

Ministries of Brotherly Understanding

Est. 2024

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Welcome members, supporters, sponsors and followers of Ministries of Brotherly Understanding, this sermon will be about how the New Year brings new beginnings and resolutions.

As the last year ends and the New Year begin, we celebrate as it creates the ending of the past and opens the door for new possibilities. This is when everyone needs to figure out how they desire to continue.

- Do you create change in your life?
- Do you close the door on relationships that you feel are behind you?
- Do you make a move that will make your life better?

It is your new beginning, and you choose how you want to start your new journey. Remember that every choice you do make does come with an outcome, sometimes they are good outcomes and sometimes bad and only time will tell. As you look back at last year, remember the resolutions you made at the beginning of the year, which ones did you fulfill, which ones did you fail at? How did you feel about your accomplishments or your failures? As you enter the New Year and make your plans, take a moment to reflect, before closing the door.

When you are ready, and you have completed your reflection, let's look forward to your new beginnings. Are you the type of person that makes a New Year Resolution? Let's look at the top 10 resolutions:

1. Better Daily Routine
2. Eat Healthier
3. Lose Weight
4. Save Money

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5. Quit Smoking
6. Learn a New Skill or Hobby
7. Spend more time with family or friends
8. Get Organized
9. Reduce Screen Time
10. Travel More

Your resolution could include one of these, or something else that resonates with you. When you are planning your resolution use the SMART plan:

- Specific – Articulate your resolution as clearly as possible; don't be vague about what you want.
- Measurable – What is your desired change?
- Attainable – Choose a goal within the realm of possibilities, yet that has some challenge to it.
- Relevant – Keep your resolution relevant to your life's priorities, goals, dreams and aspirations
- Time-sensitive – Give yourself a time frame in which to achieve your goal. A deadline will install some urgency and provide a time when you can celebrate your success.

When you are writing out your resolution plan remember the following steps:

- Keep it positive.
- Try not to make too big or quick of a change.
- Change should be gradual
- Build on other changes
- Allow a little room for error

If you create unobtainable goals you are setting yourself up for failure. This could have the adverse effect:

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- Depression
- Excess Drinking
- Drug Use
- Self Inflicted Pain
- Perceiving yourself as a Failure
- Even Suicide

Remember, it takes 6 weeks to create a habit; it also takes 6 weeks to break a habit. What does this mean? If your resolution is to eat healthier, and you are 4 weeks into your resolution time, but you have a craving for fast food, and you break to your temptation, then the 6 weeks have been broken, and you would be starting over at day 1. Same thing if your resolution is to quit smoking, your 5 weeks in, something stresses you out in your life, and you chose to smoke a cigarette to calm your nerves, then the 6 weeks would start over again. Life gets in the way of life; this is not a failure on your part. Your psyche has been conditioned to use tobacco as a stress reliever for you. If it was easy to quit smoking, then everyone would be stopping when they were ready. The first 6 weeks will be the hardest for you, if you can make it through, you might have the chance to keep the new habit.

So, if you are going to make resolutions, please think what is truly important to you.

Let's look at some of the top resolutions, what can we do to accomplish and obtain the goal:

- Quit Smoking
 - Remember cigarettes have nicotine which is what you are addicted to; this is a very difficult drug to break away from.

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- How about instead of Quit Smoking we change it to reduce my smoking, go from 1 pack a day to ½ pack a day. Again, make it something that is obtainable.
- Could you use aids like the Nicotine Patch, Nicorette Gum or other aids?
- Lose Weight
 - How much weight do you want to lose?
 - Remember if you work out while losing weight, muscle weighs more than fat, so if you are losing inches, but not as much weight, you could be putting on muscle.
 - Will you diet? Use medication? Use a trainer?
 - Let's remember you have to have a clear path to your goal.
- Travel More
 - Plan the time for your vacations and travel.
 - What destinations are you looking for?
 - Did you know several of your LGBTQ Travel Groups like: Brand G; Atlantis; RSVP as well as Cruise Lines offer payment plans, at zero percent interest.
 - Could you get a new credit card with a zero percent introductory rate? As long as you pay off the balance before the deadline, you just got a zero percent loan. You can always cancel the card once it's paid off.

When you're looking at your resolution, look at these examples, break down what the resolution is, and what steps you can take to complete these goals. Be respectful of yourself and make it obtainable.

Maybe consider instead of waiting for the New Year to make huge resolutions, to just make goals as the year goes on.

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I will use myself as an example, looking back at my year of 2024. At the beginning of the year I was recovering from Hip Replacement Surgery that I had on November 28, 2023. I was on heavy Opioids, which I had been on for over 5 years from the pain in my hip. In March of 2024 I chose it was time to stop taking the Opioids, I was able to stop cold turkey, not everyone can, and I did go through about a week of withdrawals.

I had put on several pounds from the pain and the Opioids, but I was finally able to move again and, without pain. I knew it was time to get back in shape, at the time I weighed in at 278 pounds. My new goal was to lose weight, so I joined a training facility. But I didn't change my eating habits right away and, the weight was not coming off. In August I contacted a spa and started taking Semaglutide for weight loss. Instead of waiting till the New Year I chose to make the changes throughout the year. I am currently at 222 pounds. This is a reminder, that when you create your goals, allow for failure or change, figure out what you need to add, remove or change to allow the goal to happen, and keep working at your ultimate success.

An additional goal in 2024 was to travel more, which I went to Cancun in April, Amsterdam Pride and Riverboat Cruise in August and went to Costa Rica for continuing education. These goals were met with payment plans through different travel groups and zero percent lines of credit. I have carried this goal over to 2025; my ultimate goal is to enjoy travel while I can. You never know what your future holds; don't put off to tomorrow something that you can do today. If I would have know about these payment plans when I was in my 30's or 40's I would have started enjoying vacations a lot earlier then waiting till I was 49 years of age.

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Love yourself, be kind to yourself and respect yourself when you are making resolutions and goals.

In conclusion, you can either be your best friend or worst enemy, make great decisions for yourself. Remember, you can only make change when you are ready. If it is not time for the change, you can't force it to happen, this will end in disaster. Also please remember, you should never change for someone else. This could lead to:

- Built up resentment toward the person you are trying to change for.
- Can lead to depression.
- Can lead to you hurting yourself or someone you really care about.

Be honest with yourself and your loved ones, you should be accepted for who you are.

I look forward to many more sermons and starting live pod casts in the future.

You can find us on the web at mobu.church have a great year. Thank you for your time.