

JANUARY 2018

COMPLIMENTARY

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# NASHVILLE CHRISTIAN FAMILY®

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## OUR MISSION



**Nashville Christian Family®** exists to provide Christians and the community at large with ways to strengthen and grow as a part of the Middle Tennessee Christian Family. This local monthly publication is designed to promote positive living by sharing with readers of all ages relevant and timely news and information related to health, faith, parenting, youth, finances, Christian entertainment, missions, church leaders, and much more.

## FROM THE PUBLISHER



I hope that you and your family enjoyed a blessed and Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year!

Another year has come and gone and here we are beginning a new year. We measure our time on earth by days, weeks, months and years which seem to go by quicker every year. The old saying, “the older you get, the faster time goes”, is certainly true. Whatever the past year brought your way, whether good or not so good, as Believers we all have something in common as we begin 2018.

Philippians Chapter 3 provides a perfect analogy for how we should approach a New Year. Specifically, verses 13 and 14 give us a directive from God through Paul’s words to the Christians in Philippi;

*“Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”* (New American Standard).

As Paul challenges himself in these verses, we should do the same. This must be the “New Year’s Resolution” that matters most in our lives if we intend to strive to live our lives for the Lord in a new year that we have been granted.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert Stringfellow".  
C F P

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\* Source: College Board 2014 data analyzed by Collegiate Funding Solutions, Inc. Includes tuitions, fees, room and board



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# January 2018

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### Annual Women's Event – Faith, Fellowship and FUN

Have you ever considered that a disappointment or a failure could be a ministry launching pad? This is the case for the ministry of Cherie Jobe. Significant life events and painful circumstances propelled her into ministering to others with the power of God's Word and work in her own life. "Transparent" is the word most people use to describe Cherie Jobe, founder and president of the non-profit Designed By Him Ministries.

Cherie launched her ministry believing firmly in a calling from God that directed her to minister to women of all ages and stages in life with the healing power of love and forgiveness, just as He had restored her. She often tells others that He "used her mess to give her a message" which resonates with women everywhere.

No stranger to heartache, pain and rejection, Cherie understands the trials that accompany our everyday lives. Cherie believes and teaches that regardless of your personal mistakes, God can still use you! Her passion and the mission of DESIGNED BY HIM MINISTRY is to: Encourage, Equip, and Empower women to be who they are designed to be. Cherie began her ministry as a Bible teacher and speaker, then soon expanded into writing and training, all while continuing

her work career as a hairdresser. Her first book, "Secrets from Behind the Chair", was birthed after many years of listening to her clients, watching God work in their lives, and counseling from her place of experience and a close walk with God. She followed this book with "Surviving the Bad Hair Days of Life" which is a compilation of survivor stories.

Another dream was birthed when NEW BEGINNINGS WOMEN'S CONFERENCE was launched on January 21, 2012. This ladies conference hosted by Cherie is one of the most exciting events thrust from Designed By Him Ministries. It is a one day event where women come together to be inspired, encouraged and rejuvenated.

The next NEW BEGINNINGS will be held February 10, 2018 at the Embassy Suites in Murfreesboro, Tennessee.

The featured speaker for 2018 is Anita Renfroe. Anita is (let your writer do whatever bio on Anita). Every year we have three local Middle Tennessee ladies to share their personal life stories. This year Tracy Jones, Kelli Beam and Nancy Duggin will be sharing the stage. We can't forget lots of love and laughs with Thelma Lou! A wonderful program of music will be lead by Lo-Ke Musik.



Full details about the program can be seen at [www.cheriejobe.com](http://www.cheriejobe.com).

The 2016 NEW BEGINNINGS WOMEN'S CONFERENCE is presented by our Corporate Sponsors, John Harney with (The Parks Group Commercial Group), Mark Pirtle Real Estate Development and Stone Gate Corporate Center. In addition, a number of other sponsors and vendors will participate for a great day of shopping for all who attend. "We would love for all our Middle Tennessee ladies to gather up a few friends, or bring a busload and come on down to this event," Cherie said. "We anticipate another amazing day of faith, fellowship, and oh yes, some shopping time too. Jeremiah 29:11 says God has a plan for our lives. Perhaps the Lord wants to use this day as a life event for you." Conference tickets are available online and at several local businesses. Complete details can be obtained by visiting [www.cheriejobe.com](http://www.cheriejobe.com).

— Cherie Jobe



## BODY & SOUL

### Why Do I Do That?

Ever say or do something you would never normally say or do? I bet you have. It usually happens in an emotional moment. We lash out, deny the truth, pass the buck, or even say hateful things to ones we love. After the feeling passes, we can't believe what came out of us. We try to retroactively justify our actions, twisting the story to make our choices make more sense.

The truth is, we don't always understand why we do what we do when we are hurt. It's like stepping on a Lego barefoot and immediately falling onto a pile of Legos. When we don't know how to find healing and restoration for our pain, our attempts to escape it only seem to cause us even more pain.

Our capacity for emotional pain and discomfort is directly related to how we respond to others. Our automatic reactive responses believe the unknown consequences of thoughtless actions are better than enduring the immediate pain of inaction. We choose to fall onto a pile of Legos to be rid of the pain of standing barefoot on one. But these automatic reactive responses only leave us in a repeating cycle of hurt and reactivity. Our pain is important. Our pain tells us some-

thing is wrong. Our pain, if we listen to it, will tell us what we need. Instead, we reject it or take it out on others. But this is why we remain stuck. The pain in us caused by the callousness and disregard of others remains abandoned and rejected by us. So, our hurt rebels in response. It makes its presence known in the worst of ways, forcing us, and everyone around us, to pay attention to it.

So what do we do? We have to pay attention to our hurt instead of moving away from it. That may mean stepping away from a situation before responding; understand what is happening within you before responding to what is happening around you. Slow down and ask your hurt what is happening. What hurts right now and why? You might be surprised by what your hurt will tell you.

We don't care about things that don't matter. Loneliness might tell you how important relationships are and prompt you to look for closeness. Your hurt might tell you how valuable you, or the one you hurt over, is. Your grief might seek to remind you that what you lost was valuable. It might ask you honor it instead of trying to put it or them behind you. Your guilt and shame might whisper you can do better, be better, and invite you to become the "you" you were designed and long to be.

Restoration comes from honoring the parts of us we have spent so much time trying to overpower or ignore. The path to healing comes through processing that hurt with another- a friend, a pastor, or a professional counselor. It doesn't have to be with the one that hurt you, but it has to be with someone. Our healing comes within the safety and security of relationship, where we can know that we matter, that what happened to us matter, and where we can know the greater story of what happened than our minds created in that panicked moment.

Only when we are able to securely hold and attend to our pain can our hurt feel safe enough to settle and find purpose. And when that happens, we no longer have to hurt others when we are hurt. It is the process of redemption – taking what was broken, rejected, and discarded and restoring it to fullness, significance, value, and purpose. It has the power to save our life, and the lives of others.

— Aron Strong, LMFT, is a marriage and family therapist, writer, speaker, and entrepreneur. He is the director of Pathways Counseling in Murfreesboro, TN.

