

Pastor's Page

"New Year's Revolution"

One New Year's day I visited my sister and family in Lancaster. After giving them all the appropriate greetings my youngest niece, Alice (who was 8 years of age at the time) said with great enthusiasm; "guess what my new year's revolution is?" "To stop biting my finger nails" "Wonderful" I replied. She had no idea that she had used the wrong word although perhaps in her little world such an act would have been a revolution.

However, as we consider the New Year perhaps we need both resolution and revolution if we are to truly follow Christ. For me January is a time of new beginnings; it's both the month in which I was born and the month in which I became a Christian. But for all of us it provides a fitting opportunity to review the past and look forward to the future. To thank God for all that has gone and to pray for grace to face all that is yet to come. A resolve to love and serve Jesus more keenly and a willingness to allow His Holy Spirit to revolutionise our lives

A familiar passage of scripture says " Forget the former things, do not dwell on the past see I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the desert and streams in the wasteland. " Isaiah 43:18.19. We can learn a lot from that as we enter into 2007. Firstly ... Let's resolve to not cling to the past, but to learn from it, lay it to rest (if needs be) then move on into God's future for us. Are there things that might hold us captive in 2007 and prevent us from moving forward? If so let's resolve now to let them go. Let's also resolve to not grumble about the present. The children of Israel became bitter and resentful as God tested them in the desert. And a journey that should have taken about a year, (Egypt to Jordan) took forty years to complete by which time many of the original group had died. Clinging to the past or moaning about the present may prevent us from perceiving and receiving the new things that God has for us. Lets resolve to be full of faith about the future. God wants to do new things in us and through us, revolutionising our lives, but lack of faith can hinder this work. Pray therefore for the gift of faith, and the wisdom to choose wisely. As Clement of Rome said in AD 95 "This world and that to come are enemies. We cannot therefore be friends of both, but must resolve which to forsake and which to enjoy"

Baptism reminds of us the decision to forsake self and follow Christ. It is a great privilege to be involved today in the baptismal service of David Browell and we pray that the Lord will richly bless him and Jenny as they obey his call to go and make him known to all nations. As we pray for them, lets pray that we too will be open to God's call on ours lives.

So at the dawn of another year let's stop and reflect and then step out with renewed faith in the One who came in order to reconcile us to our heavenly father and resolve to make him known to our friends and neighbours in 2007. It's a bit revolutionary I know, but God's good at turning things around so let's give him our lives and see what he can do with them!

7th January 2007