

Introduction:

Here we are at the end of 2025. I've heard it said, 'The days are long, but the years are short.'

This is also the time of the year that people make all kinds of New Year's resolutions.

A new year, a new start, and looking forward to new things. People usually make New Year's resolutions because they want something to change for the better.

The thing about New Year's resolutions, they are **often self-focused**. What I would like to change for me. **Often these resolutions last about two weeks**, then its back to the normal habits of life.

What if as followers of Jesus, we had a totally different motivation and mindset. What if we didn't focus on ourselves as much, but focused on the Lord and what He desires? What if we lived daily in total surrender and became fully devoted to Jesus? He will make more changes in your life by His Spirit in one moment, than we could ever do with a New Year's resolution.

What if we took on the Mind of Christ? And took the words of the apostle Paul to heart?

1st Corinthians 10:31. *"Whether then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, **do all to the glory of God.**"*

What if, in this coming new year of 2026 **we set our hearts to be fully devoted for the glory of God in every area of our life?** We only have one life to live on this planet. People are appointed to die once and after this the judgment. Hebrews 9:27

****Does God desire that we live fully devoted to Him? Turn with me in your bibles to 1 Kings 11**

Consider Solomon, King of Israel who had been mega-blessed by God, but didn't remain fully devoted to the Lord.

David named him Solomon (Peaceful). The Lord named him Jedidiah (Loved by the Lord) 2 Sam 12:25

The Lord had literally appeared to Him twice, giving him unmatched wisdom.

In today's financial terminology he was a Billionaire.

The wisest man on the planet, he wrote 3000 proverbs and 1005 songs.

He was an authority on plant life, animal life and many other subjects.

But he allowed his heart to become cold toward God. He married many foreign women who didn't worship Yahweh. He had 700 wives and 300 concubines.

1 Kings 11:4-6,9 NIV *"As Solomon grew old, his wives turned his heart after other gods, and **his heart was not fully devoted to the Lord his God, as the heart of David his father had been.** He followed Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and Molek the detestable god of the Ammonites. So Solomon did evil in the eyes of the Lord; **he did not follow the Lord completely, as David his father had done.** The Lord became angry with Solomon because his heart had **turned away from the Lord, the God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice.**"*

Solomon worshiped Yahweh on Sabbath, but also worshiped Ashtoreth (the fertility, sex god) along with Molek (the child-sacrifice god) the rest of the week.

This is equal to building a brothel and an abortion clinic next to each other, right next to the temple of God. You can see why God was angry. Not only was He sinning, but he was leading the nation into sin.

Because he was not fully devoted to the Lord, he began worshiping false Gods. He opened the door to division in Israel for generations. Israel never fully recovered from his leadership sins.

****Not being fully devoted to the Lord as a believer has serious consequences for generations.**

**Human beings are worshipers. We are created by God this way. We were created to Worship and Serve the Living God. There is a craving in the heart of every man, woman, boy and girl to worship and be loved by God. But, if we don't worship and serve God, something or someone will capture our hearts.*

***Human beings are professional idolaters. We are going to worship and be devoted to something.**

God is looking for His people, His Church, His bride to be fully devoted to Him. This results in generational blessing instead of generational curses.

**Does God truly desire that we live fully devoted to Him this way in the 21st Century?
Consider the mess our world is in because of self-centered humanity. The Church is not immune to this.*

Jesus warned the Apostles about the destruction and pain that self-centered living would bring.

Matthew 24:12 "Because lawlessness is increased, most people's love will grow cold."

(Lawlessness – Literally, stepping over boundaries – (21st Century lingo... You do you...whatever makes you happy. Whatever 'feels good,' do it).

***Jesus describes believers who once had a heart on-fire for Jesus, but have now become cold...
(Last Days epidemic in Christianity. The Laodicean Church of Revelation)**

King Solomon had prayed and dedicated the Temple where the Manifest Presence and Glory of God came down to touch the people. God had mega-blessed him and appeared to him twice...But now, Solomon's heart was cold toward God, evidenced by how he worshiped other 'gods.'

Does God desire for His people to be fully devoted to Him?

**Consider Joshua and Caleb, early leaders in Israel. (2 Men out of 3 million Israelites.)
They were the only ones who entered their God-given destiny because they followed the Lord fully.**

Numbers 32:11,12 "None of the men who came up from Egypt, from twenty years old and upward, shall see the land which I swore to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob; for they did not follow me fully, 12 except Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite and Joshua the son of Nun, for they have followed me fully."

***Being fully devoted to the Lord is directly connected to your God-given Destiny and Inheritance.**

To be fully devoted to Jesus is not a mystery. He tells us how we can be fully devoted for His glory and for the good of ourselves and everyone around us.

How do we do this? Can we really live in full devotion to God this way?

