

## Devotional Thoughts

Month of January 2009

### Thought: Resolve To Be Transformed

**Scripture Lesson:** *“You clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence. Blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and dish, and then the outside also will be clean.”*

What will you do different this year? During the first week of January, there will be more diets begun and more attempts at various forms of "self-improvement" than any other time of the year.

Most good-intended resolutions will soon be forgotten, but some will make lasting changes for the better. If it takes the commitment of a New Year's resolution to break free of a bad habit, restore a broken relationship or improve your health, then by all means do it!

But during this time when we almost irresistibly reflect back and look forward, let's focus some of our effort on the changes which have eternal significance. Jesus said it well as He admonished the Pharisees: *"You clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence. First clean the inside...and then the outside also will be clean"* (Matthew 23:25-26).

The Bible speaks about the initial transformation which occurs when we become a "new creation" in Christ. But it also speaks about the on-going transformation as we draw closer to God and achieve the peace and contentment found only in His presence.

In Romans 12:2 we are challenged: *"Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is - His good, pleasing and perfect will."* We all know that the behavior and customs of this world are usually selfish and often corrupt and unacceptable to God. God has a plan for his children and he wants us to become transformed and alive to glorify him. He wants only the best for his children and for that reason he sent his only Son to offer a way to be reconciled to him.

The renewing of our mind is an inward change where we are "conformed to the likeness of His Son" (Romans 8:29). It's a process of changing our thoughts, priorities, and goals to be aligned with those of Christ; *"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus"* (Philippians 2:5 KJV). The mind of Christ was pure, focused on the Father, and determined to do His will: *"My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to finish His work"* (John 4:34).

On our list of things to do different in this new year, I pray we include more time with God in prayer, more time in His Word, more time loving Him with all our heart, seeking His presence, and earnestly desiring to know, and do, His will. Let our prayer for one another be that we draw ever closer to our Heavenly Father and experience His love new and fresh every day. In this New Year, let us make eternal resolutions as we resolve to be transformed! **Have a Blessed New Year!**

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