

A Worthy Resolution

The tradition of declaring New Year's resolutions dates back to the ancient Babylonians. It is thought that the most popular resolution at that time was to return borrowed farm equipment.

Today, we make resolutions based on something that will improve our lives. We promise to break some bad habit or start a good one, such as losing weight (which may be the most popular one of our day), eating a healthier diet or exercising. By the end of the month, however, most people have forgotten or given up on their New Year's resolutions.

And since it is the next-to-the-last day of January, how many of you have abandoned – or at least modified – your resolutions? (Don't raise your hands, please.)

Good intentions are no substitute for action. James, in his book in the Bible, points this out in his discussion of faith and deeds. He gives the example of a brother or sister in Christ needing food or clothes. If someone tells him or her, "Goodbye and have a good day; stay warm and eat well," but does nothing about that person's physical needs, what good is that? James asserts that in the same way, faith that doesn't show itself by good deeds is useless and dead. (James 2:14-17).

With our busy lives, it's all too easy to not follow through on our well-meaning intentions. We assure a friend that we will pray for a doctor's appointment, and then we forget about it until we see the friend again. We feel led to call someone or write a note, but never get around to it. We create guilt for ourselves and miss an opportunity to be a blessing to someone.

Fortunately, more than most, in Life Care, Century Park and Life Care at Home, people are put before us every day who have needs – for a smile, a friendly touch or hug, words of cheer or encouragement or simply someone to listen to them. In responding, each of those individuals feels the touch of God in his or her life.

All through this year, then, we should resolve to express our faith through good deeds, not noble intentions.

--Beecher Hunter