

Stand For A Change

Ephesians 6:10

Of course it wouldn't be right to speak the first few Sundays of the year and not mention that this is when most people make resolutions for changes they want to make in the coming year. I have heard more and more resolutions stated this way,

"I made a resolution to not make a resolution this year."

I actually took that one for myself, but then I realized, if I don't make a new resolution now when the new year starts, when seasons are going to change, when everyone is positive about change...when will I?

We know we have made resolutions before and later dropped out of the gym or sold your weight equipment at the first garage sale. But some people are truly determined to change while some have no intention at making any change at all. **Here's a few observations about a good New Year's Resolution.**

- It's good to realize that staying the same is not a good thing.
- It's good to realize that change is a good thing and must not be avoided.
- Despair comes from repeated failure to respond to change, and so a negative perspective toward making change can only bring more despair.
- Change is not always losing or dropping habits or routine, many times it is adding to or shaping up what already exist.

Most of the changes I need to make is just shaping up and bringing discipline to what I already do. It's not like I need to eat another meal, I need to discipline the one I already eat.

Change can start with a healthy dissatisfaction with the way things are or a positive view of what could be.

We cannot expect our lives to be all that God has called us to be without change being a factor. If you are in Christ, it is made evident by change.

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!"

II Corinthians 5:17

When Jesus Christ comes into our life he sets us on a path that few of us have been trained for, even fewer have a great understanding of what that means. But this change, this new creation, demands...

- A hunger for improvement,
- A commitment to development,
- A desire for taking new territory no matter what the cost. This drive resonates within us similar to the prayer of Jabez's...

"Jabez cried out to the God of Israel, 'Oh, that you would bless me and enlarge my territory! Let your hand be with me, and keep me from harm so that I will be free from pain.' And God granted his request."

1 Chronicles 4:10

Habit of Ascent



I have been reading a great book called, “*Beyond The Summit*” by Todd Skinner. Todd is a rock climber, and to my knowledge coined the phrase, “**Habit of Ascent.**” Todd has emerged as one of the most accomplished rock climbers of our generation, with more than **300 first ascents** in **twenty-six** countries. He has also become a highly sought-after business speaker with clients such as Microsoft, AT&T, PaineWebber, (now UBS), IBM, and Nextel. (*Beyond the Summit*, Todd Skinner, Portfolio, Penguin /group, 2003)



Here is a picture of Todd on one of the summits that he had climbed. But one of the most astounding



pictures and climbs I think I have ever hear of was his climb of the **20,500-foot Trango Tower or “The Nameless Tower”** in the **Himalayas in Pakistan**. It had never been done before and said to be impossible, but he saw that it was done.

I find Todd book full of insight, interesting and full of one-liner resources that easily translated into my *purpose, potential* and *destiny* in Christ for two reasons:

1. First, he has helped me understand that **most of what God calls me to do in my life is often a “first ascent.”** Here is how Todd puts it,
“If any piece of rock has been climbed anywhere, I have no drive to climb it myself because it has been shown to be achievable...But on the frontier, the answers aren't known, and we often don't even know the questions. **That is where the greatest gains are made, by launching into the unknown.**”
2. Second, Todd's story helped me understand the **my personal growth and success can be translated into other peoples lives even though we have**

nothing in common. What would an accountant have to do with a mountain climber? Just like Todd's insight to climbing applies to my life, my own ascent and the lessons learned from it can translate into other people's life. The challenge of my ascent in life opens doors for others to listen and hear me. My testimony CANNOT be based on faith alone, I must have experiences that back up what my faith says God will do!

(Sadly, Todd Skinner died in October of 2006, reportedly, a belay loop failure was the reason he fell to his death. Skinner had ordered a replacement harness but continued to use his old one until it arrived. Of all the feats and incredible accomplishments, you never become greater than the basics, Todd neglected one of the basic rules of climbing and because of that fell to his death.)

I would like for us to invest in what Todd called the, **“Habit of Ascent.”** Again his insightful words that translates into our lives was:

“When ascent is a habit- a natural response to meeting challenge with and upward spirit- it is much easier to continue climbing. Obstacles are then mere detours, not dead ends; challenge is answered, not evaded.”

