



Message from Pastor Rich January 2017

A Successful Year in 2017

As all of the festivities and activities of the Christmas season come to a close and a New Year fast approaches we find ourselves with many thoughts concerning the change from trying to buy the perfect gift for someone to deciding on what type of New Year's resolution we can come up with.

There are so many resolutions that we hear for the New Year such as: "*I want to spend more time with family,*" "*I would like to exercise more,*" "*I would like to do a better job with my finances,*" etc. These are all wonderful resolutions going into the New Year.

What really grabs my attention about these resolutions is that they focus upon something for ourselves. Don't get me wrong but doing things for ourselves is a good thing because if we aren't healthy in regards to our physical, emotional, and spiritual health we put ourselves at risk by ignoring our health and devoting our time and efforts to others.

When Jesus began His public ministry His entire focus was on others. He was healing every type of disease, teaching what it meant to love and care for others, and preaching about the way to eternal life. His intention for people was to see how important it was to treat others with love, respect, and kindness. Giving up of Himself so that others might know what it means to think of others in these ways.

Unfortunately, the majority of these people who followed Jesus were not hearing the message of love and kindness Jesus brought. They were following Jesus because they were getting their needs met in a certain way. Thinking of themselves and not of what Jesus was proclaiming through these miraculous healings, the giving of Himself, and the eternal message He was speaking.

In this time of reflection upon the year 2016 and its effects it has had upon you, I pray that this New Year of 2017 may bring you renewed hope, energy, outlook on life, and a new appreciation for what God has done for you through the Christ Child, Jesus. As He grew in wisdom and stature in God the father it is my prayer for all of you to not only declare a new year's resolution that you might attain in this new year, but that you may make a resolution to God that He may use His Spirit to change your thought process so He may be the one glorified and praised within your life.

Maybe you could make a new year's resolution to spend more time with God throughout the day, try to give someone a complement every day, try to stay positive in tough circumstances calling upon Jesus to provide comfort and peace, or pray for someone or something that has been upon your mind recently.

You see there are so many things we could make for a new year's resolution but my hope is that God will become a much more integral part of your life in many ways this new year and that you experience the joy, love, and success in Christ as you begin to start a New Year. May God grant you a successful 2017.

In Christ's Service and Love, Pastor Rich