

INCLUDE GOD IN YOUR PLANS

The ebon pinion of night has settled upon the year 2007. The last glimmer of light has slipped away from another year upon this terrestrial ball. It is with a sense of bewilderment that we gaze back upon another circuit around the sun and wonder where the time has gone. At the same time, we cast a glance forward with excitement and anticipation at what the year 2008 holds for us. It is that time of year when we once again make an examination of our lives and make note of those things we need to change or improve. We begin making plans and promises to do better in this new year than we have in the past years. Perhaps you have been among the countless millions who have made New Years' resolutions, only to break them shortly after making them. We have a tendency to treat our Christianity in such fashion. Many start off with a bang, only to end with a fizzle. We resolve to read our Bibles through, to pray more often, to attend all the services of the church including Bible classes, to get more involved in the works of the church, and for a time we may keep these resolutions with great fervency and zeal. But alas, the zeal and enthusiasm wanes, and these new commitments are soon forgotten. There must be a better way of growing in our faith, and remaining true to the pledges we make before others and before God. That way is to include God in our plans!

A failure to include God in future plans was the undoing of some Christians in the first century. James addressed those with such a mindset when he wrote, "Go to now, ye that say, Today or tomorrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that" (James 4:13-15). Here were Christians who had their plans all laid out. They had determined the city into which they would enter. They had determined how long they would continue therein. They had determined what their employment would be. They had determined that they would be successful in their endeavors. There was only one problem—they had failed to consider the will of God in their planning! It is the case that we must plan our lives as though tomorrow will come, for to fail in this regard will leave us destitute and unprepared for a new day (Prov.6:6-9). However, as we make plans for tomorrow, we must make sure that we do so with the realization that tomorrow may never come (Prov.27:1), and that all of our planning must fall within the realm of the will of God. In other words, as I lay out my plans for what lies ahead, I do so with the attitude that if God desires for me to do this or that, then I will do it. We need not fret over what tomorrow might bring (Matt.6:33-34), because we know Who holds tomorrow!

As you make your plans for the new year, make sure that you pray fervently and study diligently so that you may know the Lord's will, and plan your life accordingly. "If the Lord wills" must be more to us than a mere

expression used in prayer, but a constant reminder of the direction of our lives.
If you want 2008 to be a great year, include God in your plans.

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