I believe that the Habit of Ascent begins with change. A change you and I must face, right here, right now!

No doubt...

- 1. Change is a challenge.**
- 2. Change is a chance.**
- 3. Change is a choice.**

I cannot help but feel that there is a supernatural and prophetic reason that we are at this point in the process of our sermon series in Ephesians. I believe it is no coincidence that we are beginning this new year, at this juncture in time, with a seemingly none aggressive word, “Stand,” but has incredible, aggressive action to it. To stand will be defined as an aggressive act by taking your position in it's full authority. To stand will mean change. To stand will determine a different tomorrow. is not a passive action It is important to grab a hold of the challenge set before us, to take the chance and view it not as a risk but as an opportunity and make a choice and invest our lives in a future God wants us to not only enjoy but have great influence and fruit.

1. Change Is A Challenge

It's been said, “Nothing worthwhile is easy.” Change is seldom easy. The opposite of change is *status quo*- the argument to stay the same. There are often three reasons why a person would stay in the status quo and avoid changing:

- 1. Your PAST can be a challenge to change by allowing your past to define your future.** We often look at where we have come from before we allow ourselves to believe where God would have us go. The weight of the past can paralyze us and make the future look far too big. Our past failures, past efforts and accomplishments are all weights in our backpack. If we are going to ascend the summit we have to leave what weights us down. We must empty

out our backpack and make a fresh start.

2. **Your PRESENT can be a false sense of arrival** . Sometimes the victories and trophies of the past can make us think there is nothing else to go for in life. It's hard to be passionate for more when you already feel like you are at the top. It is hard to not compare yourself with others. But when you are above the rest you can have a sense of security...but you are not reaching your potential. When we gauge our future potential based solely on our past victories or failures we will always resort to the idea that we have already done enough or we could never achieve anything at all.
3. **Your FUTURE can be limited by your fear**. Our present passiveness can lead to a future of frustration and remorse. A present plan designed only to avoid future failure is to guarantee to have a minimum future at best. **Fear is birthed in our heart when we have confidence in failure**. We avoid the hard questions and try to minimize the difficult decisions. Change is a challenge because fear is always competing for your future.

2. Change Is A *Chance*

When you hear the word chance it is easy to think random coincidence, but that is not what I'm talking about. I'm talking more about opportunity...**this is your chance**. I like what I read, "If something is said to be impossible, that might be reason enough to try."

Your chance is today. Your response could be generational, it could be life changing, it could even be eternal! Everyone loves getting a second chance...this could be yours.

3. Change Is A *Choice*

We often base our choices on immediate gratification, what pleases us or eases us at the moment. But those choices often affect us negatively in the future, sometimes catastrophically.

When we make a choice, we don't want to ask,

- **"Will things change for me in my future?"**

But you want to ask yourself,

- **"Am I willing to change for my future!"**

The future seldom ever changes when adjusting on your part is not required

If you are not happy with the journey of your life, it may not be the journey, it may be you. You can never make an accurate choice if you think that your future is just a conglomeration of coincidences rather than opportunities. **You cannot make life choices if you are unwilling to stop trying to avoid all the painful potentials of life rather pursue all the life giving opportunities.**

In opposition to the evolutionary theory, **I believe you were created on purpose, for a purpose with potential and destiny.** I also believe that you will never find the true happiness you so desire in your life until you find that purpose, potential and destiny. We must make a choice to invest our life and energy into the things that helps define our purpose, potential and destiny rather than exchange them for temporary distractions that will not or can ever fully satisfy.

"But if serving the LORD seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your forefathers served beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD."

Joshua 24:15

- 1. Change Is A Challenge**
- 2. Change Is A Chance**
- 3. Change Is A Choice**

Change is the process of what it means to come to Christ. Though there may seem to be similarities throughout the whole letter, there is a different change emphasized in both sections of the book of Ephesians and in each three subdivisions.