## SPECIAL FEATURE

### Israel Session at Proclaim 18 to Feature David Jeremiah, Kay Arthur, Michael W. Smith, and Holocaust Survivor

In anticipation of the 70th anniversary of the founding of the modern state of Israel, National Religious Broadcasters (NRB) will mark this major milestone at Proclaim 18, the NRB International Christian Media Convention in Nashville, Tenn.

The four-day Convention will feature a special Israel Session on March 1 featuring, among others, Bible teachers and Christian ministry leaders David Jeremiah and Kay Arthur; award-winning singer-songwriter Michael W. Smith; Dr. Susanna Kokkonen, director of Christian Friends of Yad Vashem; and Holocaust survivor Luna Fuss-Kaufman. Emceeing the session will be David Prager, host of The Dennis Prager Show.

NRB has long affirmed its support for and solidarity with Israel, recognizing the providential hand of God in Israel's history and His commitment to fulfilling His promises in His Holy Word, the Bible. The association's leadership has also noted the special relationship of the U.S. with Israel, as nations committed to freedom and democratic governance that respects the rule of law and the rights of minorities.

During NRB's annual Convention last year, the

association's Board of Directors unanimously approved a resolution expressing support for Israel. The Board called on NRB members to "pray for the peace of Jerusalem" and for the U.S. "to stand steadfastly by Israel, even as others malign, abandon, or attack her." They also urged Christians to "reject and guard against the dangerous Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) Movement." "More than ever, Christians must pray for the peace of Jerusalem," said Johnson.

Proclaim 18 – NRB's 70th annual Convention – will take place February 27-March 2, 2018, at the Gaylord Opryland Resort & Convention Center in Nashville, while NRB's award-winning Exposition – featuring around 200 exhibitors – will be open February 28-March 2. Speakers at Proclaim 18 will include actor and director Jim Caviezel; writer, director, actor, and author Alex Kendrick; Larry Elder, host of The Larry Elder Show; Billy Kim, chairman of Far East Broadcasting Company in South Korea; nationally syndicated columnist and best-selling author David Limbaugh; Mike Lindell, inventor and CEO of MyPillow; Eric Metaxas, host of The Eric Metaxas Show; evangelist Luis Palau of the Luis Palau Association; actor Dennis Quaid; Joel C. Rosenberg, founder and chairman of The



Joshua Fund; FOX News anchor Kelly Wright; Rick Warren, pastor and founder of Saddleback Church in Lake Forest, California ; and many more. For the Proclaim 18 schedule, hotel information, sponsorship and promotional opportunities, space and event reservations, registration, and more, visit [nrbconvention.org](http://nrbconvention.org).

For questions related to registration, contact the NRB Convention Registrar at [nrb@pcm411.com](mailto:nrb@pcm411.com), or call 212-460-9700. Register by February 23, 2018, and save up to \$100. Day passes and first-timers rates available!

— Kenneth Chan, Director of Communications,  
National Religious Broadcasters

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# GOD AND GROCERIES

I like to eat, which means I cook, and therefore I must grocery shop. And if I am not in a hurry, I enjoy the grocery store (especially when they give samples). The relaxing music at my favorite store slows me down, so I look at people around me. Lately I have seen more and more parents who do this: Walk in . . . child on hip or by the hand . . . pull out cart . . . plank child in cart . . . reach for phone or iPad or any device with a screen . . . touch ON . . . give device to child . . . shop . . . no talking.



do, meals to cook, clothes to wash, meetings to attend, calls to make, groceries to buy, coupons to use, money to save, houses to try and keep clean, dishes to wash, bedtime routines – it's all go, go, go.

But if we pause and take a minute to breathe, we might see our grocery trip as an opportunity, a creative time to talk to our children about God. Deuteronomy 6:7 instructs us to talk about Him when we sit at home, when we walk along the road, when we get up in the morning, when we lie down at night. And that means even when we are at the grocery store! Remember Romans 1:20, “God’s invisible qualities . . . have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made.”

So, what does this have to do with grocery shopping? It’s a good time to pay attention to what has been made! As you walk through the produce, notice shapes and colors. Tell your children/grandchildren, “God made this.” Have them touch, smell, and see. Thank God for eyes, fingers, and a nose. Feel a potato, touch an onion, smell some fennel.

Play the “I spy” game. “What do you see that is orange? Can you find something yellow?” Have them close their eyes and smell mint, rosemary, basil, or cilantro. Tell them, “Thank God for your tongue. We can taste all the good food He has made!” Here is a good memory verse for the produce isle: “Taste and see that the LORD is good.” Psalm 34:8

At the dairy case ask, “Where do we get milk and eggs?” Then thank God for cows and hens, and farmers. Make animal noises. Go ahead . . . embarrass yourself! Your kids will love it! (I should know. I dress in a costume and embarrass my kids all the time!)

A great adventure in parenting is looking for and finding God everywhere. So, were all my trips to the grocery a glorious parenting experience? HA! No. I always hope for successful teaching moments, even the time my son knocked over a display and sent jars of spaghetti sauce crashing. What a mess. But I put on a brave face and said, “Wow! Red is EVERYWHERE!”

Cleanup on aisle three. . . .

— Jean Thomason, aka “Miss PattyCake”, is an author, speaker, singer, with a new book, *Sharing God’s BIG LOVE with Little Lives*. (Worthy Publishing Group). Find out more here: [www.jeanthomason.com](http://www.jeanthomason.com)

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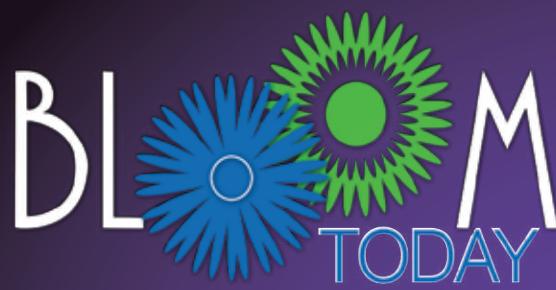


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## The Magic of Residual Income

Residual income...it's an unknown concept for many, and a mere dream for most others. This is because most people, including perhaps you, earn their income by trading time for money, generally by the hour, week or month. But regardless how often you get paid, or even how much you get paid, when you trade time for money there are two inescapable consequences...your income is active, which means it stops the second you do, and your income is limited, because there are only 24 hours in a day and there is only one "you."

As an attorney with 2 law degrees, I personally encountered these limitations early on in my career, and my lack of residual income became a major flaw that adversely dominoed into my family, relationships, priorities, values, and health. In short, I found myself on a daily income treadmill that I couldn't get off of, and that typically chewed up 10-12 hours per day of my precious time. If you've experienced any of the same, I can truly empathize with you...but I can also assure you that there are solutions, including one that many people never seriously consider.

This solution is the network marketing profession. Regardless of what you know, think you know, or don't know about network marketing, it is inarguably one of the most trend driven and fastest growing industries on the planet. Further, when it's compared to many other occupations, including in my case the legal profession, the advantages it offers are virtually irresistible for many, especially when you factor in that a network marketing business can be developed very part-time and practically risk free.

But here's the million \$ question you may have...does it really work ? For my wife Michelle and I, and numerous others we personally know, that answer is a resounding YES! In short, and at the seemingly unavoidable risk of



self-promotion, over our 33 years in the NM profession we have had the honor to train well over 1 million distributors, were recently listed in the profession's Top 250 Lifetime Earners by Business for Home, and have helped team members earn over \$100 million in estimated combined income.

