, and the third was of a wise old man gazing at the past. Over their heads Titian wrote a Latin phrase that means, "From the example of the past, the man of the present acts prudently so as not to imperil the future." As 2008 has closed, **we should rededicate ourselves to Christ**. Jesus will enable us to live fully in the present as we gain wisdom from the past and face the future with courage. Finishing well is the right way for a Christian to close the final chapter of life's book as well as each year. It testifies to the reality of our faith. It leaves for those who remain a legacy of inspiring memories. How well we end our earthly days depends largely on how well we handle life's inevitable changes. The following four elements are key factors in a happy life and helps in facing a new year (*RBC booklet "Finishing Well"*):

1. Meaningful devotions
2. Enjoyable activities
3. Helpful service
4. An active, learning mind

### Food for Thought

**Be a Blessing to Others**

*Show Random Acts of Kindness*

Open the door for a mom and her kids.  
Help someone do a chore.  
Buy a cup of coffee for a friend.  
Send a card to someone.  
Thank those who serve you.  
Pray for public officials.

*But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness.*

**Hebrews 3:13 (NIV)**

*(shared by a Class Member)*

Each year millions of people make a list of new-year's resolutions. As we start this new year, our prayer should be that we are obedient, faithful, and humble servants requesting God to enable us to do His Will. I like the **resolutions of Jonathan Edwards** who drew up a list of 70 resolutions, dedicating himself to live in harmony with God and others. The following resolutions are a sample of the serious purpose with which Edwards approached his relationship with God. He resolved: (*from "Near to the Heart of God: A Study of the Book of Hebrews" by Bob Deffinbaugh*)

1. To do whatever is most to God's glory.
2. To do my duty, for the good of mankind in general.
3. Never to do anything, which I should be afraid to do, if it were the last hour of my life.
4. To study the Scriptures steadily, constantly, and frequently.
5. To ask myself at the end of every day, week, month, and year if I could possibly have done better.
6. Until I die, not to act as if I were my own, but entirely and altogether God's
7. Seek God's enablement to act on these resolutions

## NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

Invariably, a new year prompts us to make our own list of things deserving our diligent attention and pursuit. Let me suggest that we work off the lists of two men who have gone before us. The lists are attainable, 100% wholesome, and a constant encouragement.

### **Moses' List (Exodus 20:3-17)**

1. Don't ever place substitute gods before the Lord your God.
2. Don't make an idol out of anyone or anything.
3. Don't take the Lord's name in vain. It is holy.
4. Remember to observe a Sabbath rest every week.
5. Honor and respect your dad and mom.
6. Don't murder anyone for any reason.
7. Never, ever commit adultery.
8. Don't take things that aren't yours.
9. Never lie or give a false impression.
10. Don't covet another person's mate, benefits, or belongings.

### **Peter's List (2 Peter 1:5-8)**

1. Be a diligent person.
2. Don't waver in your faith.
3. Be known for uncompromising moral excellence.
4. Enlarge your reservoir of knowledge; keep learning. Stay balanced; guard against extremes.
5. Persevere.
6. Make sure your godliness is free of hypocrisy.
7. Treat others tactfully, graciously.
8. Let your Christian love flow, let it flow, let it flow.

**If you take these lists seriously, two things are certain:**

1. You won't be the same person you were last year, and
2. You certainly won't get bored.

Without God, life is a monotonous repetition of weeks, months, seasons, years, decades, and generations.