- 1. The Believers Position In Christ-** (Ephesians 1:1-3:21)
- 2. The Believers Life In The World-** (Ephesians 3:28- 6:9)
- 3. The Believers Warfare In The Spirit-** (Ephesians 6:10-24)

What we have gained from our teaching up to this point is first, we've understood the position of Christ, His power and purpose found in Ephesians 1:1-3:28, and how that affects how we *sit*, our position and purpose here on this earth and in the heavenlies. Second, in Ephesians 4:1-6:9 we understood how we should *walk* in this earth to support the position and purpose of Christ in our lives. Paul addresses character issues and practical family and job related dynamics that are necessary for cultivating a supernaturally blessed life as well as key components to a healthy society. Now Paul changes direction and has laid the ground work to assist us in *standing* strong in spiritual warfare.

"¹⁰Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power."
Ephesians 6:10

We don't realize how often we view the world from our perspective. Here we live in a world where we can make flight arrangement, drive a car and fly halfway around the world without ever talking to anyone. We have the luxury of watching a commercial, pausing the commercial, ordering what is offered on the commercial, go back and skip the commercial without ever missing any of the show and have what you ordered in thirty minutes or less. We could eventually believe that everyone lives in this luxury.

But this is not true. And it's not true for the majority of people around the world.

- **Hunger-** Most people will go to sleep tonight with hunger deep in their stomach and a worry of where they will get their next meal. The majority of the world rarely has enough income to purchase enough food to keep them alive. Even less is left over for housing, clothing, transportation and education. Listen to this, everyday, 35,000 children, more than live in our city and surrounding area, die of starvation or complications of malnutrition.
- **Disease-** We live in a world where, everyday, disease prematurely takes the lives of tens of thousands through cholera, malaria, tuberculosis, typhoid fever and AIDS.
- **War-** In the last century we have see wars ravage and kill over 150 million men women and children, most of them were civilians

We can live in our **blessed life** and forget a whole world has never had the opportunity to see or have the simplest of our luxuries. But something I believe is as stirring if not more stirring to me than all of the things that I've just mentioned, and that is the cause for every evil, for crime, war, famine, starvation and disease. There is something at the bottom of the broken promises, broken marriages, broken societies, broken dreams. This is the reason why Peter so clearly states the need for our attentiveness,

“Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy **the devil** prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.”

I Peter 5:8

See, Jesus came to this earth so we could be positioned in three ways,

1. In the **right position with God** the Father, provided by the death and sacrifice of Jesus.
 2. In the **right position with Mankind**, provided by the example and commands of Christ.
 3. In the **right position with our enemy Satan**, provided by the resurrection of Christ and the release of the Holy Spirit on believers.
- **Position with God:** I believe all those who are truly Christians today have made right that **first position with God** the Father by accepting the sacrifice of Christ on the cross as a pardon for their sins and redeemed them for the price they could never pay. By correcting their position with God, God repositions Himself with you.
 - **Position with Mankind:** I believe fewer Christians have learned how to let that first position influence them to move into the next position, the right position with Mankind. By making right position with God, He will move you to make right position with man, and man will have opportunity to respond back to you differently.
 - **Position with Satan:** Now here, I believe even fewer Christians have learned how to operate in their third position as a believer in Christ Jesus. This position is one that is filled with power to not only overcome Satan in a personal way, but to breakdown strongholds of the enemy and make war on him for the purpose of freeing others from the kingdom of darkness to let them live in the Kingdom of God.

Many people have diluted the idea of Satan as a fairy-tail, a red creature with horns, a pointed tail and a pitchfork and lives in what we call hell.

Let me ask you a couple of questions?

1. Where is Satan's Position In The World?

1. Satan has rule over the **kingdom of the air**, (Ephesians 2:2)
2. Satan is ruler over the **darkness of this world**, (Ephesians 6:12)
3. Satan is ruler, **prince over this world**, (John 12:31)

“The god of this age has **blinded the minds of unbelievers**, so that **they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.**”

II Corinthians 4:4

4. **Satan stands condemned in this world**, (John 16:11)

“...and in regard to judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned.”

