

# Pastor Phil's E-note

1/5/2009

## To change the trajectory of your life:

- Get past the surface to the substance.
- Get real about you.
- Make yourself accountable to God and to another person.

## On Resolutions: A Personal Perspective

For those of you reading this, I ask you to help me with a personal resolution for the new year. I have had little success with resolutions in past years, so I enter into this challenge with fear and trepidation. I trust you will help me.

My resolution I need help with is for you to ask me monthly when my next "personal perspective" paper will be published. If you do that, you may be getting one of these each month. For 2009, that's twelve writings of about one page each.

Of course for you to be motivated in this regard, my personal perspective paper should steer away from being bad or boring. I'll do my best to present something that is on my heart that will move you to think and live more like our Master. If that occurs, neither my time, nor yours will be wasted. And when it's not boring it may just encourage us all to live more in line with what He has asked us to be and do.

Resolutions have fallen on hard times because habits are so hard to break. It looks easy when we begin in January; to eat more healthfully, watch less TV, spend more time with the family, go to church regularly, lose those extra pounds or quit a bad habit. We start with great energy determined to move in a new direction. But, in about two weeks, we more often than not are right back where we started. I've seen people show up on the first Sunday in January and state to me: "My New Year's resolution is to come to church every Sunday." I don't see them again until the next first Sunday of a new year.

Now there are some who, quite frankly, don't care if they improve their lives or not. They have settled into being content with mediocrity, living with things as they are, just holding their own, surviving not thriving. They have the attitude that what they do, or don't do, won't make any difference anyway, so just get along as best you can. For me, that attitude does not reflect the attitude that says God made me for a higher purpose and calling than just "getting along."

But if you want to change the trajectory of your life, here are some ideas for you to consider.

1. Get past the surface to the substance. Ask some hard questions of your resolution. Why do this? For whom are you doing it? Are you accountable to anyone to get this accomplished? Have you written it down and publicized your intention? Is God motivating you?
2. Get real about you. We underestimate the power of past experience and imbedded habits that accumulate over the years. We mistake our good intentions for actual and real change.



"And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD." (Psalm 40:3)

(Continued on page 2)

1697 Shadowlawn Drive  
Naples, FL 34112

Phone: (239) 774-1282  
E-mail: [enbc\\_office@eastnaplesbaptist.org](mailto:enbc_office@eastnaplesbaptist.org)

---

*East Naples Baptist Church*  
**Changed By His Love - Challenged By His Life**

*(Continued from page 1)*

As someone once said, the road to hell is paved with good intentions. Know that change is possible, but that a long obedience in the same direction is your only hope of lasting and real change.

3. Make yourself accountable to God and to another person. I like what John Maxwell says to discipleship groups when they begin to meet. Get real about your accountability. Here's how it works. Ask each person in the group the following questions each time you meet::

- Have you read your Bible daily?
- Have you prayed daily?
- Have you given a witness or an act of service to someone?
- Have you looked at something or acted in a way that would dishonor God?
- Are you lying about any of the first four questions?!

Bottom line: You can try to fool yourself and others, but in the end, the results you say you want will never happen. Get real about the issue, about you, about God, and let others in on your commitment to change. Then real and lasting change may just be yours!

Your friend and pastor,

Phil



---

**We're on the Web!**  
**[www.eastnaplesbaptist.org](http://www.eastnaplesbaptist.org)**