

## A New Year's Resolution?

Romans 7:15

Sermon Transcript by Rev. Ernest O'Neill

One of the rituals that we went through in Ireland at the opening of a new year was the question that was always put by our mom or dad to us on Old Years Night and the question was what New Year's resolutions have you made and then we would reply: to speak more respectfully to our parents in the new year or to have our homework done by Saturday morning or to get up for prayer faithfully every morning in our rooms. And that kind of practice, I think, has diminished in Ireland and probably here in America, too. I think there are several reasons for it. I'm sure that one is in our free swinging society we have tended to dilute the absolutes more and more and so we have tended to feel that whatever we were doing was right as long as we enjoyed it and as long as it felt good. So I think there has been a tendency in us to feel that the kind of behavior that we're practicing at the present time is what comes naturally to us, it's what feels good, so it must be right. I think that has tended to discourage us from this practice of making New Year resolutions. I also think there has been an increasing feeling among us that to use your will in any way was, if not an un-American activity, at least it was apt to bring terrible inhibitions to your life and terrible guilt.

So there has been a tendency among us to feel that exercising your will to hold to some resolutions is not the healthiest thing and you should just be what you are and let it all hang out. I think as well as that, many of us who have entered in some sense into the spirit filled life have gotten the idea that God does it all. You know that comes from our emphasizing that the Father actually delivers you. I've noticed within some of you, loved ones, there is a tendency to think that therefore there is no place for exercising the will. You just kind of "let go and let God" and I recognize that some of the expressions that we use in connection with the fullness of the Spirit can be misinterpreted that way. I think that many of us who regard ourselves as being spirit filled think that all you do is lie back and let God do it all. So that also discourages us from the idea of making New Year resolutions. So I put the question to you, is there any place for New Year resolutions and if there is some place for New Year resolutions, what is it?

I would like to start first of all by pointing out plainly to us all what the place is not for New Year resolutions. You'll get the clue about that place from a phrase that we often use, "New Year resolutions are made to be broken." We say that because we will make a resolution to do something like "I will never lose my temper throughout 1980" and then on the second of January we blow it and we kind of try to laugh it off and say oh, well, New Year's resolutions are made to be broken. Loved ones, there are obviously things that we make resolutions about that cannot be affected by our resolving and it's important for us to see that. There are things that we try to deal with by means of our will power that obviously have a greater power than our will has and these things simply cannot be subdued by our will power.

We need to know where those things are and the clue is if you make a resolution that you cannot keep -- not a resolution that you do not keep -- because some of us decide that our resolutions were not a very good plan anyway at the beginning and we simply change them-- but if you have made a New Year resolution and you cannot keep it then you're dealing with a power that cannot be tackled purely by your will or the exercise of your will. It would just help us all a lot if we saw that plain fact. If you make a New Year resolution or any kind of resolution that you find you're not able to keep, you can't keep it, then you are dealing with a power there within your personality that will not

yield to will power. In other words, you're dealing with downright, plain carnality. It will never yield to New Year resolutions.

That power of carnality is described there in Romans and it might be good just to look at it because it states plainly where that power comes from. It is Romans 7:15, "I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate." Now that is carnality, loved ones. See, it is described in the verse before, "We know that the law is spiritual but I am carnal, sold under sin. I do not do what I want but I do the very thing I hate." If you find yourself making a resolution and you find you cannot keep it then that's what you're dealing with. Now what is the power that is opposing so successfully your will? Well, there it is in verse 17, "So then it is no longer I that do it, but sin which dwells within me." Sin is a power within you and that's the problem.

You remember we used to explain it often on this diagram of body, soul and spirit. You remember we've described, loved ones, how you either work from within yourself, from within your spirit through your soul and through your body to the outside world or you work from the outside in through your body and in through your soul and into your spirit. We've said often that real sin is trying to get from people and things and circumstances. If you think of the personality as governed by your spirit and then expressing itself through your soul and then expressing itself through your body, we've said often that sin is trying to get from the world, from people and from circumstances and from things, the happiness and the security and the significance that you are meant to get from God. That is what sin is, it's a power.

When you find yourself making a New Year resolution that you cannot keep, it's because that power still operates in you in some way. It doesn't matter how much resolving you do, you will never, in fact, be able to overcome that power. There is only one way to overcome that power and that is the crucifixion that took place on the Cross with Jesus, when that old self that operated the wrong way was crucified with Christ. The only way for that to be made real in you is for you to be made willing to die with Jesus and that's what Paul says, you remember, in Romans 6:7, "He who has died is freed from sin." Not he who resolves or makes New Years resolutions, but he who has died is freed from sin. Now if I could just explain it in a plain example. If you find yourself being jealous and you know that jealousy is a problem in your life and you resolve at the beginning of 1980, or you resolve at some time in your life, I will not be jealous. Then someone comes along, sings beautifully and everybody praises them or speaks cleverly and everybody thinks they're wonderful, and you begin to find that jealousy rising within you. Then recognize that there you are dealing with carnality and you're dealing with the power of sin that at least in that area of your life is still ruling and still running your life, that at least in that area of life self still rules. In that area of your life you are still living a life independent of God. You are still in some way looking for things and circumstances and people for the love that you were meant to get from God and so you begin to track that down. Really, that's what you do.