John 16:11

2. **Why is there a gate to hell or hades?** Jesus has questioned Peter in Matthew 16, and after Peter had accurately identified Jesus, he told Peter,

“And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.”

Matthew 16:18

Gates are used to keep people out and people in. In this particular case it serves as both. I believe that there is a gate on hell for a certain time until it will open, not to throw people and Satan into it but to release things out of it.

“They, (the evil locust), had as king over them the angel of the Abyss, whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in Greek, Apollyon.”

Revelation 9:11

William Smith, *Smith's Bible Dictionary* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1997), defines. “Apollyon” or “Abaddon” Ἀβδδών [Abaddōn] , which is a transliteration of the related Hebrew term. The Hebrew term אַבְדּוֹן [ʾăbaddōn] is derived from אָבַד [ʾbd] meaning **“to perish, become lost, be ruined.”** It is translated by **“destruction”** and associated with שְׂאוֹל [she`ōl] in Job 26:6 and Pr. 15:11, where it denotes a place which is seen by the omnipresence and omniscience of God. Abaddon is personified along with death (מוֹת [māwet]) as having heard of the fame of elusive wisdom (Job 28:22). It is said to be the destination of a consuming fire (Job 31:12) and is associated with the grave (קֶבֶר [qheber]), but differentiated from it (Ps. 88:11). **It is said that hell (שְׂאוֹל [she`ōl]) and Abaddon (“destruction”) are never full (Pr. 27:20). In all of these uses, it denotes a location which is associated with Sheol and the grave, but differs from them. “The rabbins have made Abaddon the nethermost of the two regions into which they divide the lower world.”**

The Bible tells us that he is powerful, that he is intelligent, that he is the designer of wickedness and chaos that thrives in our world. He is the spirit that works in all disobedient people (Ephesians 2:2), The bible calls him the devil or Satan. Some other names are Beelzebub, liar, serpent, dragon, and tempter.

Few people know that Satan has never been to hell, or at least he has been bound to it. I truly believe that Satan does not have control of all the spirits, many of them are already imprisoned in the eternal pit, he really can't handle the competition. The gate is to keep them in and eventually, our enemy will be there with them.

Look At Our Position

I believe you and I have the same call as that spoken to Paul, on his journey on the road to Damascus. God told him...

*"...I am sending you to them to **open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.**"*

Acts 26:17b-18

Position Means Nothing Without Power

"¹⁰Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power."

Ephesians 6:10

A policeman is a good example. First he is easily identified because he is clothed with his authority or power. It is amazing to watch people snap to it when a policeman walks by or drives by. His authority/power is observed by what he has on. Second, if his authority is not heeded to by someone breaking the law he has his words that he speaks, "Halt, I am officer Joe and I am telling you to back down." His authority/power, supported by the government of the community or state or nation supports the words coming out of his mouth. If the individuals will not heed to officer Joe's words, he has the authority to call in for back up, and if things escalate to an immediate response, he pulls out the third level of authority, his firearm. His firearm is for the intended purpose of addressing the issue when the first two are not yielded to. In all cases, that would be the officers last resort. It is something he has been trained in depth about and in the process of time, may rarely ever resort to it. **It is dynamic in its potential but last in the process.**

I believe we walk in the same kind of authority. I believe there is a uniform that we wear backed up with words that can be clearly spoken and a firepower this world rarely sees. I believe we have firepower, but we also have authority besides. There is a difference when we walk in that power.

"When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own house, his possessions are safe. But when someone stronger attacks and overpowers him, he takes away the armor in which the man trusted and divides up the spoils."

Luke 11:21-22

Satan Is Very Much Alive

- He was alive and real enough to have tempted **Adam and Eve in the Garden**, (Genesis 3:414)
- He was alive and real enough to have tempted **David to take a census** of Israel and sin toward God, (I Chronicles 21:1)
- He was alive and real enough to tempt **Jesus for forty days**, (Matthew 4:3).
- He was alive and real enough to tempt Judas to betray Jesus, (John 13:27)
- He's alive and real enough to accuse **you and I and all who are believers before our God day and night**, trying to encourage God's judgment on us, (Revelations 12:10), just like he did Job, (Job 1:6)
- He is alive and real and will one day stand **before God in judgment**

"Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.'"

