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For me to be successful in life, I need to have a plan, a strategy and, more importantly, I must commit those plans and their outcome to God. (Psalms 127:1)

Proverbs 16:3,9,20 *Commit your works to the Lord (submit and trust them to Him), and your plans will succeed ... A man's mind plans his way as he journeys through life, but the Lord directs his steps and establishes them... He who pays attention to the word of God will find good, and blessed is he who trusts confidently in the Lord.*

New Year resolutions by themselves never assure us of consistent victory or success. A strategy in the form of daily habits, small increments of consistent change, are necessary to make those resolutions an active part of our life. Many of us lack the power to continue until there is a breakthrough! Distractions and discouragements are a fact of life! Notice the ice cube illustration adapted from the book, Atomic Habits...

An ice cube is placed in a room at 25 degrees Fahrenheit. If we warm the room by 1 degree per hour, nothing happens until the room approaches the melting temperature of 32 degrees (7 hours later). Then at 33 degrees it begins to melt! 1 degree in temperature makes all the difference.

In the same way, we may not see any changes for quite some time. But if we persist and do not quit we experience a breakthrough! A new habit is formed and a new identity emerges!

The Bible's promise in 2 Corinthians 5:17 tells us that when we are in Christ we are a new creation. The word "new" is the Greek word *kainos*, which means fresh, of a new kind, unused, unworn, unprecedented, unheard of. **However**... have you noticed that this

isn't automatic? In fact, many of us still struggle in our thoughts, attitudes, and behavior! And New Year resolutions don't seem to stick because they are not a part of our life as habits and behavior.

Here are a few thoughts...

1. In prayer allow the Holy Spirit to identify an area in your life that, when changed, will bring great results. Allow Him to give you a prophetic revelation of how He wants to involve you in His will.
 - Proverbs 29:18 *Where there is no prophetic vision, people cast off restraint. They are discouraged and seek other activities.*
2. When the Holy Spirit gives specific direction, start with small steps. Even God's Son began His journey as a helpless baby in one of the smallest towns! (Micah 5:2; Luke 2:12)
3. Be consistent and boldly persistent.
 - Luke 11:5-8 *...yet because of his persistence he will rise and give him as many as he needs.* (1 Corinthians 15:58)
4. Be aggressive in defeating discouragement.
 - The best way to destroy a negative feeling is with an opposite action. The Bible tells us to give thanks in every circumstance (1 Thessalonians 5:18), and to overcome evil with good (Romans 12:21).
5. Don't give up. If you do, begin again!
 - Galatians 6:9 *Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.*
 - 1 Samuel 30:1-8 *...But David strengthened himself in the Lord his God. Then... David inquired of the Lord...*
6. Bring others along in the journey for mutual accountability. Knowledge roots into behavior when assisting someone else.
 - 2 Timothy 2:2 *And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful (people) who will be able to teach others also.*

HAVE A BLESSED & SUCCESSFUL 2023!