A New Year resolution that is broken is a beautiful gift from the Father to give you a clue as to where you should begin to track down your state of consecration in Jesus. That's what you should do. You should simply say to the Holy Spirit, Holy Spirit I have this jealousy within. Now jealousy, we all know is connected with what people think of you, it's connected with their approval of you, it's connected with your reputation compared with other people's reputation, so obviously you begin to deal with the Holy Spirit in that way. Holy Spirit in what way am I not really dwelling at peace in Jesus as He was insulted and despised and looked down upon and unjustly criticized by those around Him, in what way, Holy Spirit, am I not willing to take my place permanently with Jesus? In what

way, Holy Spirit, am I still yearning for other people's praises, in what way do I still want to live independent of God's approval, trying to get man's approval. Then allow the Holy Spirit to show you, loved ones. Allow Him to show you where you are still yearning for every little bit of praise that comes from your peers. Then of course, try to deal with that question.

Would you be willing to die to that? Would you be willing to be ill thought of by your friends, to be despised by those around you, to be looked down upon as long as you had your Father's approval? Loved ones, New Year resolutions that are broken are dear gifts and guides from God to you as to where you are still not on the Cross with Jesus. It's the same with greed, you see. If you resolve I am not going to be greedy in this New Year, I am not, I am not going to be greedy or covetous, and you find greed or covetousness rising up inside you, then don't be silly. Don't keep on resolving I am not going to be greedy; I am not going to be covetous. See that there is still sin dwelling within you. There is still within you the power of independent life. In some way you are still living from the world in instead of from God out. Ask the Holy Spirit, why am I covetous? In what way am I still depending on things for my security? In what way am I still depending on things for my happiness? Then begin to deal with your dear Savior on the Cross and look into His eyes and say, "Lord Jesus, you had a loin cloth, just one coat, and even on the Cross you hadn't even a garment on. You had nothing that you could call your own. Lord, you're asking me would I be willing to accept my place with you and accept that kind of life." Then be down to earth about it, you see, ask yourself if you would. Continue to do that over the days and the weeks until you come to a place where you're absolutely willing to have only what Jesus wants you to have.

Loved ones, that's the place when you've come to a death to that self that wants things from the world. That's what you do when you find you are making New Year resolutions that you're breaking. See that it's a guide to carnality within you and that in some way you have to come into a full death with Jesus. So would you think of that just for a moment then before I share the last part? Do you know in your life somewhere where you are making New Year resolutions and you're not able to keep them? That's a sin and that's not God's will. Don't get desperate about the thing in the wrong way. Don't go on trying to beat it down with your will power. The issue is not your will power there. The issue is that there is sin still dwelling in you and that's due to a completely wrong attitude that you have towards Jesus, a completely wrong attitude in a whole area of your life.

I've shared with you brothers and I'm sure you sisters have something of the same problem we have with evil thoughts or with unclean thoughts, but I've shared often with you that when you have a problem with lust, the issue is not overcoming by will, the issue is find out where you do not have the same attitude to women as Jesus does. That's it. In what way are you still wanting something that Jesus was willing to be without? Are you wanting something that God does not want to give you at this moment? In other words, the problem with New Year resolutions that are broken is bigger than just the little tip of the iceberg. It usually involves a whole attitude in your life towards Jesus on the Cross, an attitude which is really rejecting Jesus and saying, "Lord, you can die for me, but you're not getting me onto that Cross. I am going to stay here where I am." Loved ones, it is a basic rejection of your Savior. So deal with it that way.

Now, is there any place for New Year resolutions? Well, the beautiful truth is this: once you allow the old self to be slain and that spirit within becomes not only a capital "S" as the Spirit regenerates you, but the massive "I" that is there is crossed out on the Cross -- that moment when the Holy Spirit completely fills your spirit and gives you a freedom from that problem of Romans 7:15, a freedom from carnality -- then loved ones, you're at last free to express that throughout the rest of your personality and the vital factor in doing that is the part of your soul that

connects up with your spirit. You remember that we've talked often about the conscience as being the part of your spirit that connects up with your will and your soul and the only way in which the Holy Spirit can express the purity of Jesus throughout your personality is through your will. The Holy Spirit can do it no other way. Unless you exercise your will, the Holy Spirit can never redeem the rest of your personality.

There are many, loved ones, who have experienced some fullness of the spirit and have experienced some measure of a crisis death to self with Jesus on the Cross but they have kept it there. They hold that spirit within until eventually they draw back even from that surrender and fall back into self. So there are many, loved ones, who have the wrong idea that somehow the Holy Spirit will spread Himself throughout their personality without any exercise of their will on their parts and so they fall into absolute passivity. Eventually, of course, they fall back under the domination of the elemental spirits of the universe. Now the truth is that the only way that the Holy Spirit is going to be able to redeem the whole of your personality is through your will. So after you have settled yourself on the Cross with Jesus, the rest of your redemption throughout the rest of your life is going to be exercised by the exercise of your will. If you remember it's like the conquering of the land of Canaan. You remember how that land was conquered by the Israelites as they came through the wilderness and then came to the Promised Land and they could do nothing until God, by a mighty deliverance, moved them across the River Jordan. So it is with us.

