

An Old Commitment for a New Year

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Stephen Brown taught swimming and diving for a number of years. He tells about a young boy named Billy. Billy had watched so many professional divers and wanted so much to dive like them that he refused to take time to learn the basics. Time after time Brown tried to help him learn how to dive properly. Billy wanted him to see that the most important thing about diving was to keep his head in the proper position. If his head entered the water properly, Brown repeatedly explained, the rest of his body would enter the water properly—at least, more properly than it had been.

Billy would dive into the pool, do a belly flop, and come up grinning, “Mr. Brown,” he would shout, “were my feet together?” “Billy, I don’t care whether your feet were together or not,” Brown shouted back. “Make sure your head is straight, then everything else will work out.” The next time Billy would stand on the edge of the pool and really concentrate. Then he would dive and, once again, make a mess of it. “Mr. Brown, were my hands together?” “Billy,” Brown would groan in frustration, “I’m going to get you a neck brace and weld it onto your head. For the hundredth time, if your head is right the rest of you will be right. If your head is wrong, the rest of you will be wrong.”

I thought about that analogy. Isn’t this really true about our life? If our head is wrong (if the way we think is wrong – unbiblical and undiscerning), then our marriage will probably suffer. If our head is wrong, our priorities will be fouled up. If our head is wrong, it can even affect our health, since worry and anxiety can overtake us and cause not only spiritual but physical, adverse effects in our life. If our head is wrong, then our life will not be lived out for the glory of God!

As we approach a New Year, we come once again to a fresh start. It may be that during this coming year, we need to get our head’s right once again! If we do, our Christian life will be better off in the coming New Year. Things will fall in place. If our head is right, the rest will work out!

We often want to make new commitments in view of the approaching New Year, so that our life can be made better in some way. However, God has told us to remember our old commitments to the precious truths we have been taught by our mentors and parents. This is why we have called this message: “An old commitment for a New Year.” If we want to get something straightened out in our life, then we had better go back to the basics of what we have been taught and go with the original plan!

2 Timothy 3:14 speaks of this:

“But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned *them*.”

This verse is set in the context of mentors and mothers who taught Timothy how to live and what to believe!

Secular humanism says:

“Well, we need our children to discover what they want to believe and find out for themselves what is right for them.”

Of course, this is not what the Bible says regarding the responsibilities of Bible-centered mentors and mothers. If you want your children to turn out right, then teach them the truth and set the example before them! This is parenting 101! God tells us to train our children by telling them WHAT to believe and WHY to believe it, so that they will continue to follow the right teaching, path, and direction for their lives.



We are to pass along the torch to the next generation! “But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned *them*.” Paul's challenge to Timothy is the Holy Spirit's challenge to us as we enter this New Year. We don't need to necessarily learn something new to help us in our

Christian walk but RELEARN if necessary, and by all means, RECOMMIT to the previous Biblical truths we have learned which were the right things, the proper things, and the life-changing principles that we must once again embrace.

Maybe you need to make “An Old Commitment for a New Year.”

Prop: God wants us to stay committed to what we have learned.

This is presented in three specific ways.

1. Remain persistent in your spirit – “But continue thou”

This speaks of persistence and perseverance in what you believe and practice. It means you “stick to the stuff” that you have learned, knowing that truth is like bedrock and cannot be undone no matter what a professor at college might say, no matter what the new fads are dictating, no matter what the society and culture are pushing. You need to stick like glue to what you have learned from the Bible and your mentors in the midst of our anti-god, anti-bible, post-modernism, relativistic, and existentialistic society which does what it feels instead of what is right.

"Continue" The word means "to abide, dwell, remain." It occurs more than one hundred times in the New Testament and more than fifty times in the writings of the apostle. One of the Greek lexicons refers to how this word speaks of a “state or condition; to remain as one is, not to become another or different.”

Timothy was to abide, to make himself at home, in the things which he had learned from his mentors, which came directly from the Word of God and the application of Biblical commands and principles to his life. Continue in the truth – what you know is right to believe and practice. You just do what is right and leave the rest to God!

John Philipps said:

“The Bible (it’s truth) is a safe refuge from the windblown heresies of our day, a secure retreat from the fear of being blown to gale force by the hatred of the world.

We must continue in the Biblical and truthful things which we have learned and not waiver from them. Don't be moved! Stand your ground!"

Ephesians 6:13

"Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand."