Most importantly, this success has not been at the expense of my marriage, family, priorities or health. In fact, I am in better health now than I was in my 20s, have been ecstatically married for 30 years, have 3 amazing daughters who I spent maximum time with as they were growing up, and now have 3 equally amazing grand kids. Further, Michelle and I are in charge of our own schedules and living our life by design, spending time with our family and traveling when we chose while still earning a great income...all of which is made possible by residual income and the right network marketing company at the right time.

*— Rick and Michelle Teague have been in the network marketing industry for 33 years, 30 of which have been full time, and have worked side by side with many of its top trainers and income earners. Rick & Michelle recently partnered with a disruptive new company which they feel will be their biggest, best and last, and are currently seeking a few key people that they can personally help develop strong residual incomes with. To discuss the possibilities, leave message at 615-219-5420.*

### MUSIC NOTES

## The Controlled Scream

The famous Luciano Pavarotti, the greatest operatic tenor of the 20th century, was once asked how he sings the High C. His answer was, "basically, it's a controlled scream."

A 'scream' in singing is a drastic concept, but to hear Pavarotti sing is to understand what he meant by the word 'scream' and to be aware that he used all of his voice, all of the time. This is not to say that he always sang loudly, but that he used his whole voice with great intensity in both his loud and soft singing.

Many singers, both young and old, have trouble getting to their whole voices and are even afraid or embarrassed to make that kind of sound. Many can't believe that a big sound like that can emanate from themselves. Sometimes in a vocal coaching session I will demonstrate by saying a phrase or a word in my full voice and I will say that it's like yelling at someone across the parking lot. If they will do it, they soon realize that the full voice is within them. It's hard for some to find that sound and easy for others, but when they do it's like a revelation and they discover that much more was

inside. It can be a wonderful experience that can take singers into brand new places of their vocal and musical lives.

Some singers cringe at the idea of making an unpleasant or ugly sound and hesitate to go to this new place. I respond by saying that I have made thousands of really ugly sounds in practice or in a lesson and that you've got to make the ugly sounds before you can make the really beautiful sounds.

Singers may actually be afraid that someone will hear them and possibly even judge them. As we go further into this complete sound, we can get to the place where we look forward to letting people hear us and share with others how we feel about a particular song when we sing it. It feels good to finally share ourselves with other people. God has given each of us gifts that we can use to serve Him. Our goal is to use those gifts to the best of our abilities. Singing is a gift and a privilege. The primary purpose of music is to glorify God and bless others. Sometimes we are the vessel and the method by which



beautiful music is conveyed. Find out if you may be one of those vessels.

*— Neil Breeden, Vocal Coach  
neil@neilbreeden.com, 615-440-2263*

## How To Be An Informed Buyer Of a College Education

The cost of a college education is not cheap. There are many factors that will go into how much your family will pay for a college education. Knowing the ground rules of how the game is played will result in the best outcome for your family. Here are the top 11 things to know regarding paying for a college education:

- 1. Sticker Price** – most students do not pay full price for a bachelor's degree. 58% of students receive grants/ scholarships at state institutions and only 11% on students at private colleges pay full price.
- 2. Know the Sources of College Money** – the federal government, state governments, colleges themselves and private scholarships are the main sources of money for colleges. Knowing which source is the right avenue for your family to pursue is crucial.
- 3. Private Scholarships** – actually, private scholarship are one of the smallest source of money for college. The average award is \$4000 and competition for national scholarships is fierce.
- 4. Financial Aid** – determine if you will qualify BEFORE applying to colleges. It is critical to know your family's Expected Family Contribution (EFC) before applying to colleges and before filing out the FASFA.
- 5. Know Your Numbers** – starting in your child's sophomore year, it is critical to start looking at your financial data that may impact financial aid eligibility. Learn what assets and income count and do not count when it comes to financial aid. Pay close attention to parent assets, student assets, all sources of income, 529 accounts, custodial accounts and retirement accounts.
- 6. Grandparent Strategies** – grandparent contributions may be reported as untaxed income to your child and greatly hurt your financial aid chances. Learn strategies to avoid reduced financial aid eligibility with strategic grandparent gifting.
- 7. Check 4-year Graduation Rates** – nationwide averages consistently show public university 4-year graduation rates hovering around 33% and private schools at 53%. Knowing the chances of your student graduating in 4 years will help you pay less for college.
- 8. Throw a Wider Net** – looking at some lesser known schools can yield results that offer generous merit aid for your student. Don't just assume public, in-state universities will be the cheapest.
- 9. Understand Borrowing Options** – nearly 71% of students borrow for college. Understanding the pros and cons of subsidized, unsubsidized, student, parent and private loans can make all the difference.
- 10. Tax Credits** – for most parents, the American Opportunity Tax Credit can yield up to a \$2500 tax credit in a given year. Know the income limits and what is best for your family ahead of time.
- 11. Divorced Parent Strategies** – Understand how the financial aid formulas look at divorced parent situations. Learn how they determine custodial parent, who's income counts and who's on the hook for paying for college. It may differ from your custodial agreement or tax filing situation.

Planning financially for college can be a tricky proposition. There are many myths and misconceptions about paying for college. Heather Hale, CFP of Peak College Planning specializes in helping families navigate the college admissions process to find the right college, for the right reasons and at the right price. Contact her today for a free consultation at 615-485-2280 or [info@PeakPlanningTN.com](mailto:info@PeakPlanningTN.com)

## AN ENCOURAGING WORD

### Never Asking Anything More Than Everything

God never asks for anything less than everything, and in his mercy, never asks for a single thing more. He remembers our frame, our dustiness is never hidden from His eyes. A widow's mite and a sower's seed are both limited by physical and temporal "smallness," as are the widow and the sower themselves. All four are finite creatures, and more humbling than finitude, the widow and the sower are both fallen, both sinfully natured and habitually inclined toward sin.

But He places the mite in the widow's hand and asks, "What will you give?" She gives everything and He asks



nothing more. He did not ask for two mites. She gave her fortune, little and limited as it was, and God smiled as He smelled the redolent savor of her sacrifice. What did God do with a penny? I haven't any clue, but I trust it was something great. He has made it a habit of doing grand and glorious things with the seemingly scant offerings of His creatures.

God knows you're little. He made you that way, and out of his infinite mercy, He placed His own image within you. He asks you today, "What will you give?" He wants you to give everything and will never ask for more than that. He knows your frame. He remembers you are dust.

What about the sower of seed? The farmer loves the earth and the bounty of the earth. Any sower sows in faith. Who would broadcast these dead vessels of future life without believing they can live again, and bear fruit five, ten, and one-hundred fold? Which farmer commands the clouds to spill their liquid life and then depart again to reveal the sun? Which farmer believes he can command the seasons or the stars? Doubt-filled farmers will not remain in that line of work for long. Farming takes faith. And the faithful farmer sows expecting good things in return.

Like the sower of seed, you only have so much you can give today and a limited number of people to give it to. God asks for no more than you have to give, but if you hold some back in doubt, like extra manna, it will rot before sunrise tomorrow. You always have just the right amount of seed for today's field. When the bag is empty, the field is sufficiently sown; if seeds remain, there is work left to do.