Matthew 25:41

Power Gainers and Power Drainers

A Power Drainer...

- Makes your acts of obedience feel like a duty to a company or corporation. In other words, your acts of obedience are more of an exchange for eternal security rather than the freedom of earthly rule.
- Is doing whatever you are told without knowing its purpose.
- Is not knowing if your acts of obedience really matters, God will probably do what He is going to do.
- Is not really knowing how well you're really doing, if it's pleasing to God or not.
- Is never feel like you have the freedom to know what is going on or that you really make any kind of contribution.
- Is feeling like you have little or no control over your life or your role in God's Kingdom.

A Power Drainer is...

- **Effort Under Your Own Strength**

"I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing."

John 15:5

- **Energy At The Wrong Time**

There is always a purpose to God's plan, but there is also a time. The Word of God is full of those who were faithful to respond to the timing of God and others who missed great opportunities because their time line did not jive with God's. In truth, their personal agenda did not allow God to have His way. But timing is everything. A huge power drainer is placing not only all your energy, but all your expectation on something that is designated to come into fruition in it's own process.

We have to learn and understand how to cooperate and operate with the timings of God. When Christ comes into your life you should develop the sensitivity to the timings of God and how it should operate in your life. Every step that you take following your acceptance of Jesus Christ into your life is meant to be lived according to the will of God, it is not life as usual or life with a little Jesus. It is a life, following God and His principles, learning of Him, listening to Him, responding to Him in the simplest of terms.

Throughout the Old Testament God spoke through prophets to describe Himself and to move people in obedience, appropriately in the timing of God. The understanding of spiritual times came from listening and obeying through absolute commitment to God.

The Bible says that all that Jesus did was obviously at the appropriate time:

- After the temptation it was time for Jesus to begin preaching repentance, (Matthew 4:17; Mark 1:15)
- There was a time when Jesus began teaching His disciples about His

coming suffering and death, even though they did not understand it, (Matthew 16:21)

- There is a time that the wheat and the tears will grow together and a harvest will take place, a separation of those who know God and those who don't, (Matthew 13:30)
- Jesus tells us of a certain time that will fall on the earth that will be devastating and full of tribulation, (Matthew 24:21)
- There is a time that the demons know that Jesus will deal with them and cast them into an eternal punishment, (Matthew 8:9; Revelation 20:10)

Timing is everything, and a huge power drainer is when your efforts are not in sink with God's timing! A Spirit-filled man can walk in step with God and work the works of God without the burden of being overly "powerful" when his obedience "accurate." When we operate in God's timing we lose the fear of stepping out in faith that paralyzes so many believers. Becoming familiar with God's timing produces courage, boldness, security and strength.

Attempting great things for God outside the timing of God can be a power drainer.

Here are some facts to keep in mind:

- **God never moves on you that He doesn't require faith!** God may be moving on your heart about stepping out in faith:
 - Faith to pray for the sick,
 - Faith to lead someone to Christ,
 - Faith to operate in Spiritual-gifts
- **God develops a gift over time, and that requires much faith and raises many questions.** Those who I know who have developed incredible gifts from the Lord have never stopped operating out of faith and were not afraid to search out the answers to the many questions that come with that gift.
- **God may be moving you toward a gift and you are looking for an event.** God may be trying to develop gifts in you but you are looking for a position, a certification, a crusade to preach in, a miracle service to operate in. This is something that I have seen over and over again. When a man of God or woman of God begins to become interested in the power of God, often they make the same mistake, they look for the event rather than the message.

Others think that their interest in the power of God being released in their life was their idea. To think it was their desire to minister to others is not of this flesh. To have a desire to heal the broken hearted is not a result of our selfish pride, it is the working of the Holy Spirit in your life. Your interest in God's power is not a selfish wish, it is a needed weapon.