Don't back down! Instead, beef it up! Keep on keeping on! Continue in the things which you were taught and which you know are right to embrace and practice because they are rooted in the Bible. Don't be fooled by that which glitters but is not real gold!

The mineral pyrite, or iron pyrite, also known as fool's gold, is an iron sulfide with the chemical formula FeS_2 . Pyrite is considered the most common of the sulfide minerals. Pyrite's metallic luster and pale brass-yellow hue give it a superficial resemblance to gold, hence the well-known nickname of fool's gold. Fool's gold is not the real thing! Don't be fooled by the gold that this world offers to you! Don't allow it to sidetrack you from righteous living, holy living, and dedication to God's truth and cause. You just keep following the real gold (the real truth) and you will be okay!

Continue on the right path. Believe and practice what you have learned! But you might say, "My friends are going a different way. The contemporary church is going a different path. The times are changing and we need to update our lives with the times." However, we must remember that the Bible does not change and we are challenged to continue in the truth of sanctification and the set of values which we have learned. God has not called us to follow the course of this age (Eph. 2:2). Remember that the world has many signposts, which are designed to give direction, but they will blow down in the storms of life. Human psychology and philosophy, along with manmade therapies are full of holes and uncertainties. You have the parading humanist ideologies telling you how to live today. Only God's Word is authoritative, eternal, changeless, and life-changing.

Don't be blown off course from your previous Biblical teaching, learning, and living. Continue! Don't become lackadaisical in your commitment, conviction, and in the

basic course that you have been taught to embrace and live by. When you know what the truth is and have been seeking to live by that truth – don't waiver from it or move away from it. When you start going in the wrong direction, Satan will grease the tracks and try and move you further away from the original things and right things which you were taught and once practiced in your life. Don't give in or give up! Don't jump ship! Fight for what is right and do what is right! Continue in what you know is the right thing to believe, the right thing do, and embrace if for yourself and family.

1 Timothy 6:12

"Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses."

The expression "the faith" means we need to fight for what we believe and embrace as truth (Jude 3). We are in a fight or contest to do what is right! We are in a fight to live by the Book! We are to stand in the gap and continue in the things which we have been taught! We are to continue in the things that we have learned. Acts 14:22 speaks of "Confirming the souls of the disciples, *and* exhorting them to continue (stay the course) in the faith (what we believe and know is right), and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." Continue on! Keep at it! Don't waiver, don't slow down, don't run out of gas.

One New Year's Day, in the Tournament of Roses parade, a beautiful float suddenly sputtered and quit. It was out of gas. The whole parade was held up until someone could get a can of gas. The amusing thing was this float represented the Standard Oil Company. With its vast oil resources, its truck was out of gas. We must stay the course, keep on keeping on, in believing the truth, embracing what is right, and following the right paths which we have been taught to walk.

II. Recommit to the right things.

If you have been taught something that right, don't stop believing it or practicing it! Make sure it was the Biblical teaching and then hold to it unapologetically.

What are the right things? They are mentioned in our text.

a. What you have learned - "in the things which thou hast learned"

These are the things we have learned about such as Fundamentalism, holiness, separation, God-honoring music, pure relationships, witnessing, fruitfulness, fellowship with God, how to treat people, honesty, purity, integrity, etc. These are just some of the things we have learned and which we need to continue to adhere to and follow for our own spiritual well-being and our family's spiritual growth in sanctification.



Proverbs 22:28 says:

"Remove not the ancient landmark, which thy fathers have set." The ancient landmark was a series of stones which indicated the boundaries of a person's property. Dishonest people often moved them during the night to increase the size of their farm at their neighbor's expense.

From a spiritual perspective (attaching a spiritual lesson to this), the ancient landmarks that we should not remove would be "the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints" (Jude 3). The fundamental doctrines of Christianity should not be tampered with or changed, nor should we get off the righteous paths which our mentors have taught us to walk and remain committed to throughout our entire lives. We had better keep the established landmarks in our hearts and homes, keep them before us and behind us and beside of us, or else the creep of the world will get in to our lives.

Have you removed some of the ancient landmarks in your own personal life? Be honest with an evaluation of yourself at the beginning of the New Year. If you have removed some of these landmarks, put them back in place.

Our pagan and warped society in which we live today has been removing just about every ancient land mark that we could imagine such as the landmarks of God-given gender, husband and wife roles in the marriage, creationism without evolution, honoring our country and those who have fallen, the landmark of our Judeo-Christian heritage and so on and so on. When the old landmarks re removed, when rot and decay are everywhere, and "when the enemy comes in like a flood" as Isaiah 50:19 says, we must remember that our only anchor is the Bible! The Bible (the truth that we have been taught) is the only sure anchor.