And like the widow, you have everything at your disposal that God has placed at your disposal. He only wants to bless you as you give it all, and never asks for a penny more than you have to give. He knows your frame. He remembers that you are dust.

— Marc Hays serves as the Lead Curriculum Developer for Classical Conversations MultiMedia. He and his wife, Jamie, have six children and live in Hartsville, Tenn..

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RENFROE



## Anita Renfroe

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## SPECIAL FEATURE

# TIME WITH GOD IN 2018: A FRUITFUL CONNECTION

When You said, "Seek My face,"  
My heart said to You, "Your face, Lord, I will seek."  
Psalms 27:8

The scriptures, especially the Psalms of David, are replete with references about spending time in communion with God. Most believers don't have to be persuaded of the importance of a regular, healthy devotional life, but many would admit to an inconsistency in the practice. This is no small oversight. Time with God, in His Word and in prayer, is not merely a quaint practice, but a necessity to living a fruitful life.

Jesus said, "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing" (John 15:5). Jesus makes it clear that just as the branch is dependent upon the nourishment from the vine to bear fruit, so too our fruitfulness as believers is dependent upon our connection with Him. The Amplified Bible is even more explicit: "However, apart from Me [cut off from vital union with Me] you can do nothing" (John 15:5b Amplified Bible, emphasis mine).

In Psalm 42:1, David wrote, "As the deer pants for the water brooks, so pants my soul for You, O God." It's clear that David put a premium on seeking God. We, on the other hand, live in a society that values industry. In fact, we see being busy as a mark of value and importance. However, as believers it is crucial that we see the distinction between busyness and fruitfulness. The fact is, some of us are too busy to be fruitful. Busyness is activity in response to life's demands, whether it's paying bills, running the kids to soccer practice, or doing the grocery shopping. Many of these responsibilities are necessary, of course, but if we think they're more important than spending time in God's presence, we're sadly mistaken. Busyness will never replace fruitfulness, for fruitfulness only comes from nurturing that vital connection with Christ. The truth is that for most of us, it's not a matter of not having the time, but of making the time. It's an issue of priorities.

Sometimes for a tree to be fruitful, the extraneous branches have to be trimmed off so the life and vitality of the tree can be redirected to the larger, fruit-bearing branches. The same can be true of us. If we'll allow God to trim



off some of the busyness from our lives and give ourselves to spending time in fellowship with Him, we will see a marked increase in the fruitfulness in our lives. A Bible reading program or a good devotional can be a great help to give us structure, but the primary tool needed to cultivate a good devotional life is a firm dedication to be intentional about giving God the place in our lives that is His due. Join me in making 2018 a year of daily, intentional time with God. I can't wait to see what He chooses to do through such a fruitful connection!

— Dr. Randy Lane Bunch, Church planter, pastor, and adjunct professor at Summit Bible College in Bakersfield, California. Author of several books, including his new devotional, *Immutable: Changeless Truth for a Changing World*, available through Amazon, Barnes & Noble online, or Apple iBooks. For more information about Randy's ministry, visit [www.randylanebunch.org](http://www.randylanebunch.org).

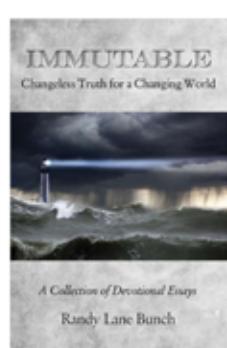


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## 5 Healthy Resolutions the Y Recommends For You

As we change our calendars from December to January, there's always a bit of a thrill in the promise of 365 days full of potential. The new year is chance to start fresh and say goodbye to any of the frustrations the previous year held—a perfect opportunity to make resolutions that will help strengthen one's spirit, mind and body.

However, many of us find our resolutions thrown out along with the holiday decorations. It's no wonder—starting New Year's by making sweeping cuts to our diets and declarations that we'll hit the gym seven days a week doesn't exactly set us up for success. But by reframing resolutions and breaking them down into smaller, sustainable goals, we'll see big benefits in the long run. As a community-serving organization here in Middle Tennessee, we see how things such as getting involved in the neighborhood and making basic lifestyle changes can impact someone's life for the better. So, here are five New Year's Resolutions the YMCA of Middle Tennessee recommends for you in 2018:

**1. Move More.** It's important for children to get at least 60 minutes of physical activity each day and for adults to get at least 30. Maybe you can take the stairs at work. Or walk to nearby restaurants instead of driving. Get creative with little tweaks you can make to incorporate more physical activity into your routine.

**2. Swap a Soda a Day.** It may be difficult, but cutting soda can do wonders for your body. If you can't cut it entirely, resolve to swap one soda a day for a large glass of water instead. Put fresh lemon or lime in your water for a healthy flavor. Once you've been able to swap one out, see if you can cut soda entirely.

**3. Schedule Family Time.** With work, school, and activities, family time may seem like an impossible task. But see if your family can have a "screen-free" night once a week or month with no phones, video games, television, etc. Use that time to play a board game, enjoy the outdoors, or visit with family and friends.

**4. Volunteer.** Giving back and supporting neighbors can benefit everyone involved. Not only is it a personally rewarding experience to help others in need, but it's also a way to meet new people or discover an interest. Find an opportunity in our community, such as reading to children at the library or helping at a food bank. If you'd like to partner with the Y, we have opportunities too!

**5. Put Extras to Good Use.** Do you have extra canned goods or clothes that could benefit others in need? Clean out your pantry, closet, or attic and donate extra items to homeless shelters or community outreach programs. At the end of the day, remember to keep taking small steps in a positive direction. Change takes time, and you are investing it into a healthier future for you and your loved ones. Cheers to 2018!

Grow healthier in spirit, mind, and body at the YMCA of Middle Tennessee, [ymcamidtn.org](http://ymcamidtn.org).

— YMCA Staff

## How To Cheat and Not Splurge

The infamous 'Cheat Day.' A day where all diets are off and we can eat however much of whatever we want, right? Well, that's how I used to look at it.

I would look forward to my 'Cheat Day' the whole week and then when it finally came I'd eat donuts for breakfast, tons of pasta for lunch, a whole pizza, and then some ice cream for dinner. Instead of "cheating", it became "splurging". In many ways, I was ruining everything that I



had worked so hard for that week. We must recognize the difference between occasionally having food we wouldn't normally eat and just completely over eating. If we view these "cheat meals" in the right perspective, we end up having more control instead of it having more control over us.

Our 'cheat meals' must be goal oriented. What we eat will directly correlate to the results we get. Are you trying to lose fat or gain muscle? Are you trying to achieve both? What body type are you? The answers to these questions will have a huge influence on what and when we need to be eating. No matter what your goals are, you have to have some room every once in a while to have some fun and rest from all the hard work you have put in.

There is a huge physical benefit to having a cheat meal every once in a while as well, especially when you're not wanting to plateau with your weight loss. When we eat for weight loss our body becomes accustomed to the negative energy balance and our metabolism can start to slow so that we can survive. So, we must have a day/meal where we can eat higher calories than we would normally so that our body can have that calorie variance. By having this calorie variance, we can make sure that all of the metabolic processes in our body don't plateau or slow down. A 'cheat meal' is perfect for this because first, it will keep our body on its toes and our metabolism high; and second, it is something that we can look forward to so that we don't get burned out on what we are trying to accomplish. If we use the cheat meal strategically and make sure that we exercise on the days that we have it then we can eat our cake and have it too in some ways, as long as it's a delicious chocolate quinoa cake.

