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# What's Got Ahold of Your Heart?

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**What…or who's…got ahold of your heart?**

As we prepare to enter a new year, where's the focus of your heart? Does the approaching year instill fear….or offer hopes and dreams?  Sometimes we anxiously find reasons to run away from what may come….yet we're urged towards opportunities of renewal. With so much hinging on inflated expectations for the New Year, our hearts swirl with hopeful anticipation all due to a simple new digit

defining the upcoming days.

But, have you considered the condition of your heart today and acknowledged what may need to make way? Because sometimes our hearts must let go and create space…***we have to give something up in order to start something new.***

With so much hijacking our hearts, with so many distractions in our overscheduled, unbalanced days, we're often forced off-course. So we first must consider what to **relinquish** in order to **add any kind of purpose** to a New Year's potential renewal. [1]

As we envision flipping the calendar to that magical new page, sometimes we skip over what's really important when it comes to change. We visualize ourselves in a brand new light maybe sporting a brand new body or perhaps with better life balance. But we forget to first open the grip on old routines or surrender self-sabotaging thinking.  With puffed up confidence to change the very essence of ourselves as we round the calendar corner, we neglect to notice what's already got ahold of our hearts.

Because here's the thing: ***We take whatever's holding our hearts, restricting our hands or hijacking our heads right along with us as the clock strikes midnight on a new year.***

I don't mean to put a damper on your New Year dreams but there's nothing new when something old's got ahold of you! Whatever's been holding you back from those dreams won't fall away when you flip the page.

What's pick-pocketing the passion in your heart, robbing you of precious opportunity, keeping you from using your time wisely towards your desires? What's been holding you back all along?

It sometimes feels like I've fallen flat on my face at the end of the day. I'm only allotted just so much energy, time and money. If you're like me, those daily resources are tight and we're all tapped out before we've ever reached what matters on the list! We hold our heads down and plow through the itinerary forgetting to refocus until the day's already done and the morning's good intentions rest again with us in bed.

But wait. Maybe we've got this all wrong! Perhaps our focus is misplaced from the moment we wake up and the wrong thing has ahold of our hearts from the start. ***Our intentions are off and overflowing daily duties distract us from what we're really supposed to saturate our souls in!***

*When my head hits the pillow hard and I know I've spent more time soaking in social media than sinking into His Word, my soul aches. When I know I've lost my cool and created an atmosphere of flailing arms and frustration in my home instead of calmly carrying His peace into this place, my heart breaks.*

***So then, what…or who's… holding our hearts hostage and keeping our hands from what we ARE capable of!? What's constantly taking us off course?***

An enemy.

A snake.

A temptress.

Every time we believe the lies and we let social 'rules' define our desires, we run out of time for

what's really important: **HIM.** Every time we set that same resolution with the wrong focal point, we're already doomed to failure.

So, maybe we should prepare our hearts differently this time around. After all, our souls already know what we need but somehow something else is holds our hearts back from Him. That's why we're always left yearning to changed, to transform. ***But when reconcile His will with our desires, we hear His whispering call in our hearts.*** And His call becomes clearer each time we look to Him for resources instead of relying on ourselves to once-and-for-all make that change!

We realize it's not the calendar page calling our names to change. It's Him calling us, beaconing us to allow Him to be our agent of change.

***You see, we can never really reach any good goal without God.*** *Because all good goals lead us closer to Him even if all we do is start by surrendering whatever mess we've already made!*

*We have to make space by letting go of what's hijacked our hearts. Material things....money....social status....parenting stress....a fight with time....a battle with our bodies...*

***We have to carve the enemy, the temptation, out to create space in our hearts for HIM!***

Climb down from the pedestal of self-reverent change so you can look up towards the transformation He desires in you. ***Before you set a goal or settle your heart on a resolution [2], first give Him your heart to hold.***

With only a few days left, listen to His whispers in your heart. Refocus on what's really worth striving for, asking Him for wisdom and the right way.

***With the Savior at the center of self-change***, ***even messes become masterpieces in a JOYFUL journey of change.*** That's right...even the tough stuff is filled with JOY when He's at the heart and holding your hand!

*He transforms any kind of brokenness into something beautiful [3]. God specializes in transformation! He works ALL things for good and can turn any challenge into the most beautiful blossom!*

No matter what's got ahold of your heart today, He's waiting for His turn....waiting for you to relinquish control and turn towards Him! ***Each day is a fresh canvas for Him to create and there really IS hope for a bright future when you have faith.***

Before you set any resolutions, seek the guidance of His hands in your goals. ***Surrender*** [4]. Set your heart free from what's been holding it hostage and give it to the God who specializes in transformation!

**Prepare to start a New Year with *brave JOY* because God's got your back!**

Here's some REAL hope for a New Year [2]. Carve it into your heart. Memorize it with me:

"Forget the former things;

do not dwell on the past.

See, I am doing a new thing!

Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?

I am making a way in the wilderness

and streams in the wasteland.”

Isiah 43:18-19

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