“Will your anchor hold in the storms of life,
when the clouds unfold their wings of strife?
When the strong tides lift and the cables strain,
will your anchor drift or firm remain?”

Have you been drifting this last year? Maybe you need to anchor your life once again in some specific truth, path, or way that you know you need to take. Maybe you need to put down the old landmark once again and stop drifting.

When in Michigan, my friend and I sometimes go fishing. He would throw the anchor over the side. However, if the anchor does not reach bottom, it can slow up the boat and keep is from rapidly drifting, but it cannot keep it from slowly, almost imperceptibly drifting in the wind. This is what we need to be careful about. It’s the slow drift away from truth, righteous standards, and Fundamentalism. It’s a slow leak that takes down a giant balloon and a slow leak that eventually sinks the ship! Beware of shifting and drifting in your life. Don’t think it cannot happen to you. It can.

Psalm 16:8 says:

“I have set the LORD always before me: because *he is* at my right hand, I shall not be moved.”

The old song says:

“In His love abiding, I shall not be moved
And in Him confiding, I shall not be moved
Just like the tree that's planted by the water
I shall not be moved.

Though the tempest rages, I shall not be moved
On the rock of ages, I shall not be moved
Just like the tree that's planted by the water
I shall not be moved.”



- Is this your true, heart's desire?
- Is this your goal in life?
- Are you on the right path?
- Have you moved?
- Have you over time swerved and become sidetracked?
- Have you taken away an old landmark?
- Have you moved in some way from a previous position – the right position?
- Are you willing and ready to anchor yourself once again?

What are the right things?

b. What you have believed - “and hast been assured of”

This is talking about living with conviction and by conviction! Knowing WHAT you believe and WHY you believe it! When you “assured” about something, you are convinced that it is the absolute standard of truth that is unwavering, unchangeable, and inflexible. It is truth that will stand the test of time, give us victory in temptation, and will take us to a place that is safe and constant. You know, I’m convinced that we need to be ready to sink the whole ship on conviction! We cannot lose Biblically-based conviction for when we do, we being to lose our Biblical moorings.

A lady left the church one day and said to me, “Well, at least you stand for something.” We had better stand for something today or else we will fall for

everything! They now tell us that we cannot be sure about Creation week – it’s actually a week of millions or billions of years of built-in evolution process. Folks, don’t imbibe this kind of thing. We either came from monkeys or we came from God! We either came from slime or we came from God. We either came from aliens or we came from God. You cannot have it both ways! We need to be reassured of the truth and stop wavering back and forth.



1 Kings 18:21 records this:

“And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD *be* God, follow him: but if Baal, *then* follow him. And the people answered him not a word.”

The word “halt” means to leap, dance, or skip and metaphorically speaks of wavering back and forth. We need to take Elijah’s advice and stop dancing between two opinions. We should get God’s opinion and live by it, stick to it, and not be moved! Stop wavering back and forth. Make up your mind. It’s time to do what is right! Stop riding the fence on political and even religiously charged issues and just follow the right path. Make up your mind to follow the truth and stop trying to muddy the waters.

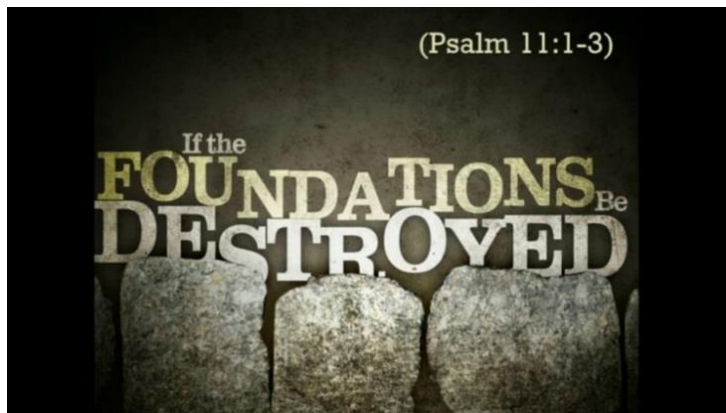
Be assured of what you believe! Be assured what you believe about creation. Don’t second guess the truth about creation in six literal days. Don’t second guess the way the Holy Spirit wrote the Bible. This means you should stop believing in the theory of progressive evolution and stop following those who disbelieve and misinterpret the Genesis record of Creation Week!

