



## New Year's Resolution or Life-Changing Revolution?

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**D**o you ever wonder if you're really accomplishing anything with your busy days?

Do the hours, days, and years just seem to be slipping by with nothing to show for them?

How do we slow down long enough to ensure that our lives will make a difference?

It's so easy to just go about our daily lives checking the block and doing whatever comes next. One day runs into the next with no time to evaluate and recognize our own personal change and growth. Without a concerted effort to stop, look back, and acknowledge the positive changes we have developed in our lives, we run the risk of discouragement and hopelessness.

The start of a New Year provides a great opportunity to take the time for some self-evaluation. Learning to ask ourselves good questions, such as, "What new things have I learned this year?" and "How have I proven myself as a friend and family member?" or "How has God worked in my life this year?" will help us to find satisfaction in our past, as well as providing impetus for future growth and change.

While New Year's resolutions too often set us up for failure and guilt, a pro-active plan to grow and learn new life-stretching lessons will enable us to see real and tangible change.

Take a few minutes, or an hour, or a whole day, if necessary, and make a list of the things you would like to learn this year. Make another list of areas of personal growth you would like to establish. Your list might include such things as: more time in the Word, memorizing scripture, volunteering more often, building new friendships, or developing a new skill or talent.

The lists aren't a written-in-stone law to enslave you, but, rather, helpful tools to encourage positive change.

Growth and change are always more fun with friends!

Invite some friends over for cookies, hot chocolate, and goal-setting. Encourage them to come prepared to share what they have learned in the previous year and how they hope to grow in the upcoming year. Choose partners and commit that you will encourage and pray for one another as you diligently pursue your plans for positive and pro-active change. There is strength in numbers. And knowing that you're not alone in your pursuit of growth will make change an easier proposition.

As a follow-up, perhaps you could host a "halfway" summer barbecue. Providing your friends with an opportunity to share the growth they've experienced "so far," will strengthen all of you to push through until the end of the year. Besides, it's a great excuse for another get-together with friends!

Change is an inevitable part of life. However, change with no forethought too often becomes change for the worse. Take the time to look ahead, pursue your dreams, and pray for change that is spiritually positive and growth oriented.

No more guilty New Year's Resolutions... Let's plan for success!

*Megan Scheibner, is wife to her college sweetheart, Steve, and mom to eight awesome kids. Megan loves writing, cooking, reading, running, tennis, and feeding teenagers. Megan's personal goal is to continually bring glory to God through Christ-like, character healthy decision-making. That's her goal for her kids as well. Sometimes they succeed, but sometimes, not so much. We are looking forward to having Megan join us as a speaker at our 2019 Homeschool Iowa Conference.*