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THE NEW YEAR RESOLUTION

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"The Protestant Faith"

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### THE NEW YEAR RESOLUTION

The New Year is traditionally a time for new resolutions. I wonder what ones you have made. It is a time for reflecting on the past and seeing whether we can do better in the future. However, it is well known that good resolutions normally do not last long. There is a proverb that says that the road to hell is paved with good resolutions. This proverb shows that people have found out that it is one thing to make a good resolution and another thing to carry it out consistently. They may find that they cannot do it. This characteristic of our nature was well known to the ancients. The Latin poet Ovid pointed out that it was one thing to desire good and another to achieve it or, as Paul the apostle wrote in his letter to that Romans, that he was conscious of the fact that the good things that he wished to do he did not achieve while the bad things he wanted to avoid doing he fell into doing. What are we to make of all of this? Are we to be content with our life running down hill all the time. If so, we will finish up as the proverb says in hell, yet we do not seem to be able to do any better and in fact we cannot pull ourselves up by our own shoe laces. However there is good news in this situation, for God can change us as He has done for innumerable people. What we need is not a good will, we have got that; but a good disposition which month after month motivates the good will which we may adopt at the beginning of the year. We need a new disposition, and God has promised in the Scripture to give us that. In the Bible language we read that God will take away the old heart and give us a new heart. By His Spirit we may be born again with our disposition renewed right through. If you want to know whether it works you have only to ask a genuine Christian and you must surely know some of those. You will find their testimony uniform that God gives us a new disposition so that we are able to carry out more and more our good resolutions, rather than less and less, as our normal experience is. However, we must remember this fact. God can deal with



us only in the area of truth, for God is true and this means firstly that we must recognize that we need His help and secondly we must acknowledge what the facts are, namely that God is almighty and sovereign and that Jesus of Nazareth is God-with-us, who took our nature, bore our sins, overcame our enemy and is now risen to the right hand of the throne of God where He exercises all authority and power. If you recognize Jesus as Saviour and Lord you are recognizing the truth, the truth about yourself that you need a Saviour and the truth about Jesus that He is Saviour, and that you will take him as your boss. In this area of truth God will reveal Himself to you, giving you a new disposition, forgiving your shortcomings and by His Spirit enabling you to carry out what you know to be right as you live in fellowship and friendship with Him. So the best new resolution that you can make is to make Jesus central in your life. This resolution has within it the power not only to fulfil itself but to enable you to fulfil all your other good resolutions as well. So that the resolution for the New Year for all of us should be to make Jesus Lord and boss of our lives, asking Him for forgiveness and looking to Him for the help He has promised.

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