Be assured of what you believe about the sexes. They are now saying you can choose whether you are a girl or boy, a man or a woman! The way you came out of the womb is not the deciding factor! Really? Have we lost our minds as a nation today? Have we forgotten about the “Birds and the Bees?” Have we purposely forgotten that God chooses our gender?

Don't fool yourself. You are NOT created as a homosexual, lesbian, or any of the many names that the LGBT community is assigning to people today. Stop the gender bending game! Be assured of what the Bible says on these matters! Don't follow the politically correct version of gender today.

Romans 1:26-27 records:

“For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet (fitting).”



We need to be “assured” of these foundational landmarks today!

Psalm 11:3 records:

“If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?”

Don't allow the world to kick out the props or foundations from underneath you. We need to be reassured, convinced, and living by strong convictions today regarding the basic truths of Christianity and purity.

- Are you standing on the truth that was taught to you early on in life?
- Are you standing on the foundations of what is right, pure, holy, theologically correct?
- Is your foundation getting shaky?
- Do you need to sure up the foundation again?

Remember that what have you been taught from the Bible IS absolutely true! Be reassured you are on the right path. Let the world laugh and scoff at you! The Bible says there will be scoffers in the last day! Don't doubt the right things you were taught, the pure things, the wholesome things, the precious things, the very clear

and unmistakable things! To doubt truth is to deny truth! Satan comes along and asks: “Yea hath God said?”

You might say, “Well, I used to not drink alcohol but now so many Christians are doing it, I kind of got in to the same practice. I drink socially.” Why would you doubt your former teaching and mentors on this matter and set yourself up for a fall? Why would you risk so many things for some liquid that comes from a bottle or can? Be assured of what you have learned!

You might say, “You know preacher, watching some of the R-rated movies is not so bad after all. There is just a little swearing, a little nudity, a little temptation.” Why would you doubt your former teaching and mentors on this matter and place yourself in temptations ways? Be assured of what you have learned! Keep your heart clean and don’t become like the frog in slowly

You say, “Preacher, I used to come to church on a more regular basis but I kind of fell out of this practice. After all, we should not make an issue out of such a trivial matter.” Why would you doubt your former teaching and mentors on this matter and drift further away (begin to distance yourself) from church teaching, life, and ministry? Be assured of what you have learned! How about what you have been taught regarding sacrificial giving to the local church? What about the kinds of friends you have? What about living a separated life that is clean and pure? Stay committed to what you have been taught and know is right to do. Practice what has been passed down to you.

You might say, “I no longer embrace dispensationalism, the literal interpretation of Scripture, the promise of the Rapture, and that God still has a plan for the nation of Israel. After all, mainstream evangelicalism does not embrace this teaching.” This may be true, but the mainstream is not always the right stream!

- Have you backed down from your former stance?
- Have you been reassured that what you have learned is right?
- How strong is your conviction in some specific area of sanctification?
- Are you pursuing the same, righteous path today?
- Have you gone fundamentally AWOL?

- Have you walked away from some important truth that you used to embrace and need to embrace once again?
- Have you been wondering out there in “no-man’s land”?
- Remember that DOUBT is DENIAL!

Beloved, Fundamentalism is true, Biblical separation from the present world and age is the right path for our lives, believing what the Bible actually says about marriage, gender, creation, and so many other subjects is TRUE. Be “assured” of these things! Don’t doubt them! Don’t try and reverse them! Don’t try and spin them. Be assured about them!

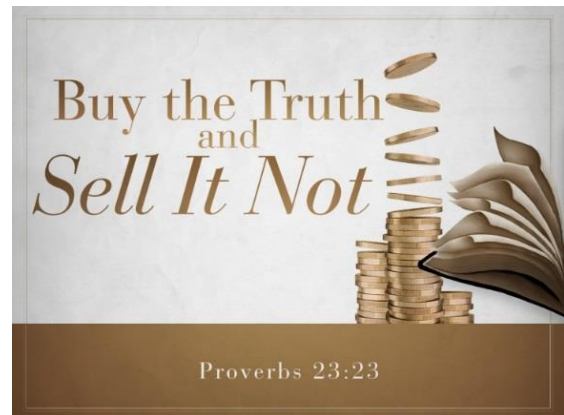
Ray Stedman said:

“In our age we have made an idol of tolerance.”

Beware of this in your own life. Be assured that you have been deposited the truth and stick with it! Don’t sell it!

