

“If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God...” (1 Peter 4:11).

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“I AM RESOLVED...”

John Edwards

The Parable of the Steward, as recorded in Luke 16:1-13, finds the accused steward saying, *“I am resolved...”* (v. 4). Standing at the opening gate of a new year, it’s a good time to make some personal resolutions of a spiritual nature. *“I am resolved...”*

TO ATTEND EVERY SERVICE. We are taught, *“Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together...”* (Heb. 10:25). So, resolve to be present every time the saints assemble together. This requires putting first things, first! Jesus commanded, *“But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness...”* (Mt. 6:33). Attending every service promotes growth. *“But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ....”* (2 Pet. 3:18).

TO READ MY BIBLE EVERY DAY. The Bible is the greatest book in the world. It’s the only book that can save your soul! *“...receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls”* (Jas. 1:21). Do you know why the Bereans were more noble than those in Thessalonica? *“...they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily...”* (Acts

17:11). Have you thought about the benefits of daily Scripture searching? I am resolved to read my Bible every day to: protect myself against sin (Ps. 119:11), to know the truth (Jn. 8:32), to grow (1 Pet. 2:2), and so on.

TO USE HOSPITALITY.

Hospitality isn’t practiced today like it once was. Christians are expected to be *“...given to hospitality”* (Rom. 12:13). Peter penned, *“Use hospitality one to another without grudging”* (1 Pet. 4:9). Do you remember Lydia? She said to a group of gospel preachers, *“...come into my house, and abide there”* (Acts 16:15). Would you have said that? How long has it been since you had members of the church into your house?

TO PRAY WITHOUT CEASING. Prayer is effective! *“...The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much”* (Jas. 5:16). Do you pray regularly? How often? The Psalmist said, *“Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice”* (Ps. 55:17). How often does God hear your voice in prayer? The Scriptures teach, *“Pray without ceasing”* (1 Th. 5:17).

TO GIVE BOUNTIFULLY AND CHEERFULLY. Do you know who it is that reaps bountifully? The one who sows sparingly or bountifully? Some

give sparingly and expect to reap bountifully. It doesn’t work that way (2 Cor. 9:6)! The Lord loves cheerful giving. *“Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver”* (2 Cor. 9:7). So, resolve to be bountiful and cheerful in your giving!

TO VISIT. James taught, *“Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world”* (Jas. 1:27). This separates the sheep from the goats (Mt. 25:31-46). Paul said to Barnabas, *“Let us go again and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they do”* (Acts 15:36). Do you ever go and visit the brethren and see how they do?

TO HAVE A POSITIVE ATTITUDE. Too many have bad, negative attitudes. “That won’t work”, “we can’t”, and the like are heard all too often! How about adopting a good, positive attitude this coming year? Say, *“...we are well able...”* (Num. 13:30) and *“I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me”* (Phil. 4:13).

Resolve to obey the Lord (Heb. 5:9) and be faithful unto death (Rev. 2:10)!

IT IS EASIER #2

Nicolas Edwards

It is easier...

TO BE CONFORMED THAN TRANSFORMED. *"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God"* (Rom. 12:2). It is easier to pattern and fashion yourself like the world. It is easier to blend in and look like the world in our mind, speech, conduct, dress, music, media, etc. If we aren't conformed, we will stand out like light does in a dark room. *"Ye are the light of the world..."* (Mt. 5:14-16).

TO RUN WITH THEM THAN TO BE STRANGE. God's elect must no longer *"live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God"* (1 Pet. 4:2). This involves a ceasing of running with certain people. *"Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you"* (1 Pet. 4:4). Doing the will of God requires we stop living in the lusts of men. When we do

that, we no longer run with those who live in the lusts of men. As a result, they think it strange and speak evil of us. Will you do God's will or take the easy path?

TO LOVE FAMILY MORE THAN THE LORD. The Lord says, *"He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me"* (Mt. 10:34-38). Any time we put family before the Lord, we transgress these passages which constitutes sin (1 Jn. 3:4). It is easier to choose family before the Lord; to separate from the Lord before we separate from family; and to compromise our relationship with the Lord before we do so with our family. The Lord says if we do that we are not worthy of Him!

TO SAY A PERSON IS RIGHT THAN WRONG. It is easier to tell a person that is wrong, they are right. It is easier to tell a person that is unscripturally divorced, you are Scriptural. It is easier to tell a person immodestly dressed, you are modest. It is easier to tell a person in sin, you are not in sin.

It is easy for man to get to calling *"evil good, and good evil"* (Is. 5:20). It is easier to say "all is good", when all is not good. It is not always easy to tell someone they are in sin. It isn't you telling them, God's word does the telling! The soul-saving truth must be spoken!

TO JUSTIFY THAN TO REPENT. It is easier to justify self or another than to repent or encourage repentance. Many, rather than recognize sin and repent of it, are quick to justify, make excuse, or go down a thousand rabbit holes to make themselves or another right. This is not a new problem (Lk. 16:15).

TO SELL OUT THE TRUTH THAN TO BUY IT AND SELL IT NOT. *"Buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding"* (Prov. 23:23).

TO PRAISE THE WICKED THAN TO CONTEND WITH THEM. *"They that forsake the law praise the wicked: but such as keep the law contend with them"* (Prov. 28:4).

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