

*Matthew 28:18-20 Jesus came and told His disciples, "I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age."*

As the dawn of 2015 breaks, many of us will make New Year's resolutions. By the time this short devotion is read, ours will be mostly broken or forgotten.

I do not like New Year's resolutions. The problem I have with them is I try to make my life better by subtracting something from it. I will not eat donuts, I will exercise more (subtracting weight) or I will eliminate certain words from my vocabulary. All of this to me seems like one big adventure in missing the point. I cannot become holy by subtracting things from my life that shouldn't be there. I am focusing on my sins of commission but not realizing that goodness is not the absence of badness. I can end up doing nothing "wrong" and still do nothing right!

God considers all sin to be the same but for me, it's my sins of *omission* that haunt me. Those are the sins that I have a rough time accepting God's forgiveness. The lost opportunities to share the saving Grace of Jesus with people who do not know Him are the sins that have eternal consequences. If I am going to subtract anything from my life by way of a New Year's resolution, I would like to subtract the fear that keeps me silent at times. Holiness however, is not achieved by subtracting sin, because *I can never subtract enough*. Holiness has already been achieved for me by the birth, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ!

We seem culturally programmed to make New Year's resolutions. The Great Commission could easily be the Great Resolution! It is certainly one we can keep, since God promises the presence of the Holy Spirit until the very end of time. As Jesus sent His disciples, He now sends us; whether it is across the world, across the country or just across the parking lot! I wonder what the world would look like at the dawn of 2016 if God's people made and kept "The Great Resolution" in 2015?

*Darren Hansen, Principal/Director of Family Life, North Valley Christian Academy, Phoenix*