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**This New Year Make *Stewardship* Resolutions**

New Year’s Resolutions offer a great opportunity to set a new goal, to start a new project or to renew a commitment to achieve an objective that might have slipped away from you last year. Most resolutions deal with the most important aspects of our lives, and they usually go to the heart of our cares and concerns.

So this year definitely make some resolutions, but for 2017 try something different. This year rebrand them as *Stewardship Resolutions*. After all, Christian stewardship starts with the premise that we actually own nothing because God owns it all. Therefore our time, our talent and our treasures – and our very lives – are merely entrusted to us by a God who loves us and wants us to use all these things wisely and for Godly purposes.

As Stewardship Resolutions, your goals will not be merely tests of your willpower, but also noble exercises of faith. They will take on a deeper meaning because you are making resolutions as an act of discipleship. You can pray that God will help you keep your resolutions.

Here are some suggestions:

**Time:** This is a biggie for 21st century folks. We never have enough time, but somehow every moment seems to be consumed either by the nonstop urgencies of the moment on the one hand, or by mindless entertainment and activities on the other. Resolve to steward your time by planning, setting and maintaining priorities for enriching activities, such as meaningful hobbies, leisure, reading, prayer or rest.

**Spirituality:**We are saved by grace through faith, it’s true, but we grow spiritually the more we invest ourselves in the disciplines of faith. In *Power Surge: Six Marks of Discipleship for a Changing Church*, Lutheran pastor Michael W. Foss suggests growth through the spiritual practices of daily prayer, weekly worship, daily bible reading, nurturing spiritual relationships, serving others and giving beyond a tithe. Resolve to be a better steward of your spirit!

**Physical Health:** God gave us wonderfully complex bodies. Good stewardship means doing what we can to keep our bodies not only free from disease but also operating in top condition. Your Stewardship Resolutions might call for such things as getting adequate sleep, exercising more,eating better, quitting smoking, cutting down on alcohol.

**Mental Health:** We all carry stress, but too many of us have way too much! For stewardship of our mental health we might resolve to play more, to meditate, to pray, to take walks, listen to relaxing music – whatever works for you.

**Intelligence:** We know that to keep our bodies healthy we have to feed it nutritious food. Our minds need to be fed, too. Your Stewardship Resolutions might call for taking (or teaching) a class, reading four challenging non-fiction books this year, subscribing to an educational podcast.

**Family and Friends:** God has given us family and community in order that we will be happiest and most fulfilled in relationship. How are you stewarding relationships? This year resolve to strengthen ties with family and friends, and if necessary to end unhealthy relationships.

What Stewardship Resolutions would enrich your life in 2017? Pray about it. Then write them down.

*--Rob Blezard*

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