

Title: "From This Point On"

Scripture: Galatians 1:13-19

Speaker: Josh Maness

Event: New Year's Eve Service

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Galatians 1:13-19 *"For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it: 14 And profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers. 15 But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, 16 To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: 17 Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus. 18 Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days. 19 But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother."*

During this time of year, every year, people all over the world make resolutions. They want to fix or improve upon the things that they slacked on or failed at throughout the previous year. For the church, we need to have a New Year's REVOLUTION – not RESOLUTION.

There are some things that we must do "from this point on":

1. **Remember our past:** (verse 13) Paul recaps his past. He remembered where he came from and used it when trying to tell others about the glory of God. Whether our pasts were filled with drugs, alcohol, criminal acts, or whether you were nice to everyone you met, your life is better and improved with Christ. No matter how bad or good you were in the past, you were still lost.
 - a. Our past victories will encourage us: Remembering the things that God previously brought us through will encourage us to keep pressing forward in current times of trouble.
 - b. Our past failures will teach us: Remembering the times that we failed will teach us to grow stronger and become closer to God. We should be learning from our mistakes.
2. **Realize our privilege:** We get to the point where we feel special because we go to church and because we call ourselves "Christians". It is not anything that we deserve or are entitled to. It is a PRIVILEGE. We are able to do these things because we have a God who gave his life for us.
 - a. God calls us: In verse 15 Paul mentions that God knew him before he was even born. Previously in the Old Testament the prophet Jeremiah said the same thing. It is a privilege to be called by God. It's hard to understand the love that God has for us sometimes. Ephesians 1:4 *"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:"*
 - b. God commissions us: In verse 16 of Galatians 1, Paul said Christ commissioned him to preach among the heathen. When we are saved we are commissioned to go and tell others about Christ.
3. **Revise our priorities:** Every year we tend to make the same resolutions – lose weight, read more, study more, eat better, pray more, etc. We might start out real strong on January 1st with the gym membership, clean cabinets, and fresh veggies, but the first time that weekend rolls around you're at Longhorn and stocking up on calories. We always start strong but lose our willpower and desire. We need to keep the momentum going all year that we start with at the beginning of the year.
4. **Realize our potential:** Our own potential will lead us nowhere in the New Year. We can do nothing without Christ. If we stand for God and are led by him we will make a difference everywhere we go.