I'm not talking about extreme diets that people try to do and then splurge later on. I'm talking about a lifestyle of balance that is sustainable. We must make sure that we are getting all of the essential nutrients that our bodies need. One of the biggest problems with having a cheap meal nowadays is that people try to go for foods that have zero nutrients. The problem with this is that our bodies still need all of the macro and micronutrients daily to thrive. So, the next time you have your cheat meal try having a healthier alternative to those cookies and that ice cream you love! Make the effort to fit as many micronutrients into your macronutrients and make the 'cheat meal' worth your while.

— Ashton Tate, Personal Trainer, Franklin, Tenn.  
Helping people live a balanced and healthy lifestyle is the heartbeat of what I do. [glorytogloryfitness.com](http://glorytogloryfitness.com)  
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# Comedian Anita Renfroe

## Finding the Funny Bone in Life



**Isn't it odd how sometimes an uncalculated decision can completely reorder the trajectory of life? So it goes for Anita Renfroe, one of America's most beloved comedians.**

In 2007, this Georgia born, suburban homeschooling mom, and occasional Christian speaker/singer became one of the first female comedians to populate YouTube space. At the urging of her three children, Renfroe posted a grainy video singing "Total Momsense," a piece she'd written to the tune of The William Tell Overture. The sketch condenses everything a mom would

say in 24-hours to 2 minutes and 55 seconds. The result is a hilarious YouTube phenomenon that took the world by storm. To date, the video has 1,326,372 views.

"I really thought perhaps 1,000 people would see the piece," said Renfroe. "I never imagined it would go viral and change the course of my life as it has."

Renfroe's social media success led to appearances on Good Morning America, Fox News Channel, Dr. Phil, Inside Edition and more. She has gone on to author several books, is a regular on Sirius XM Channel's comedy station, and continues to pack auditoriums across the country.

### The Early Days...

Renfroe was born in Cobb County, Ga. and raised in a tiny town in Central Texas. Her parents were staunch evangelicals who believed laughter was frivolous and hard work was always required. "It was a repressive environment," recalls Renfroe. "My outlet was listening to the Grand Ole Opry and watching Carol Burnett and Red Skelton on TV. I knew the joy they brought audiences was high value and deep down I guess I wanted a piece of it."

Renfroe left home to pursue a Political Science degree—hardly a stepping stone to stand up comedy—but she believes that through those dry pre-law classes God prepared her for her future as a mom and comedian. "I was very active in the university's debate team, and this required me to organize thoughts on the fly, the very tool I would come to rely on years later."

Post college she married John, a Baptist minister, and gave birth to three children. As a pastor's wife Renfroe immersed herself in ministry, often leading women's conferences and children's events. She employed her quick wit and musical skills to keep parishioners engaged. In short time Renfroe became a sought-after Christian speaker. The highly popular Women of Faith ministry signed her on as a regular speaker and the once stay-at-home mom became a touring comedic celebrity.

When asked if this was the path she envisioned, Renfroe reflects, "When my

now 33-year-old son was 4-months-old he giggled for the first time. I recall that it sounded like the most beautiful crystal tinkling. I remember thinking that if a simple laugh from a tiny baby can make me feel this way, imagine how it delights God. I have always wanted nothing more than to delight Christ, and if humor were a pathway to that, well, I would take it." Renfroe's encounter with her son's tiny giggle helped her ultimately find her purpose. "God hardwires each of us for a purpose and often people have inside them a talent they don't recognize until someone speaks life into it. I never saw comedy as a ministry path or career until people started telling me I was funny and actually paid money to see me perform," recalls Renfroe. She says this was her "ah-ha" moment. "I finally discovered my purpose when I was around 35-40-years-old, which is not unusual for women. It's an age when you finally care less about what others think your life should look like and more about what God desires. I finally surrendered to how God made me—perhaps a vessel to give hope to people who don't find joy anymore." Renfroe adds that someday she will give an account of how she used her life, and she wants to make sure she employs her gifts and talent to bring Him glory. "I want to stand unapologetically before Him."

### **Trailblazing...**

The comedy circuit didn't always have room for a Middle America, middle-aged Christian woman. In fact, if you wanted to be a stand-up comedian you needed a raunchy routine and a smoky bar. As the Evangelical movement grew though, the Nation saw the rise of Christian comedians such as Chondra Pierce and Brad Stine. In short time these two trailblazers broke into the mainstream with Renfroe on their heels.

With her wild red-brunette hair and easy smile, Renfroe delights audiences because she keeps

things real by drawing from her personal experiences. Her early comedy routines focused on the trials of raising babies and losing site of her waistline. As time passed, she reflected on the manic of menopause and the glories of grandparenting. The net result, year after year, is success. "The best comedy is always about your own life. I mine my life for material, and as God would have it, there is always plenty of new, good and bad experiences to draw from." Renfroe believes in making a short path between tragic and wonderful. When trouble hits, she looks for the oddity in it. Renfroe calls this finding the funny bone in life. "With God's help, we are all able to rise above situations and surrender to the moment. For me, this means finding some measure of joy despite my circumstances."

### **Has America Forgotten How To Laugh?**

Some would say there is not much to laugh about in the present day. Safe

topics are far and few between, and it seems not a day goes by that someone is offended. America may have forgotten how to laugh, but Renfroe holds out hope. "It takes a great deal more to make us laugh these days. People are more jaded and cynical, but we could never stop seeking joy," Renfroe implores. "As a comedian, especially a Christian comedian, I try to remain sensitive and empathetic, but it's getting difficult to avoid offending someone. You never know all the hot buttons, and the list keeps growing."

Comedians Chris Rock and Jerry Seinfeld feel the same. They recently announced they would no longer perform on college campuses for fear of

setting off a firestorm of judgment. Other comedians are shortening their sets due to a growing list of what the public perceives as unacceptable material. The iconic Mel Brooks recently said in an interview with BBC radio that, "politically correct" culture is killing comedy. Dennis Miller rallies against what he calls the "Me-Me-Me-Culpa Generation." As for Renfroe, she avoids talking politics and instead pokes fun of motherhood, marriage, mammograms and what most American women find funny.

Following a recent cross-country holiday tour, Renfroe reflected on social media's ability to steal joy. "Maybe we know less about ourselves because we spend so much time looking at other people's lives. Narcissism is on the rise because we are constantly comparing our lives. The Bible says men will become lovers of themselves and not God. I fear we are shifting in this direction." Renfroe's remedy is to relax. "I give people a space to exit the norms of life and find an oasis to choose joy." She also urges people to shut down the 24-hour news cycle. "Just because it is available to you doesn't mean you need to read it. We were never meant to know it all, all the time. If we immerse ourselves in the world we can't be the hands and feet of Jesus."