A mental desire to see the spectacular is not spiritual hunger, that is a hunger for the spectacular, a desire to be entertained. But a

spiritual hunger comes from two things:

1. A spiritual hunger comes from a **revealing of the truth and dynamics of the Word of God**.
2. A spiritual hunger comes from a **supernatural awareness or discernment of things going around in a person, around a person, community, country, world or in the heavenlies**.

Paul wants us to understand all we can about this spiritual dimension:

*"I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the **Spirit of wisdom and revelation**, so that you may **know him better**."*

Ephesians 1:17

It takes a "Spirit of wisdom," not an intellectual confidence and a "revelation" of God to know Him better. It is not an intellectual study or academic pursuit in knowing God that will enhance your spiritual dynamics. ***Spiritual insight leads us through the proper dynamics of becoming powerful in the spiritual dimension***, Paul wanted us to also understand how important this is by continuing his emphasis by saying,

*"I pray also that the **eyes of your heart** may be enlightened in order that you may **know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and his incomparably great power** for us who believe."*

Ephesians 1:18-19a

Until this Spiritual wisdom comes in and the revelation of God opens up the "eyes of your heart" you can remain clueless in one or more of these areas. It is most important to know that having your eyes open in one area doesn't necessarily mean they are open in other areas. Remain clueless, with the eyes of your heart closed, not enlightened, you will not understand three things:

1. **You will not understand what you were created for.** ("**...know the hope to which he has called you...**") You can not live out your full potential in the spiritual dimension because you don't know what you are supposed to be doing. You will not have the hope in your spiritual DNA that you have purpose.
2. **You will not understand what God has and wants to resource you with.** ("**...the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints...**") Reading this scripture correctly, you are already resourced for what you were called for. Interestingly enough, too many "*saints*," (people who actually have already got the ear of God), are either oblivious of what God has placed in them or they are trying to congeal up resources that God has placed in them for actions and callings that He has not called them to. If you are unaware of how God has resourced you to do what you were created for you may have the want to, but never know you have the ability to.
3. **You will not understand the difference between your strength**

and God's power. (“...his incomparably great power for us who believe.”) Let me ask you a simple question, “Do you believe?” I'm not asking if you believe in miracles or the great power of God. Here the scripture says that His, (God's) power is incomparable. There is no match up. If you cannot tell the difference between when you are doing things in your strength and His power, then you need an enlightening, a discernment through the eyes of your heart to take place so you can see the difference. If you do not understand or experience the high voltage of the power of God, I believe you will burn up or burn out trying to do the things God has birthed you with in hope, revealed you with in resources but hasn't empowered you with in power. When you try to do in your flesh what can only be done in the spirit, you will burn up or burn out. “Nothing” can really be done in outside the power and connection with God if you intend to do something for God over the long run.

Too often we are either full of faith or full of fear. Some are so full of faith, they want to get out and move without hearing God accurately, desiring to be used so much without a real message to carry. Then on the other hand there are those who are full of a message, a direction, a command from God but are full of paralyzing fear and not of faith.

We are often moved with compassion for other people, we see their need and out of our sincerity we step out in faith to talk to them, to pray for them to encourage them, but nothing happens. We think, “Well I must have not heard God.” How wrong you are, Jesus Christ gave His life for the purpose that “all” would accept Him. You heard God. You responded in faith. Now there may have been something you could have said different, there may have been other approaches, but your act of faith is the beginning point of hearing God.

- **Ending The Process Too Soon**

I see so many people who **stop** too short of their victory and too soon for their harvest. Too often they end their passionate pursuit of God, to know Him deeper, greater and more personal before their confidence can be established in a mighty way in God's power and knowledge. One of the greatest things to learn of God is that He is in control and He will never fail. When you live by the Spirit, you walk in step with God...all the way. To get distracted. To lose the interest and the hunger for God will end the process too soon of what you could have known about Him and what you could have seen through your obedience. It is worth the commitment, the pursuit and the enduring journey. The greatest story you will ever tell anyone else is the story of what God has done because you did not end the process too soon.

"I tell you the truth," Jesus replied, "no one who has left home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for me and the gospel will fail to receive a hundred times as much in this present age (homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and

fields—and with them, persecutions) and in the age to come, eternal life."