Mark's Gospel, Chapter 12

In this passage, Jesus distills the whole Old Testament and actually, the whole of the Bible into a simple command. He reveals the heart of our Father and what He desires for His people. Because this is what really matters for life and eternity. To be fully devoted to Him and love others with His kind of love.

Scripture Text:

Mark 12:28-34 NIV

*"One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, "Of all the commandments, which is the most important?" 29 "The most important one," answered Jesus, "is this: 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. 30 **Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.**' 31 **The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'** There is no commandment greater than these." 32 "Well said, teacher," the man replied. "You are right in saying that God is one and there is no other but him. 33 To love him with all your heart, with all your understanding and with all your strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself is more important than all burnt offerings and sacrifices." 34 When Jesus saw that he had answered wisely, he said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." And from then on no one dared ask him any more questions."*

1 – God commands us to be fully devoted to Him.

This is not a suggestion. This is a command from the Lord. Jesus wasn't making up anything new. He was quoting for this religious leader the 'Shema,' directly from the Old Testament, **Deuteronomy 6:1-9,13,14**.

***The command to love the Lord above all else was connected to the promise of bringing the Israelites into their God-given destiny and inheritance.**

***They couldn't enter their destiny or inheritance if they worshiped 'other gods,' along with the Lord. God warned them against something, bible scholars call SYNCRETISM**

Webster's – Syncretism: The combination of different forms of belief or practice;
Worshipping The Lord on Sunday, then Worshiping other Gods the rest of the week.

***Whole segments and denominations of 'Western Christianity' are practicing Syncretism today:**

Claiming to worship the Lord, but adding the Rainbow Flag and promoting sexual lifestyles that are clearly forbidden in the Bible. ***Promoting abortion, (the murder of the unborn) as something that God approves of. (Promoting Ashtoreth and Molek publicly like King Solomon)**

***Many believers in the body of Christ practice Syncretism by worshiping the Lord on Sunday, but also worship other 'gods' the rest of the week. Jesus is not the Lord of their life.**

***There are many things in this world that pull on our hearts daily, trying to grab our affections, desires and motivations.**

Anything we place before God is an idol. **1 John 5:21** "Dear children, guard yourself from idols." That is why God commands us to be fully devoted and love Him. He is protecting us!

So, how do we become fully devoted to the Lord?

*The Lord tells us how in this passage – Its Total surrender to the Lord in every area of our life.

2 – Being fully devoted means we Love God with all of our heart: Vs 30

What is the heart? The seat of your affections, desires and motivations. The core of your being. We are to love God above all of our affections, desires and motivations.

*Things of this world pull on our hearts daily, trying to grab our affections, desires and motivations. Not just sinful addictions, drugs, sex outside of marriage etc... but money, materialism, sports, status, comfort, convenience, relationships, hobbies, etc...

My Story:

*Some people stop from being fully devoted to Jesus because it would make waves in the family. Husbands, wives, kids, boyfriends, girlfriends are more important than Jesus.

Matthew 10:37,38 "He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. 38 And he who does not take his cross and follow Me is not worthy of Me."

Story: Smith Wigglesworth (and wife Polly):

Story: Mom's Conversion (Waves in the Family)

*This often-times will cause a holy disturbance, but is necessary to walk with Jesus.

*People around us should know Jesus is the most important priority of our lives. Lordship of Jesus!

*Apostle Paul taught walking with Jesus would involve making waves and tribulation.

Acts 14:22 "...Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God."

Proverbs 4:23 NASB "Watch over your heart with all diligence, for from it flow the springs of life."

Psalms 86:11 NIV "Teach me your way, Lord, that I may rely on your faithfulness; **give me an undivided heart**, that I may fear your name."

Q. Do I love God with all of my heart? Or, is someone or something else a priority?

What is the Lord asking me to put to death or put in its proper place to love God with all my heart?

Psalms 34:8 O taste and see that the Lord is good; how blessed is the man that takes refuge in Him...

3 – Being fully devoted means we Love God with all of your Mind: Vs 30 – God gifted us with a Brain/Intellect, He wants us to use it.

Your mind is an amazing Gift from God, made in His image. The ability to think, reason and create.
Story: Reminders

Proverbs 1:1-7 We are to seek wisdom and understanding. Not only about God but about all of life.

1 Kings 4:29-34 “Kings from every nation sent their ambassadors to listen to the wisdom of Solomon.”

We need to be continual students of God, our wife, husband, kids family, our vocation and all that applies to us.

**Read books, articles, watch instructional videos. Anything that will help you learn and grow.*

**Using your mind can save you a lot of Money:*

Story: Furnace Heater

Van purchase – (TIPM)

Prayer: **Proverbs 2:3** “Cry out for insight and ask for understanding.”

