

BEFORE YOU MAKE RESOLUTIONS FOR THE NEW YEAR....

By Bob Young

[Please pardon the personal nature of this article—I know of no way to illustrate the principle than with a real illustration from real life.]

It's that time of year—thoughts of 2019 resolutions are everywhere. Is there a chance that making resolutions for 2019 is premature? **Before you make resolutions for next year**, it's time for a final check of the current year. How did you do? Check your resolutions list for 2018. (Don't have the habit of writing down resolutions? Resolve to begin now!)

Resolutions are meaningless if you are not committed to living intentionally. Resolutions are a means to living a disciplined, controlled life. Resolutions are guides to help establish and maintain priorities. When I write down my list of resolutions, the list constantly gives me important reminders: what are the things I must say "no" to; what are the things I must say "yes" to.

Here's my ministry-mission checklist from a year ago—some successes; in some areas, I did not reach my goals.

- Read 30 books (more books than the previous year). *I read 18 new books, although I did reread some of the books in my personal library in preparation for more downsizing.*
- Read the Bible systematically. *I completed reading the entire Bible during the year. I increased my readings in languages other than English.*
- Prepare more video materials in English and Spanish. *I prepared, recorded, and posted 44 new videos to my YouTube channel.*
- Continue writing projects, completing at least two additional Bible Study Guides. *I finished books on the General Letters and the Prison Letters. I have several writing projects "in progress."*
- Continue to write and post materials to the website, with new materials and seminars. *The website has been significantly expanded, and reorganized, in 2018.*
- Continue the ministry and mission of Latin America Leadership Development, with an increased focus on evangelism, and less travel. *The work has gone forward as previously; the series of evangelistic Bible study lessons has been completed edited and updated, I made one less international trip than in 2017.*

Here is my personal checklist from a year ago.

- Maintain physical fitness. *I have controlled my weight (actually lost a little), went to gym about half of the days I was in town (137 visits to the gym)*
- Travel to be with friends; include Jan in more of my travels. *Accomplished! (or at least I can see significant growth in this resolution)*
- Home filled with laughter, love, and life [good food, good friends, family, friends, visitors]. *We have made a concerted effort to grow in these areas.*
- Enjoy simplicity of home and home projects. *Attitudes and enjoyment are hard to measure. I have sought the simple life. I still have too many "to do" projects on my list.*

One item from last year's resolution list that I did not make much progress in—worthy of maximum attention in 2019.

- Rethink church and what is a substantive church experience for us personally? How can we make that a reality? Where? How?