Mark 10:29-30

A Power Drainer is...

**Effort Under Your Own Strength
Energy At The Wrong Time
Ending The Process Too Soon**

A Power Gainer is when you realize...

- You are unique and no one else was created for the role that you are called to serve.
- You can determine your own influence.
- Your acts of obedience have eternal consequences and blessings.
- You can know the will of God and where you stand with Him.
- You have an open opportunity to intervene on behalf of others.
- Your acts of obedience is a reflection of who you really are.
- Your simple acts of obedience always has an earthly response.

A Power Gainer is...

Enforced By The Holy Spirit

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

Acts 1:8

- It is a promise, "...you will receive power..."
- It is a person, "...when the Holy Spirit comes on you..."
- It is a passion, "...you will be my witnesses..."
- It is a pattern, "...Jerusalem...Judea...Samaria...to the ends of the earth."

Encouraged By The Holy Spirit

"In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express."

Romans 8:26

Empowered By The Holy Spirit

"I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being..."

Ephesians 3:16

Promised By God

"I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high."

Luke 24:49

Conclusion: Gain The Power

Getting In The First Word

“Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place where he prayed.”

Mark 1:35

What you hear first will have great affect on what you say next

You have heard this expression, there are no second chances at making a first expression. Having time with God gives you a basis for the first word. If you want to start out your day in a powerful way, there is no substitute for spending time with God.

- ***It is impossible to give what is in desperate demand what you do not have in abundant supply-*** You must receive to give. All that you might have, all you need to have is bread, simple bread. Jesus taught us in Matthew 6:11 to pray for our *daily bread*. The little amount of bread, five small barley loaves in the boys hands in John 6:9 was enough to feed the five thousand when blessed by God. What little you get from God today, no matter in what form, it is enough to feed the demand around you, the supply is what is in your hands multiplied by God's power.
- ***It is hard to respond to something in an appropriate way for when you have not prepared for something in an adequate way-*** All your words and responses to others are full of lead or helium. The will bring death, like a ball and chain in the water or a hot air balloon in the sky. Being prepared for your day does not mean you know all the answers, it just means you are closer to the one who does.
 - You will be in demand today to...
 - Make important decisions
 - Hear complaints and criticism
 - Respond to different kinds of reports, influences and environments
 - Discern the difference between flattery and healthy praise
 - Determine the difference between a biblical response and a natural response to others and circumstances.
 - The commands of your day, the voices of you morning, the advice of others, the ideas of the masses must be preceded by the voice of God.
- ***It is hard for others to forget what you wish you had never said-*** Everything you say becomes recorded in the mind of all those within listening distance. If you are not talking about anything important...it is still being recorded. If you are saying anything off color...it is still being recorded. If you are just venting...it is still being recorded. Your words are transcribed in the minds of others. Your words helps establish a persons opinion of you. Your words describe who you really are.
 - The minute you become careless with your words is the time someone takes them serious.
 - The words lightly spoken in casual conversation is cataloged and documented in someone else's library.
 - The statements and opinions expressed while you are processing an idea

or thought is often considered as beliefs and definition, never to be challenged or refuted...just one more means of defining you.

- Processing Out Loud:
 - Preface your statements with, "I was thinking about," "I'm not sure what you think," "I was wondering." All these give way to the words that follow as processing words instead of opinionated statements.
 - Some of you worry out loud. You are processing what to do or what the solution could be. You think you are actually acquiring input but you are perceived as full of fear. If you are actually around people that you think that can help you then let them in on why you are talking in the first place. You find yourselves processing your feelings with anyone that can't help you, then stop talking, stop processing your fears with others, you are looking weak and unstable.

"O God, you are my god, earnestly I seek you; my soul thirst for you, my body longs for you, in a dry and weary land where there is no water. I have seen you in the sanctuary and beheld your power and your glory."