Story: Welding Business

**We can be thinkers and problem solvers to serve and help others. (The Figure-it-out, Anointing)*

**Why too much reliance on AI is scary. It removes our creative thinking and problem solving ability.*

**Guard your mind from all the garbage of this world with the truth of God’s Word. Keep out anything that pollutes your mind.*

**Don’t let your Cell Phone/Social Media become your master. Master it.*

**People around us should be able to come to us for advice on things we study and apply ourselves. Make a commitment to grow intellectually. Think on what you need to learn and study it.*

**God can bless your mind with inventions and problem-solving ideas*

Q. Do I love God with all of my mind to guard it and develop it. Or, am I lazy-minded?

4 – Being fully devoted means we Love God with all of your Soul: Vs 30 – God gifted us with emotions. We need to steward them rightly.

Your soul is an amazing Gift from God. *You are not a ‘Vulcan’ like Dr. Spock, (on the original TV Series of Startrek) an emotionless creature.*

Example: *Dr. Spock*

Emotions of joy, grief, sadness, anger or frustration are a part of the human experience because we are made in the image of God. Jesus Himself experienced these emotions in His life.

Emotions are not to lead our life, they are only indicators of things we experience. Believers need to be strong emotionally and display calm in stressful situations.

Believers need to learn compassion and empathy for others, especially children and the vulnerable. Believers need to control our zeal, anger or grief and channel it in the right direction.

Galatians 5:22,23 NIV “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self control.”

Prayer: **Psalm 42:5** “Why are you in despair, O my soul? And why have you become **disturbed** within me? **Hope in God**, for I shall again praise Him for the help of His presence.”

Q. Do your emotions tend to rule your behavior, or do you allow the Holy Spirit to give self-control?

*People around us should be able to connect with us emotionally. They should feel safe, protected, loved and inspired.

Make a commitment to let the Spirit of God harness your emotions and connect well with others.

*We are to love God with our whole soul/emotions.

5 – Being fully devoted means we Love God with all of your Strength: Vs 30 – God gifted us with a physical body to steward well.

As a follower of Jesus, your body belongs to God as a Temple of the Holy Spirit.

1 Corinthians 6:19,20 Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price: therefore, glorify God in your body.”

Apostle Paul mastered his body for the glory of God.

1 Corinthians 9:27 NLT “I discipline my body like an athlete, training it to do what it should. Otherwise, I fear that after preaching to others, I myself might be disqualified.”

*Paul the Apostle

*Navy Bootcamp

*As we get older, we can feel the effects of aging.

Like an older car, it needs more TLC and maintenance. That’s why we need to be proactive about maintaining our body properly.

We are to steward our bodies so that we have strength to do what God calls us to do: Moses
Moses was 120 when he died: His eyes were not dim, nor his strength gone. Deuteronomy 34:7
Moses was 80 years old when God called him at the burning bush to Deliver Israel from Egypt.

***Note to Seniors:** We don’t retire from the Great Commandment or the Great Commission. We stay active with all the strength we have, serving and telling others about Jesus.

3 Pillars of Physical health:

- A. **Nutrition** – eating healthy for fuel rather than for mere pleasure
- B. **Exercise** – Working out to keep your body in shape
- C. **Sleep** – Getting proper rest to recharge

III John 2 *"Beloved, I pray that in all respects you may prosper and be in good health, just as your soul prospers."*

***People should be able to depend on us because we have strength because we steward our body well. Make a commitment to God to do all that you can to be healthy to steward your body well.**

Q. Do you view your body as belonging to you or God? Are you actively stewarding it well? You show love to God by taking care of the body He gave you. You only have one that He gave you!

***To love God with our whole heart, mind, soul and strength is a lifelong journey, once we have given our life to Jesus. It requires a daily surrender to God's grace.**

It is only by His grace and His power that we can be fully devoted to Jesus and love God the way He desires for us to do.

We can love Him because He first loved us. 1 John 4:19

We serve a God, that is Fully Devoted to us! He proved it by leaving His throne, taking on a human body, and going all the way to the cross to die in our place to purchase us out of a slave market of sin and darkness, and bring us to the Father.

Example: Bank Owner/Debtor

Jesus is so worthy. As his children we should surrender to Him and be fully devoted to love and serve Him with all of our being. We love Him because he first loved us.

Its my prayer that God would remove everything in our lives that hinders Him. I pray that we would live totally devoted, as followers of Jesus for His glory this new year. If we do that, its certain our lives this new year will not be the same. Our church, our city and world will be changed for the glory of God.

Conclusion:

The only way we can be fully devoted to Jesus is to surrender our hearts to Him and ask Him to work in and through us by His Spirit.

What He asks of us is that we give our 'hearts' to Him and let Him work through us. He will!

When we are totally devoted to Jesus, He can then work through us to 'love our neighbor as ourself'

We follow Jesus, not just because He makes our life better, but because He is better than life!

Let us be Fully Devoted to the Lord in 2026! A Blessed Life!

