

Your Best New Year's Resolution: Make a "Stop Doing" List

John 1:14-35

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Instead of more New Year's Resolutions—what I am going to **DO**--John the Baptist gives us three questions to help us decide not just what to do, but what to **Stop Doing** in the new year. Imagine two phone calls: One says you were just given \$1 million. The second said you have one year to live. Would that focus things for you? It might help you to decide what to stop doing.

What Are You Deeply Passionate About?

John testified [about Jesus] and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.' " (John 1:15)

He must increase, but I must decrease" (John 3:30).

If I say I'll never mention the Lord or speak in his name, his word burns in my heart like a fire. It's like a fire in my bones! I am weary of holding it in! (Jeremiah 20:9).

Food for Thought: *What puts a fire in your belly, a tear in your eye and a song in your heart? What do you believe God wants you to accomplish in this life?*

What Are Your Spiritual Gifts? What Do You Feel "Just Made to Do"?

I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well (Psalm 139:14).

Elizabeth will bear a son, and you will name him John. . . . He will be great in the sight of the Lord. . . . He will turn many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God. With the spirit and power of Elijah he will . . . make ready a people prepared for the Lord" (Luke 1:11-17).

When John was asked, "Who are you?" He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, "I am not the Messiah." And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" He answered, "No." Then they said to him, "Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" He said, "I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,' "as the prophet Isaiah said" (John 1:19-23).

A spiritual gift is given to each of us as a means of helping the entire church (1 Cor. 12:7).

Food for Thought: *How has God gifted you? What comes naturally for you? What do you have a flare for? What do you do that brings you satisfaction and success?*

What is God's Plan for You?

God said, I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope (Jeremiah 29:11).

John the Baptist said, For this reason my joy has been fulfilled (John 3:29).

St. Paul said, One thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal (Philippians 3:13, 14).

Jesus told us how: Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well (Matthew 6:33).

Food for Thought: *It has been said that a secret to happiness is to find something you really like to do; then find someone who will pay you to do it. Christians believe that God has put that "like to do" in your heart.*

Ask yourself the \$1M, 1-Year question: If you were given a million dollars and one year to live, what would you do differently and what would you STOP doing?