

THE SPRRC

Official Newsletter of St. Paul's Red Run Church

January 2025



PLEASE JOIN US AS WE CELEBRATE VALENTINE'S DAY EARLY! WE WILL HAVE GAMES AND ITALIAN FOOD!

FEBRUARY 12TH AT 6:30 PM IS WHEN THE DINNER AND FUN BEGINS! PLEASE SIGN UP NEXT TO THE NURSERY!

(THIS WILL TAKE PLACE INSTEAD OF BIBLE STUDY AND PIONEER CLUB)

YOUTH LOCK-IN

COME AND GET LOCKED IN AND STAY THE NIGHT AT CHURCH! WE WILL HAVE FOOD, GAMES, AND MOVIES. BREAKFAST WILL BE SERVED BEFORE PICK UP AT 6:00 AM! JANUARY 10TH!

UPCOMING EVENTS:

1/8/25 WEDNESDAY NIGHT ACTIVITIES RESUME

1/10/25 YOUTH LOCK IN
6:00 PM – 6:00 AM

1/11/25 MEN'S BREAKFAST
8:30 AM

1/25/25 LADIES BREAKFAST
9:00 AM – 11:00 AM

LOOKING FORWARD:

2/8/25 MEN'S BREAKFAST
8:30 AM

2/9/25 YOUTH TUBING
2/12/25 VALENTINE GAME AND ITALIAN NIGHT
6:30 PM – 8:00 PM

2/22/25 LADIES MINISTRY BREAKFAST 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM

It seems that every December, many people make well-intentioned resolutions for the new year. With premeditated bursts of enthusiasm, they are caught up in a whirlwind of peculiar, and sometimes public, activities that puzzle even neighborhood children. We witness surprising promises and new year's manifestos whereupon we are summoned to behold what sweeping changes may come in the new year.

The skeptical observer may ask: Is all this new year's fervor genuine? Is it helpful? Is it really necessary? Moreover, the curious onlooker may ask: Is it even appropriate to make resolutions? After all, shouldn't we at all times and all seasons seek to live wisely, obediently, and biblically?

Some may even go so far as to argue that resolutions themselves are not biblical, based on the fact that the Word of God itself provides us with a complete and authoritative compilation of God's resolutions for His people to obey. To manufacture our own list of resolutions, they would argue, is superfluous at best. These are the sorts of questions I have always considered when it comes to the whole business of making resolutions, and I have a hunch that many of my biblically informed brethren also ponder such questions. Yet, we know that it is right and biblically justifiable to resolve to establish certain priorities and principles in life so that we might serve others faithfully and glorify God in all we think, say, and do. And although it has not been my habit to make new year's resolutions, I have always sought to establish and keep certain priorities and principles by which I strive to live every day, praying that the Lord would come to my aid daily to help me live according to those priorities and principles for His glory, and His glory alone, and not for the accolades and applause of those around me.

As such, in considering how to glorify God in all that we do in our particular circumstances and callings, it is appropriate for us to establish and keep certain priorities and principles as we strive to love and follow Christ as His disciples—to the end that we might obey all that He has commanded us. For SOME resolutions may be one way they go about doing this, whether they make these resolutions at the turn of the new year or throughout the year. All the while, whether or not we make resolutions, we do well to remember that we can only keep our priorities and principles in life by the power of the Holy Spirit, resting assured that by faith, and by faith alone, we have been declared righteous by the Father because of the righteousness of the Son. We are called by God to live according to His will, not our own—for Christ's sake, not our own—for it is not to us but to Him that all glory belongs.

The nineteen-year-old Jonathan Edwards knew his weaknesses and was aware of the destructive nature of his sin, so he resolved to establish certain priorities and principles in his life in his effort to live entirely for the glory of God. He helped pave the way for us as he prefaced his seventy resolutions with these words:

Being sensible that I am unable to do anything without God's help, I do humbly entreat Him by His grace to enable me to keep these resolutions, so far as they are agreeable to His will, for Christ's sake. These simple introductory words of Edwards not only provide us with a glimpse into the mind of one of history's greatest thinkers, but they also provide us with a glorious insight into the heart of a young man who had been humbled and mastered by the Lord God Almighty. We would therefore do well to consider Edwards' prefatory remarks as we seek to glorify God and enjoy Him forever in our churches, our homes, and our hearts.

Continued

Resolving Sensibly

“Being sensible,” Edwards begins his preface—we must be sensible, reasonable, in making resolutions. If we hastily make resolutions out of an illusion of sinless perfection, it is likely that we will not merely fail in our attempt to keep such resolutions but that we will likely be less inclined to make any further resolutions for similar desired ends. We must go about making resolutions with genuine prayer and out of a thorough study of God’s Word. Our resolutions must be in accord with the Word of God; therefore, any resolution we make must necessarily allow us to fulfill all our particular callings in life. We must consider all the implications of our resolutions and be careful to make resolutions with others in mind, even if it means implementing new resolutions incrementally over time.

Resolving Dependently

“I am unable to do anything without God’s help,” Edwards admits. We must be honest in grasping the simple truth that every resolution must be made in dependence on God. And while every Christian would respond by saying, “Well, of course we must depend on God for all things,” most Christians have been sold the world’s bill of goods. They think that once they become dependent on God, they will have immediate strength. They repeat the world’s mantra: “Whatever doesn’t kill me will make me stronger.” While the principle is generally true, such thinking can foster an attitude of proud independence. We must understand that being able to do all things through Christ who strengthens us means that we must depend on His strength continuously in order to do all things and to keep all our resolutions (Eph. 3:16; Phil. 4:13; Col. 1:11). In truth, whatever doesn’t kill us makes us weak, by God’s conforming grace, so that in our weakness we will rely continuously on the strength of our Lord (2 Cor. 12:7–10).

Resolving Humbly

“I do humbly entreat him by His grace to enable me to keep these resolutions.” In making resolutions for the glory of God and before the face of God, we must not come into His presence pounding our chests in triumphal arrogance as if God must now love and bless us more because we have made certain resolutions to follow Him more. In reality, the Lord in His providence may choose to allow even more trials to enter our lives; in His unchanging fatherly love for us, He may decide to discipline us even more in order that we might more detest our sin and delight in Him. We should approach Him in humble reliance on His grace as we seek not merely the blessings but the One who blesses.

Resolving for Christ’s Sake

“So far as they are agreeable to His will for Christ’s sake.” We cannot resolve to do anything with a presumptuous attitude before God. The whole matter of making resolutions is not just goal setting so that we might have happier lives. We are called by God to live according to His will, not our own—for Christ’s sake, not our own—for it is not to us but to Him that all glory belongs (Ps. 115:1).