### **Next Chapter...**

What's next for this quick-witted, talented woman? Renfroe refuses to speculate. For now, she plans to enjoy her husband of 34 years, her three grown children, and her six grandchildren. She'll always keep one eye open and one ear tuned for comedic material amidst her crazy busy life but, she will discipline herself to stay present. "I could never have imagined my life as it is today. This is the beauty and wonder of Christ. He surprises us when we step out of the way and let Him lead. I'm just going to hold onto His belt loops and enjoy the journey."

— Susan Reinfeldt is an author, speaker, mother of two amazing kids and a spunky granddaughter. Reinfeldt sheepishly confesses she struggles in the comedy department, especially when it comes to remembering a punchline.

**To see Anita Renfroe live plan to attend:  
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Anita Renfroe is the Keynote Speaker of the **New Beginnings Conference**

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# 2018—The Year of Joy



My new year's prayer for you is that you live in incomprehensible joy. And I am personally declaring this new year, 2018, as The Year of Joy.

I have a family member who has an ancestral connection to Togo. Therefore, I decided to learn more about that nation. Google was my first exploration. After getting to the end of an extremely long article about the languages, history, culture, and people, I was shocked to see that Togo ranks as one of the unhappiest nations in the world. This tiny sliver of a country on the western coast of the African continent ranks near the bottom, just above Rwanda, in the UN's 2017 World Happiness Report. While a number of lifestyle factors were used to assess global happiness, that designation made me sad.

There is a major difference, however, between the definitions of "happiness" and "joy." Happiness depends on the external. I could explain it as being based upon right happenings. Joy, on the other hand, is internal...a spiritual experience. It is not based upon circumstances. Joy is a God-thing. I firmly believe that joy is teachable. With determination, you can infuse joy into every day of your existence. Plus, it's good for you.

Joy changes the biochemistry of the body. Many researchers believe that joyfulness has a physical impact upon our bodies—the very opposite of fear, stress, and anxiety. Caring for others, expressing generosity, experiencing gratitude, living thankfully, pursuing forgiveness, investing in loving relationships, being selfless—these are all qualities which build a joyful life.

And, did you know that there is a joy hormone? Even though there are varying opinions about how and why it works, experts have found that the hormone, oxytocin has a powerful impact on the brain and the body. Oxytocin is also an anti-inflammatory which diminishes pain and boosts healing. It might be described as God's joy stuffed into a hormone.

One of the things oxytocin does is to soften the walls of the arteries. And when our arteries are softer, the heart is not required to work quite as hard pushing blood through our bodies. This healthy effect can be accomplished by consistently living a life of joy.

The words of the prophet Nehemiah are indeed true, visionary, and even medicinal: "The joy of the Lord is my strength." (Nehemiah 8:10) Imagine the impact on your family, your workplace, and your health of "The Year of Joy." Imagine the result of spreading joy across the globe.

In 2018, flex your joy muscles everywhere you go. Believe it or not, the planet may never be the same.

— *Regina M. Prude is an inspirational speaker, SiriusXM radio host, syndicated columnist and author. E-mail comments to regina@reginaprude.com.*

*Follow her on Facebook ([www.facebook.com/reginaprude](http://www.facebook.com/reginaprude)) and Twitter (<http://twitter.com/rprude>)*

# *The Camouflaged Lie*

There is an age-old lie that Satan wants you to believe. At one point or another all of us have been tempted to believe this lie. Satan is crafty and comes as an angel of light. He takes God's truth and uses 90% – the remaining 10% he warps with the intent to harm you.

Why? Well, as Christians we find ourselves on the front lines of a spiritual battle that has raged for thousands of years: "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." – Ephesians 6:12

The particular lie I'm speaking of attacks your identity. It seeks to damage how you see and feel about yourself. Now, there are many words Satan can use to help us all believe the same lie. My version may be different than yours. That is what makes Satan so crafty.

**What is the lie?** You are sin. **What is the truth?** You have chosen sin. (So have I! We're human.) There is a big difference between choosing sin and being sin, but Satan wants to blur that line in our minds to create one big gray area. (For abuse victims, especially childhood victims, the lie is more pervasive. Abuse victims not only believe "You are sin," but also falsely take on the sin of their abuser "The abuse is your fault.")

If Satan can convince you that you are less than God's precious child, (Psalm 139:14), then you are vulnerable to believing a whole slew of other lies. This steals the peace and joy God provides for you, thus slowing down your work for God's kingdom, which gives the enemy more influence in this world. I was never tempted to think the lie "I am sin" directly. But I was tempted and believed "I am not good enough." "There is something wrong with me." "I can earn forgiveness with good works."



The enemy also uses lies to convince you that sinning is the safe and feel-good action to take: "You're powerful." "You're taking control." As a result, you may have chosen to steal, seek comfort in chemicals or food, or listen to fear rather than obey God.

But afterward, he shows your choices as so-called proof of labels that are not of God: "You're a thief." "You're an addict." "You're a coward." The truth is, your choices were sinful. But YOU are still a beloved child of God. (Eph. 1:4) and the identity Christ sealed for you when He died on the cross and took on your sins (2 Corinth. 5:21).

We need God's strength and the leading of the Holy Spirit to help us discern truth along the journey. Every day you have a choice to believe you are a beloved child of God. Choose to believe it. Choose to be set free.

— *Ginny Priz, The Single Handed Serenity Coach, Author of Ditch The Drama and Bloom Today Anchor. [www.ginnypriz.com](http://www.ginnypriz.com)*

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# FUN, FUN, FUN IN MUSIC CITY

Nashville doesn't stop in the Winter. On a daily basis Nashville and surrounding areas offer an experience that doesn't cost a thing. There's plenty of attractions, events and art galleries to see. Visit the Bluebird Café or tour the Grand Ole Opry.

Concerts in January include Avenge Sevenfold, Dwight Yokum, Kid Rock, the music of Prince with the Nashville Symphony and much more. The Nashville Winter Wine Festival takes place at the Marathon Music works on January 6th. Visit the Music City Walk of Fame, and bring your appetite, because the Music City has also become a culinary destination.

There's a Nashville Restaurant Week in January, from the 15th to the 21st, in which 40 locally owned restaurants of Middle Tennessee offer special menu items and deals you won't want to miss! Other food experiences include Chaffin's Barn Dinner theater, for 45 years a Nashville Landmark, and the General Jackson Showboat, taking you on a fun packed powerful musical journey down the musical highway featuring music born in Tennessee.



Try the Music City Brew Tour, learn about the history of beer and brewing in Nashville, in a four hour craft brewery tour with knowledgeable and experienced craft brew lovers.

The Nashville Farmers Market offers a night market each month. With local produce, meats cheeses and more. Explore Nashville's neighborhoods, there's adventure around every corner.

If you're ever in the Cool Springs Franklin area, never hesitate to stop in and say hello me and my staff at Hyundai of Cool Springs, you'll enjoy our family friendly way of doing business. Wishing you and yours the happiest of New Years!

*— Frank Odrobina. Owner of Hyundai and Genesis of Cool Springs*



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## MISSION MAKERS

### God's Plan For Service – Being An Enabler



This month let's talk about being an enabler. We can enable ourselves to some extent when we are alone through prayer and thinking but we must achieve the proper balance between being alone and being with others. Being with others allows us to be enabled by others. While we are working to enable ourselves and letting others to enable us, we have the great opportunity to help enable others. How do we do this?

