

# Creating a New Normal for the New Year

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**Text: 2 Corinthians 5: 16-17 NIV**

**16** So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. **17** Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!

## Introduction

I often hear people complain about *the way things are*, in their life, relationships, finances, health, etc., I suppose we all do at some time or another. I normally point out that, “the way things are”, is their “normal.” Then I ask them, to think of what they want their “new normal” to be from this point. Many times, people will answer with a blank or confused expression, “I don’t know.”

The reality to life is, if we do not intentionally create a “new normal” for our lives, the old normal will remain or return. The Gospel of Christ is the ultimate promise of a “new normal” for those who are unhappy or struggling in life.

The following are a few ways people try to create a new normal for themselves this time of year:

### TOP 10 NEW YEAR’S RESOLUTIONS

Stay fit and healthy	37%
Lose weight	32%
Enjoy life to the fullest	28%
Spend less, save more	25%
Spend more time with family and friends	19%
Get organized	18%
Will not make any resolutions	16%
Learn something new/new hobby	14%
Travel more	14%
Read more	12%
Source: Nielsen	

When we look at how consumers are planning to meet their health and fitness goals, what is surprising, is how this year’s resolutions stack up against last year’s behavior. For example, 43% of Americans say they plan to lose weight by making healthier food choices, but 76% said they did not follow a weight loss or diet program in 2014.

Time Magazine lists the following as: **The Top 10 Commonly Broken New Year's Resolutions**

- Lose Weight and Get Fit
- Quit Smoking
- Learn Something New
- Eat Healthier and Diet
- Get Out of Debt and Save Money
- Spend More Time with Family
- Travel to New Places
- Be Less Stressed
- Volunteer
- Drink Less

Our past intentions may not have always been followed through on and our resolutions may have been left unfulfilled, but God's faithfulness makes a new normal possible. Consider some of the *promises* of God's Word in relation to the new year.

## **I. Every Year with Christ is a Year of Renewed Hope.**

**A. The heart of the Gospel message sets our expectations for what God is prepared to do in our lives when we follow Him.**

**B. Forgiveness through Christ makes it possible for us to leave our sins and failures in the past.**

**Psalm 119:90**, "Your faithfulness continues through all generations; you established the earth, and it endures."

## **II. Every Year with Christ is a Year of Positive Expectations.**

**A. God would have us to look forward with great expectations.**

**Jeremiah 29:11** "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

**B. God would have us make our plans with Him at the center of them.**

**James 4: 13-15** Now listen, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money.” **14** Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. **15** Instead, you ought to say, “If it is the Lord’s will, we will live and do this or that.”

## Conclusion

As I said earlier, our past intentions may not have always been followed through on and our resolutions may have been left unfulfilled, but God’s faithfulness makes a new normal possible. The *promises* of God’s Word will help us to set our expectations for the New Year and for our “new normal.”