



Intro

Resolutions. We make them every year. We break them every year. Why do we put ourselves through this? We set ourselves up for instant failure and guaranteed guilt. There must be some kind of redeeming value from this cycle of commitment and failure. In fact, there is. And as you'd expect, it comes from God's Word.

Note: While this exercise does not include a personal prep (as does all our small-group studies) we encourage you, as the leader, to work through this exercise before meeting with your group.

Materials

- Each student will need a Bible and a copy of the student page found below. Print as many copies as you need.

Open

After your group has gathered, open your time by discussing these questions:

How many of you have made New Year's Resolutions for 2017?

Which one of the following categories best describes your new resolution for 2017 or old resolution for 2016?

- A. Fitness/nutrition
- B. Personality-driven (i.e., be nicer)
- C. Spiritual
- D. Other

How did you do on your 2016 resolution?

- A. Broke it beyond repair
- B. I forgot about it
- C. I'm actually on track

Digging In

Share in your own words:

Even though the idea of resolutions pretty much comes from secular practices, Scripture does contain a few scenes of resolution, or more accurately, moments of resolve, that we can imitate. So, if you're looking for a resolution to take on more of a look of a revitalized spiritual life, check out some resolutions as seen in Scripture.

Depending on your timeframe, invite students to choose one or all of the situations below and on the next page. Have them read the passage from their Bibles and then respond to the questions on their own.

Option: You may want to divvy out the passages to different students and then have students teach the group about their respective situations.

Note: If you haven't explored these situations and processed the questions yet on your own you'll want to do so while your group is exploring.

1. Jehoshaphat: 2 Chronicles 20

What was Jehoshaphat's situation?

What was his resolution?

How did it work out for him?

What kind of resolution can you make that reflects the resolve of Jehoshaphat?



2. Daniel: Daniel 1

What was Daniel’s situation?

What was his resolution?

How did it work out for him?

What kind of resolution can you make that reflects the resolve of Daniel?

3. Paul: 1 Corinthians 1:28-2:5

What did Paul resolve?

Why do you think Paul needed to make this resolution? What does it appear he was tempted to do?

What parallel resolution can you make in your faith commitment?

4. Jesus: Luke 9:51-56

What did Jesus resolve?

As best you can tell from the small window you have into this passage, what appears to be significant about the fact that Jesus “resolutely set out for Jerusalem”?

What kind of similar resolution can you make in your faith walk?

● **Taking It Inward**

- After a few minutes, call your group back together and ask students to share about their experiences. Make sure that you touch on each of the four passages by the time you finish your discussion.

Ask for volunteers to share briefly about the situation in the passage and then explain how that situation and resolve are similar to situations today.

Ask:

Which of these situations most closely reflects a situation in your life in which you need resolve?

Read to the group one or two of the resolutions you wrote down.

Putting Into Practice

Ask:

Would you like to use the resolutions in the Bible to make a 2017 resolution?

Ask students to take a minute to write a resolution based on one of the passages of Scripture they just read. They may want to adopt and improve on any they wrote during the Digging In exercise, or they may want to write something brand new. If you need to prime the pump a bit, read the resolutions below as examples.

Jehoshaphat Resolution:

I resolve to live a life that inquires of the Lord. I will make Him a part of my decisions and trust Him to enter into my situations.

Daniel Resolution

I resolve to not let my heart and mind be corrupted by the dirt (or food) of the culture. My actions will be different. I will not be taken in by things that chip away at our faith; I will trust God for the outcome.

Paul Resolution

I resolve to know nothing but Christ crucified. Everything about my walk with God needs to come out of my personal experience with Jesus’ crucifixion.

Jesus Resolution

I resolve to not take the easy, expedient way in walking with God. True discipleship will be costly. I will resolutely walk that path.



● **DIGGING IN**

● **1. Jehoshaphat:** 2 Chronicles 20

● What was Jehoshaphat's situation?

What was his resolution?

How did it work out for him?

What kind of resolution can you make that reflects the resolve of Jehoshaphat?

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Why do you think Paul needed to make this resolution? What does it appear he was tempted to do?

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What did Jesus resolve?

As best you can tell from the small window you have into this passage, what appears to be significant about the fact that Jesus "resolutely set out for Jerusalem"?

What kind of similar resolution can you make in your faith walk?

● **PUTTING INTO PRACTICE**

● **My 2017 Resolution:**