

ALLEY LG – January 2nd/3rd

Bible Story: The Rich Fool (Luke 12:13-31)

Bottom Line: The best resolution we can make is to put God first!

Memory Verse: “ But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given unto you as well.” *Matthew 6:33*

SFX: Play high-energy music as kids enter.

Worship:

Video: New Years

CG: New Year New You

You can always tell what time of year it is by the commercials you see on TV. For example, if you're seeing a lot of ads for flowers, fancy restaurants, jewelry, what time of year is it? (Valentine's Day, February)

If you see a lot of commercials with toys, elves, and cars with red bows on top, what time of year is it? (Christmas)

If you see a lot of commercials about paying off credit cards, stopping smoking, going on diets, and losing weight, what time of year is it? (New Years)

New Years is a day that many people use as a time to change the big things in life. When the calendar changes, people make what are called resolutions. Resolutions are commitments that they will change something big in that new year. I'm going to lose weight. I'm going to get in shape. I'm going to get more money. I'm going to change jobs. I'm going to be different!

Many of the resolutions people make are very good and very wise, like getting healthy. And there's nothing really wrong with wanting to make more money or move ahead in life. But as we all take look at our lives and ways to improve ourselves, I want us to ask one question first: what's most important in my life? What is the number one thing?

Is my number one thing my family? Is it money? Is it school? Is it sports?

SAY: Or is it just me? If you answered yes to any one of these questions, then I have a resolution for you: it's time to put God where he belongs, as your number one thing. Jesus told a story about a man who might have made one of those “I want to make more money” resolutions. He doesn't give the man a formal name; he rarely did that in his parables. But Jesus always gave us a name to remember his characters: the Good Samaritan, the Prodigal Son, the Wise and Foolish builders. This man we remember as the Rich Fool.

Take a look at this...

Video: The Rich Fool

I can almost see this story taking place at New Year's time. It's the start of a new day and a new life for him. All of a sudden, his wildest dream has come true. He is rich beyond measure! He can kick back, take it easy, and never work again! But God has a message for the Rich Fool: you will never get to enjoy a day of your selfish life. Before you even lay the foundation for the storage barns, you will die, and what will become of all the wealth you accumulated?

Like I said before, there's nothing wrong with wanting to make more money or even enjoy life. So where did the rich fool go wrong? He forgot the one who blessed him. He looked only to himself. He didn't put the Lord first. God had a plan for the rich fool. He blessed him with a great harvest that could be used to feed those in need. He could have used all of his grain to feed those who didn't have much to eat. The Rich Fool is called a fool because he chose to serve only his own needs – and he died before he could even enjoy it.

God has a plan for every one of us here today, and God wants to be a part of our thoughts as we make resolutions about our lives. Here are three practical ways we can make wise choices at New Years, and all year long:

First, give God your time. Remember to take time for God every day, and spend time through the Bible, you will notice a pattern in ~~away, getting His kingdom~~ - He was always going off by Himself to pray! Jesus was always getting His kingdom and talk with His Father. alone time with God, how much more do we need it? Time alone with God helps us stay focused on the Lord. We think less of our own wants and we see more of what God wants.

Second, remember everything you have is a gift from God. The money you earn, the talents you have, the body you live in. Everything comes from God. It is our responsibility to make wise choices about those gifts, and to use them for God's glory.

Third, ask God what He wants you to do with your gifts. If you're athletic, God can use that to His glory. If you're a quick learner and love studying the Bible, God has a plan for you to use those gifts. If you are adept at math and science, God has a plan for those gifts. If you are artistically gifted, God has a plan for you as well.

Our memory verse says it like this,

“ But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given unto you as well.”
Matthew 6:33

CG: Memory Verse Slide

Wrapping Up The Story

With all of our gifts comes the temptation to use them for our own glory. Our gifts are not for our glory, but for His alone. If we are wise, we will use them to share God's love with others.

When you look back on your life 50-60 years from now, what do you hope to see? Will you see a person who did it his or her way and lived only for the moment, or will you see someone who took everything God gave them and used those gifts for God's glory?

The rich fool could have done so much good if he hadn't thought only of himself. Make a resolution to

put God first this year, and ask God to show you how to use your gifts for his glory!

CG: Bottom Line Slide

Our bottom line today is: **The best resolution we can make is to put God first!**

Let's say that together: **The best resolution we can make it to put God first!**

So WHAT is the best resolution we can make this New Years???? Right, to put God first.

Will you squander your gifts like the rich fool, or will you put God first in your life?

Let's pray...

Dear God,

Show us how to focus on you and spend time with you. May we learn how to seek your face and put you first.

In Jesus' Name, Amen

Dismiss children to their Small Groups.