Psalm 63:1-2

Just For Reading:

The Five Stages That Lead to Successful Resolutions

1. **Pre-contemplation:** The desire to change is vague. This is a good time to seek information and ask some important questions such as, "What risks am I running by going along just as I have been?"
2. **Contemplation:** Weigh the benefits of change. This is a time to get specific, to monitor behavior. For example, keep a record of how much you eat, drink, spend, etc.
3. **Preparation:** Begin making small changes. For example, you might give up some TV time and redirect your energy. Now us the time to tell family and friends that the leopard is about to change his spots. This is the time to make a firm commitment.
4. **The Action:** Banish and sacrifice vices while embracing and committing to new virtues. At this point, give yourself all the help and support you can by creating a sense of accountability to others. Encourage family and friends to prod, provoke and push you.
5. **Maintenance:** This is the challenging part. You're finished with your old habit and into your new life. It is a lot easier to maintain your resolution than it is to regain it. Do your self a monumental favor and stay focused on WHY you set this resolution in the first place!

Those who stay the course and fulfill their resolutions share these characteristics:

1. They believe in their ability to change.
2. They did not indulge in self-blame or excuse making.
3. They avoid wishful thinking and concentrate on results.
4. They understand their motivators and reasons why the resolution is important.

Resolution Guidelines

The most important investments require time. Setting and achieving a resolution requires focus, effort, and commitment. Changing old habits and developing new ones won't happen overnight. The following four guidelines are meant to help you achieve all of your New Year's Resolutions:

1. **Focus on one resolution at a time.** Divide and conquer the activities to achieve your desired results. Break larger tasks into smaller ones — each of these make up your Personal Resolution Roadmap, a path to achieve your goal.
2. **Create a sense of accountability.** Designate a friend, mentor, or companion for sharing successes, monitoring progress, and offering support. The benefit of involving others in your goals and plans is instant access to experience, knowledge, and wisdom — it also raises the bar of responsibility.

Research indicates that one of the qualities of those who are successful at making changes is that they have excellent support systems. Many of those who make resolutions never tell others about them. Consciously or subconsciously, that way if they fail no one will view them as a failure.

Communicating your resolution and intentions actually increases your accountability to the behavior. From the very beginning it is important to share your objectives and goals with those around you so that you can enlist their support. Knowing that you are accountable to someone other than yourself will help to keep you on track.

3. **Persist until completed.** A resolution achieved is a stunning example of consistency and hard work. If you fall behind schedule or are sidetracked for any reason, refocus! Just don't give up! Don't surrender to temptation, difficulty or temporary failure. Persist until you achieve the goal.
4. **Cultivate personal integrity.** Integrity gives you the oxygen needed to cross the finish line of accomplishment. Your commitment determines your level of success. This commitment boils down to two essential tactics: daily action and review.

Resolution Beginnings

The nuts and bolts of achieving any resolution are invariably the same. Neither the size of the resolutions nor the person achieving it matters. Successful New Year's Resolutions consist of the following:

- **Clear Purpose** — For a dream to become a goal, it must be specific. Being thin is an image, losing 10 pounds by March 1 is a true resolution. Be clear on what you want to achieve.

Make a New Year's Resolution that you have a real, bona fide intention of keeping. The truth is most people have not made a genuine, serious, no-kidding-around-I-really-mean-to-do-this New Year's Resolution!

- **In Writing** — Describe precisely what you want, how you will earn it, when you will have it, and the benefits you'll receive from achieving your resolution. Write the details, but don't make it complex. When you put it in writing, you increase your chances of moving to the next step and increasing your level of commitment.

Your mind, while blessed with permanent memory, is cursed with lousy recall. Writing your resolution goes a long way towards achieving it.

- **Commitment** — Without commitment, you can say, "Farewell dream. Adios potential. Toodleloo success. Hello Mediocrity!" Your resolution will find a more deserving soul: someone with courage, character, conviction... commitment.
- **Commitment is not only habitual but also essential** — it moves you ever closer to your resolution and ultimate success. Commitment is the heartbeat of your goal.
- **Accountability Counts** — commitment means you own it. You are responsible for taking the resolution that's on paper and turning it into a desired outcome. Owning it means tasking responsibility for changes, risks, failures, and successes.