Proverbs 23:23 reminds us:

“Buy the truth, and sell *it* not; *also* wisdom, and instruction, and understanding.” We need to live and die standing on the truth. We cannot afford to back down. The price we must pay for backing down is too high.



Rudy Atwood said:

“Lord, I want to die with my boots on.”

No, I don’t want to die this year, but this attitude should be true of all our lives today. I want to die living right, serving the Lord, and not losing the former things which I was taught!

III. Remember your mentors

2 Timothy 3:14 goes on to say:

“But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned *them*.”

Don't forget those who have mentored and taught you (“knowing of whom thou hast learned them”). This can refer to parents, pastors, Bible teachers, godly people, good Christian friends, or any people who have a direct and lasting impact upon your spiritual life.

Paul has two specific mentors in mind.

a. The mother inside the home

2 Timothy 3:15

“And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.”

Timothy's conduct grew out of what he had learned as a child and this gave him personal convictions early on his life. Where do young men develop convictions? It begins in the home and is strengthened further by other godly mentors. Jewish parents were expected to teach their children the Law from the age of five onwards.

2 Timothy 1:5 reminds us of Timothy's early home training:

“When I call to remembrance (don't forget your home training!) the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice (passing down the torch!); and I am persuaded that in thee also.”

Mentoring begins in the home. It is the foundational basis for mentoring and molding children. Timothy had a godly grandmother and mother. Paul wants to remind Timothy to not forget his upbringing. A recent survey of teens in America came up with this result: Only 39% said that they want to be like their parents. This is a very sad statistic. Parents are to be mentors to their children and children should want to follow in their belief' system, practices, and overall living. When you have godly parents as mentors, it is a tremendous blessing in life.

Timothy's father was a Greek (Acts 16:1). This may be why his father is not mentioned as one of his mentors. Only his mother is mentioned. Timothy's father may have not been saved and schooled in the Jewish scriptures. However, his mother was a Jew and knew them well. She was a very godly woman. "From a child" (from infancy) Timothy was rooted and grounded in God's Word which came from a godly mother. The word translated "child" means literally "embryo," or "newly born babe." So Timothy imbibed the Scriptures along with his mother's milk. Her lullabies were the Psalms. The songs she sang around the house were Hebrew hymns. As he grew, she taught him to read from the Bible and to respect it as the foremost and final authority on all matters of faith and practice.

“There’s a dear and precious Book,
Though it’s worn and faded now,
Which recalls those happy days of long ago,
When I stood at mother’s knee,
With her hand upon my brow,
And I heard her voice in gentle tones and low.

Blessed Book, precious Book,
On thy dear old tear stained leaves I love to look;
Thou art sweeter day by day, as I walk the narrow way
That leads at last to that bright home above.”

b. The mentor outside the home.

In Judaism the teachers were called “masters” who had students under them. Paul was a student of the renowned Jewish scholar and master-teacher Gamaliel (Acts 22:3). Paul likened himself to a “wise masterbuilder” (1 Cor. 3:10). The idea of a master means that they have mastered some teaching and they are able to articulate it in a clear fashion. We have something today called “the Master’s degree” which reflects this idea and practice. A master-teacher is how Paul viewed himself in relation to Timothy’s life. Timothy was Paul’s student, Paul was a master in the study of the Bible, and he was to sit by Paul and learn. So, Paul was a mentor outside the home which also helped bring Timothy to new spiritual heights.

He speaks of this mentoring concept in 2 Timothy 3:10-11:

“But thou hast fully known my doctrine, (my) manner of life, (my) purpose, (my) faith, (my) longsuffering, (my) charity, (my) patience, (my) Persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: but out of *them* all the Lord delivered me.”

Under Paul's Biblically instruction, Timothy's learning went beyond anything that his godly mother and grandmother could teach him. Timothy could excel in the understanding of the deep things of the Bible and prepare himself for ministry as a pastor. Timothy was not to forget the teaching that Paul instilled within his life. He wanted Timothy to be “assured” that what Paul taught and practiced was God’s absolute standard of truth and that he should stick with it to the end of his life. Areas of sound doctrine and sanctification were all part of Timothy’s training.

Paul called Timothy his own son because Paul had somewhat of a son relationship with Timothy! This may be since Timothy lacked a real fatherly figure in the home. Paul is saying, “Don’t ever forget what I have taught you! Don’t lose the truth I’ve shared with you. Don’t forget my discipleship and time that I’ve had with you. This sounds like a father’s heart being poured out to his son.