We should look for opportunities and not just requests or demands. An obstruction or a problem could be turned into an opportunity. As we encounter opportunities, consider that it might not be the best timing for us and might not be something we enjoy doing. The opportunity could be a surprise requiring that we act at that moment.

One opportunity which is found by a discerning spirit is the spiritual, physical and emotional hurt being experienced around us. We must be discerning in that much of this hurt is not at the surface. People could be struggling in their effort to find God, they could be experiencing physical pain or be struggling to cope with emotional strain caused by either themselves or others. In each of these cases, much enabling can be done by a person who is willing to walk with and sit with an individual demonstrating empathy through our use of time and effort in a manner meaningful to the individual. When showing empathy we are tempted to avoid venturing outside of our comfort zone and to do the surface things that are convenient to do. Telling a needy person that you will take their call even in the middle of the night is an example of meeting their need while getting out of our comfort zone. Think of how the Good Samaritan went beyond what others might do to meet a need of someone else.

Think of your particular talents and your opportunities. What talents and abilities do you possess that would make you a particularly helpful enabler to a person? Do you have education and experience that could help a particular person? When God gives us talents and abilities he expects us to use them to enable others. They are not just for us to enjoy and then hide from others. Do you remember the song we learned as a child that said "Hide it under a bushel – NO?"

Are there people for whom you might be an enabler today or this week helping them with spiritual, physical or emotional challenges that they might encounter? Or maybe they just need help moving a couch or a helpful phone call. We rely on one another. The more we allow others to rely on us as enablers, the greater our blessings. Who could you enable right now?

Study questions are available at [www.christianfamilynashville.com](http://www.christianfamilynashville.com)

— Kenneth Oosting, PhD

## KIDS KORNER

### The Faith of a Bowling Ball

#### BIBLE TRUTH

We cannot always choose the situation we are in, but we can always trust God will guide us through anything.

#### WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS

Joshua 1:9

New International Version (NIV)

9 Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go.

#### Bowling Ball Pendulum

#### INGREDIENTS

- 10 Pound Bowling Ball
- String

#### INSTRUCTIONS

STEP 1: Securely attach the string to the 10 pound bowling ball.

STEP 2: Securely attach the bowling ball to the ceiling.

STEP 3: Pull the 10 pound bowling ball to your nose. Let go! DO NOT PUSH THE BOWLING BALL OR MOVE! IF YOU PUSH THE BOWLING BALL OR MOVE FORWARD, IT WILL HIT YOU IN THE FACE, CAUSING INJURY. Use evidence to construct an explanation relating the speed of the bowling ball to the energy of the bowling ball. Predict the outcomes about the changes in energy that occur if the bowling ball were to collide with another bowling ball.

#### EXPLANATION

The swinging bowling ball demonstrates the conservation of energy, which says energy cannot be created or destroyed. The total amount of energy the bowling ball has stays the same, until you do something to change this energy. You can change the amount of



energy by pushing the bowling ball. This would cause the bowling ball to hit you in the face. Potential energy or stored energy is at its greatest when you are holding the bowling ball to your nose. Once you let go, potential energy changes to kinetic energy, or energy of motion.

#### BIBLE CONNECTION

This experiment took a lot of trust. You had to believe the 10 pound bowling ball would not hit you in the face, causing injury. In life, we can't always choose the situation we are in, but we can always trust God will guide us through anything.

— Jason Lindsey - STEM Certified Educator and Meteorologist

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# 5 MONEY HACKS FOR A HAPPY NEW YEAR

Courtesy of [DaveRamsey.com](http://DaveRamsey.com)

Do you ever feel like you're in a chronic cash crunch? That can put a real damper on your days, and take the hope and expectation out of a new year.

But if money tops your list of New Year's resolutions, you're in luck! Research shows you're on the road to success. According to Fidelity Investments, 56 percent of people who resolved to improve their finances last year did just that. Better yet, 83 percent said last year's financial resolution is an ongoing event instead of a one-time goal. Who knew change could be so exciting?

**Put those resolutions into action — and get a leg up on your happy New Year — with these five money hacks.**

## 1. Use Cold, Hard Cash

Lots of folks choose plastic over cash for everyday purchases, and research shows that can lead you to spend more. Why? According to a Journal of Experimental Psychology study, parting with cash really is sweet sorrow. Plastic simply doesn't tug at your emotional strings in quite the same way. Use envelopes to divvy your dollars up across everyday budget categories. You might have one for groceries, restaurants, entertainment, clothing, and pocket money. On payday, fill your envelopes with the cash you budgeted for each category. When an envelope's empty, the spending stops for that category until your next paycheck. It's that simple!

## 2. Give Impulse Buys a 30-day Notice

You went to the store for one thing, and somehow ended up with a cart full of stuff. Sound familiar? If so, join the crowd. A recent study found five in six Americans are impulse shoppers. We all know it pays to sleep on a big money decision overnight. But what about smaller purchases that crop up throughout the month? Why not add them to your wish list and wait 30 days? That gives you a chance to work them into next month's budget. And who knows? That can't-live-without item you had your eye on just might be on sale by then.

## 3. Ignore Interest Rates when Paying Down Debt

Want to put a big dent in your debt this year? You might be tempted to grab debt by the jugular, and attack the biggest interest rate first. But it takes more than math to win. According to Fidelity, the number one reason people stick



to a money resolution is because they're encouraged by their progress. That's where the debt snowball comes in. Here's how it works: List your debts in order by outstanding balance, and attack the smallest one first. Once you knock it out, roll that cash over to your next debt, working your way up to the biggest of the bunch. You'll build momentum — and motivation—as you watch your debts disappear and your cash grow!

## 4. Go Roth with Your 401(k)

These days, most full-time workers have access to a 401(k) through their employer. This is a great way to save for retirement, because it enables you to make pre-tax contributions for your future. What you may not know is many employers offer a Roth 401(k) option, too. According to a Willis Towers Watson study, 54 percent of large and midsize companies do, yet only 10 percent of employees take advantage. That means lots of folks are missing out on tax-free growth. And now, any pretax match dollars your employer puts in can be converted to a Roth. That's means even more opportunity for tax-free growth. Just keep in mind that you do have to pay taxes on any money you convert. An investing professional can show you how it works, so you can weigh your options and choose the strategy that's right for you.

— Used with permission from [DaveRamsey.com](http://DaveRamsey.com)

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# Resolutions And Bumps In The Road

"This is to your advantage, who were the first to begin, not only TO DO THIS, but also to DESIRE TO DO IT. Now FINISH DOING IT also; that, just as there was the readiness to desire it, so there may be also the completion of it by your ability." (II Cor. 8:10-11)

Note the stages that Paul gives us for making measurable progress in every aspect of our Christian lives: from the desire to accomplish something in the new year, we get ready, and then we begin. We actually start doing it. We really desire to get things done! Then, to most of us, come "bumps in the road", things to distract and drive us off the road. However, we persevere and we complete, we finish what we started. When December comes, we look back at our year, satisfied with what we were able to accomplish.

