

Time to Take a Pit Stop

While the beginning of a new year is widely considered an appropriate time for resolutions (and I wonder how many have already been broken in this first week!), it is also an excellent time for self-examination.

Dr. Charles R. Swindoll, senior pastor of Stonebriar Community Church and chancellor of Dallas Theological Seminary, writes in his book *Growing Strong in the Seasons of Life*:



It's been awhile since you took stock of where you're going, hasn't it? And how about on evaluation of the kids? Or your marriage? Or your future? You know what I mean, trimming off the fat of lazy thinking and taking a lean, hard look at your life. Occasions set aside for evaluation and regrouping are needed. Even the sports world has its time-out and seventh-inning stretch and pit stop and halftime, so why shouldn't we? Force yourself, put your pace into neutral, and ask some hard questions.

Here are a few questions Dr. Swindoll suggested that are worth personal consideration:

1. Am I really happy, genuinely challenged and fulfilled in life?
2. In light of eternity, am I making a consistent investment for God's glory and His cause?
3. Is the direction my life is now taking leading me toward a satisfying and meaningful future?
4. Can I honestly say that I am in the nucleus of God's will for me?

Appropriate questions for each of us to consider. After all, God created us with a purpose in mind. Have we recognized what that plan is, and are we engaged in it?

While anytime is a great time to take stock of where we are in life and where we want to go, seize the opportunity a new year presents to really evaluate life. Such an exercise can help us move from random resolutions and ill-conceived intentions to meaningful, missional living.

Let us examine our ways and test them, and let us return to the Lord (Lamentations 3:40 NIV).

– Beecher Hunter