I personally believe that Timothy’s mother led him to salvation according to statements in the Bible (Acts 16:1-3; 2 Tim. 1:1-5). It’s likely that Paul called Timothy his “son” in the sense that Paul was like Timothy's true spiritual father (Phil. 2:19-23), since Timothy did not have a spiritual father. So Paul was his fatherly mentor, even as a father would be to his own son.

The point is that we are not to forget about our fatherly mentors outside the home who have also guided our way, given us a firm standing, and how through their teaching and mentoring, God implanted important truth within us. Some who have not had any really spiritual insight in the home lean even more heavily on the mentors outside the home. These type of mentors might be pastors, friends, a college professor, a home Bible study teacher, or someone else that God used in a specific way to help educate us and give us a strong footing in life. They not only

got us started on a right path, they grounded us for the rest of our life. Thank God for mentors! Don't ever forget what they taught you!

Timothy knew that he had learned his Bible from the best of teachers. Paul had been his greatest and most gifted instructor. Having just a casual conversation with a man like Paul would have been educational. I think Timothy and Paul must have had a lot of interesting talks. No doubt, he rounded out Timothy's general knowledge of Old Testament history and prophecy found in the Bible with his own new profound insights that God gave to him in New Testament revelation about the church and prophecy. Yes, Timothy had been blessed with the best of the master-teachers, but he needed to "continue" on in the teaching and footsteps of his mentor! He needed to remain focused on those initial days of training and not lose the primary truths taught to him.

2 Timothy 4:10 is one of the saddest verses in the Bible:

“For Demas hath forsaken me (this must have hurt Paul deeply), having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia.”

Demas has forsaken me. Many a pastor has felt this way. Demas chose to not follow in the teaching and footsteps of Paul (his mentor). He chose a different path that would spiral him downward in to the ways of the world. A mentor wants to mold a person's life, so that they do not throw away their life in doing those things which will adversely affect their spiritual life.

- Have you forsaken your mentors?
- Have you strayed from some important truth which your mentors taught you regarding sanctification and holiness?
- Have you removed a landmark in your life?
- What teachings have you abandoned for the sake of acceptance and out of the fear of the reprisal of others?
- Are you ready to be mentored?
- Do you possess a willing heart?

Folks, we don't need a new commitment for this New Year. What we really need, is an old commitment to the truth that we have learned and followed for many years. Sometimes, in order to go forward – we must go backward! We must remember our mentoring and what the Bible calls “the first principles of the oracles of God” (Heb. 5:12). If you forget about the first teachings, you won't maintain your Biblical principles, and eventually you will lose your way.

Christian friend, if you have strayed from your former teaching – return to it this year! Don't delay. Stop drifting! Make up your mind to believe and do what is right.

Someone said:

“The road of life often seems to have potholes that will throw us off course. We begin to go this way or that, and soon discover that we are off of the path that God desires us to use.”

Beware of changing the direction of your life. Go back to your former training, learning, and commitments. You will be much better off if you do. In some cases, we must, as Revelation 2:5 states, “repent, and do the first works” once again! Sometimes we must go back to the early days, return to our original teaching and learning, and never depart from it again!

One day, President Abraham Lincoln was riding in a coach with a colonel from Kentucky. The colonel took a bottle of whiskey out of his pocket. He offered Mr. Lincoln a drink. Mr. Lincoln said, "No thank you, Colonel. I never drink whiskey." In a little while, the colonel took some cigars out of his pocket and offered one to Mr. Lincoln. Again Mr. Lincoln said, "No, thank you, Colonel." Then Mr. Lincoln said, "I want to tell you a story."

"One day, when I was about nine years old, my mother called me to her bed. She was very sick. She said, 'Abe, the doctor tells me that I am not going to get well. I want you to be a good boy. I want you to promise me before I go that you will never use whiskey or tobacco as long as you live.' I promised my mother that I never would, and up to this hour, I kept this promise! Would you advise me to break that promise?"

The colonel put his hand on Mr. Lincoln's shoulder and said, "Mr. Lincoln, I would not have you break that promise for the world! It is one of the best promises you ever made. I would give a thousand dollars today if I had made my mother a promise like that and had kept it like you have done. I would be a much better man than I am!"

May God speak to our hearts on the threshold of a New Year, so that we might make some old commitments in this New Year.

2 Timothy 3:14

"But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned *them*."

Don't drop the torch that has been passed on to you! Pass it on to the next generation.

