

Perpetual Resolutions

by Wayne Goff

Biblically speaking, disciples of Christ are to be in the mode of **perpetual resolutions** — we do not practice this once a year with the “New Year’s...” prefix attached.

The kingdom of Jesus Christ was introduced by both John and Jesus with the words “**Repent** (*resolve to change?*), *for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!*” (Matt. 3:2, 11; 4:17; etc.) This command appears *repeatedly* throughout the New Testament because it is needed *perpetually*.

One needs to **repent (resolve)** to change to be the person God wants us to be at the beginning of the Christian walk, and then throughout that life *continue the process of change* for the better. In the words of Paul, “*Arise to walk in newness of life*” (Rom. 6:4).

Some “Jiffy Mix” religions that teach you **only** have to “believe in Jesus as your personal Savior to be saved” have shortchanged Jesus and His spiritual kingdom. Carnally-minded people — which we all were before we obeyed the gospel — are in need of many changes, and so it is a process.

Once one becomes a Christian, the term often used for this perpetual resolve is “*sanctification*” (see Acts 26:18; Rom. 15:16; 1 Cor. 1:2, 30; 6:11; 7:14; etc.). For example, to the new converts in Thessalonica, Paul wrote, “*For this is the will of God, your **sanctification**: that you should abstain from sexual immorality; that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in **sanctification** and honor*” (1 Thess. 4:3-4). While this sounds like a big, complicated word, it simply means that as a newborn child of God, keep on learning how to “clean up your act!” We see this concept in 1 Peter 2:1-2 where Peter commands the newborn babe in Christ not only to **desire** “*the pure milk of the word*” (after all, what do babies drink?), but also to **lay aside** “*all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking.*” That is not accomplished by simply believing in Jesus. It takes mental determination, work, and time.

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