Well, some of us do, at least. A lot of us don't. Many of us never finish, because something is allowed to stop our progress. Jesus spoke of one whole church, the congregation at Sardis, "I have not found your deeds completed in the sight of my God." (Rev. 3:2)

What blocks our progress? Let's examine the life of Felix. In Acts 24:22-27 we read about him. He was to appear at a court hearing, to listen to arguments from a certain Jewish preacher named Paul, to try to come up with a helpful ruling in that case. But rather than sit through a bunch of legal gibberish and arguing, he got the shock of his life. The prisoner actually took over the court proceedings, and suddenly Felix himself was on trial! "As he (Paul) was discussing righteousness, self-control, and the judgment to come, Felix became frightened." Another version says, "He trembled." With these three

## FAMILY MATTERS

### New Year's Wish List From Teens in Divorced Families

As we travel and work with kids and teens across the country as well as in Nashville we find common themes they wish their parents knew. Here are 12 insights for the New Year – maybe consider trying one new thing each month this year if you are a single parent or step parent?



**1. I wish my parents would give me their blessing to love the "other" parent.** It is difficult to feel like I can never talk about the good things about my other parent.

**2. I wish my parents would not make it stressful at our "handoff" when I transition between homes.** It's my most awkward time of the week and I wish they would be nice to each other.

**3. I wish my parents understood how much the "silent treatment" to each other is shouting pain and frustration to me!**

**4. I sometimes feel like I get forgotten when my parents start dating and are excited about someone new in their life.** It takes time for me to adjust to the idea of a new person in their life – please always see me as the priority.



simple concepts, Paul was quickly outlining the Christian life: receive the righteousness of Christ by faith, live a life of godliness and self-control, and thus be ready when Jesus comes again and we all appear in final judgment. The conviction of the Spirit of God came mightily upon Felix, and now he had an opportunity—an opportunity to respond.

His answer? "When I find time, I will summon you." (verse 25). Sad to say, that time never came. A window was opened to his soul, an opportunity to step from death into life . . . and he wavered. Scripture never shows him trembling again. The opportunity came, and it went.

Now, you have found 2018. You have found that 2017 blew by like a tsunami! Where did it go??? Never mind: another window, another door to move forward, beckons. What God has laid before you now, do. Desire to do. And finish doing. May God bless your new year with progress, despite bumps and detours and whatever else may get thrown at you. Don't be a Felix: find the time.

— Mark Simpson

**5. I wish I didn't have to worry about who I say "Hi" to first after my ball games and my events at school.** Sometimes I feel like I am in a no-win situation to hug each of you but I can't figure out who to go to first. Please don't take it personal if I hug the other

person first – I love you both.

**6. Holidays are sometimes still sad for me because the two people I love the most (mom and dad) can't be all in the same place together.** I know that seems silly but sometimes I miss having our family events together like we used to. I wish I could tell you each about that.

**7. I really like having new step siblings – they are fun to be around and it's great to feel like a big family again.** I wish I could tell you about that without you getting upset.

**8. I know you don't like the fact that I have a new stepparent in my life but I wish you could be OK with me enjoying them as a bonus parent.** No one will ever replace you and how much I love

you. You were there first and you don't need to worry that I will ever choose him/her over you.

**9. I don't know what to do with social media sometimes because I like posting photos of each side of my family.** I wish I didn't have to worry about hurting anyone's feelings or keeping track of how many pictures of each parent I share.

**10. Going to birthday parties and social events is an important part of my childhood and teen years.** I wish you wouldn't get mad if I miss a few hours with you because of my friends.

Being a single parent or a step parent can be challenging and sometimes we don't realize the "blind spots" that impact the kids. Maybe sit down and go through this "wish list" and ask your kids if any of these things sound familiar? Helping them open up and talk is the best GIFT you can ever give them during the New Year and every year to follow!!

— A companion in the co-parent journey, Tammy Daughtry, MMFT and Co-Founder of The Center for Modern Family Dynamics in Nashville, Tenn.

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# January 2018 Calendar



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### Goodwill Will Pickup Your Donation

"If you can't get it to us, we'll come get it from you." That's the gist of Goodwill's new Home Donation Pickup Program, which in just a few months has grown to serve communities in more than 16 Middle Tennessee Middle and West Tennessee counties (Davidson, Montgomery, Robertson, Sumner, Wilson, Rutherford, Dickson, Cheatham, Maury, DeKalb, Bedford and Perry, Madison, Henderson, Gibson and Decatur). [www.giveit2goodwill.org/pickups](http://www.giveit2goodwill.org/pickups)

### HELP WANTED

#### Now Hiring Basketball Referees -

The Williamson County Parks and Recreation Department is seeking referees and supervisors for the youth and adult basketball leagues. Applicants must be able to work evenings or Saturdays from December through March, and can earn up to \$22 per hour. Must be 16 to apply. Experience in playing or officiating is preferred. Reliable transportation and a background check are required. For more information, contact HunterE@williamson-tn.org.

#### Immediate Job Openings For Lifeguards -

Apply now to join the Aquatics team at the Williamson County Parks and Recreation Department (WCPR). The three indoor pools operated by WCPR in Franklin, Brentwood and Spring Hill have immediate openings for part-time lifeguards. To

apply, visit [www.williamsoncounty-tn.gov/jobs.aspx](http://www.williamsoncounty-tn.gov/jobs.aspx), or apply in person at the Williamson County Administrative Complex, 1320 West Main St., Franklin, TN 37064. For more information about employment as a lifeguard, contact Kristin Pitts at (615) 370-3471, ext. 2122.

#### Williamson County Parks & Rec Fun for all ages in upcoming classes -

The Franklin Recreation Complex, 1120 Hillsboro Rd., offers activities for all ages including classes for adults and kids. For more information about any of the classes listed below and to register online, [www.wcparksandrec.com](http://www.wcparksandrec.com)

#### Color Wheels-Homeschool Art Class

Each week, students in this ongoing art class will explore art history, techniques, styles and artists from the past and present.

#### Sticky Fingers Preschool Art Club

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#### Piano

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#### BE YOU! The Gift of Being Yourself

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ney and discover the gift of being yourself.

#### Kids Cooking Academy

Kids will tantalize their taste buds and learn to make simple dishes in this fun cooking class presented by Parker Anderson enrichment.

#### Color Wheels-After School Art

Join the fun as students explore art history, techniques, styles, and famous artists from past to present. This class is for kids 5 to 11 years, and meets Wednesdays, January 10-31 from 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

#### Preschool Musical Theatre

Theatre professional Julia Nolan leads this fun Preschool Musical Theatre class for ages 3-5 years. 11:30 a.m. The course fee is \$48 and registration is open at [www.wcparksandrec.com](http://www.wcparksandrec.com) (activity # 10806).

#### Hogwarts Academy

Perfect your magic skills in this interactive, spell-binding class for ages 8 to 12. Find out which house you belong to and learn how to make potions, use your wand, identify creatures and more.

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MyPillow Inventor and CEO

For the full list of speakers and musical artists, visit [nrbconvention.org](http://nrbconvention.org)



The NRB International Christian Media Convention is the largest annual event dedicated solely to assisting those in the field of Christian communications. Highlights include Super Sessions, Industry Sessions, Film Screenings, Networking Events, Live Broadcasts, and the Exposition — a vibrant, active marketplace of around 200 exhibitors, including Museum of the Bible.

This is a “must attend” event for Christian communicators seeking insights, connections, resources, and opportunities to advance themselves and their organizations!

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