You can do nothing about the redemption of your whole personality until you experience that great deliverance whereby God slays the old man on the Cross. But then you remember there took place the detailed, day by day redemption of the whole of the land through human commitment and through detailed battles that were fought on different mountains and different valleys. So it is with our own personality, loved ones. The only way that personality will ever be redeemed is by our will exercising power and control over our mind and emotions and then over our bodies so that our whole personality comes under that purity. So God, through His Spirit, will show you that Jesus wants to waken up in the morning to a different way than the way you've been doing it for years. So the Spirit of Jesus will want to express that to you and say to you, "When you get up in the morning I want your mind to be bright and alert, I want you to meet me and be filled with my presence before you meet anybody else." So that will mean making resolutions about the time you get up in the morning. You get up at 6:00 or you get up at 5:00 to give yourself time. It will mean resolutions about the book that you're going to use for Bible study. It will mean resolutions about the time you're going to spend in prayer. Unless you make those resolutions, unless you exercise your will to bring those things about, your life will go nowhere, it won't, honestly.

Loved ones, God does not force you, only Satan forces you. God requires the cooperative action of your will and if you don't exercise your will in this way, the Holy Spirit will never be able to redeem your life. I do think that if you don't mind me saying, I think that some of you do wobble like jellyfish for years. You wobble over onto the Cross and then you wobble over this way and you wobble over that way and you drift and you hope somehow that the Holy Spirit will rock you into a heavenly victory and it doesn't work that way. The fact is the Holy Spirit delivers you from the power of sin which prevents you obeying God and then you exercise your will to obey God -- but the Holy Spirit will not make you obey God apart from the exercise of your will. What the Holy Spirit does through the victory of Jesus on the Cross is to deliver you from that power that prevents you obeying God so that you are free to obey Him. In other words, the victory on the Cross means you are free not to sin. You can still sin if you want to but you are at last free not to sin if you don't want to. You don't have to lose your temper, you don't have to lie in bed unable to get up, you don't have to be an invalid. At last you are free to obey God and so the Spirit of Jesus will point

out to you ways in which you speak to your friends that are wrong, ways that are harsh and sarcastic, ways that you have at work that are not right, ways that are unkind and cruel, attitudes that you have to other people that are critical, ways in which you don't accept other people fully. The Holy Spirit will reveal habits of mind and habits of emotion that you have developed over the years as a servant of sin and you need to make resolutions to change those because, of course, sin is no longer your master, Christ is. He makes new your personality.

So really, it is in a way like a great mountain that was at one time dominated by the river of sin and it made all kinds of ruts in your personality and now sin has been destroyed on the Cross with Jesus and there are new ruts that have to be made by the Spirit of Jesus, completely different ones in different ways. There are new mental habits and new emotional habits; there is a renewing of your emotions and a renewing of your mind that has to be exercised by the power of your will. Therefore, loved ones, it is vital to make New Year resolutions. It is vital to note carefully the ones that you are not able to keep because they require a different kind of treatment to the ones that you're able to keep. But it is vital to make New Year resolutions. You will move nowhere in your life in progressing with God unless you align your will strongly with His. Unless you exercise your will with His there will be no victory in your life. You remember Jesus said that. He said, "Be it unto you according to your faith." As you believe and as you will, so it will be in your life. I would ask you at this moment what New Year resolutions are you going to make for 1980, where is the growing edge of Jesus in your life, and you have to know where it is. You have to know where He is beginning to deal with you. So I put that to you. Where is Jesus maturing and growing in you? In other words, what resolutions does He want you to make for 1980 and then have you any besetting sins? Have you any New Year resolutions that you cannot keep? Those are the areas where you have to examine your attitude to Jesus on the Cross. Have you really come to the place where you've died with Him there? Loved ones, will you think about that because I would rather you make clear decisions tonight and take action.

(Questions from the congregation):

John: Can I ask a question about the basic necessity of the will over a problem? I want you to clarify something. You said in the beginning that there are some things that cannot be subdued by willpower. In what way do you suggest you employ the will to solve the problem?

Rev. O'Neill: Yes, I think so. I would say, first of all, John, that the things that seem unable to be dealt with by the sheer exercise of our will are those things that are listed as the works of the flesh in Galatians 5: envy, strife, jealousy, that kind of thing. And it seems that the will cannot deal with those because those themselves are an expression of a will that is hostile to God. So the fact is, you're trying to exercise a will against an evil will within you that has no intention of yielding and so the issue to be dealt with is that evil will within. But the evil will within comes because we have a totally wrong direction in our lives in that area -- because in that area of our lives we're living completely the opposite way from the way God intended. That's what has to be dealt with in that instance. In order for the will to be able to exercise itself over, for instance, jealousy or greed, the whole wrong orientation of the personality towards people and circumstances and things instead of to God, has to be changed. That can only be changed by the Cross and that can only be changed if we're willing to have that change be made real. So you have to be willing. You have to be willing to take your place on the Cross with Jesus.

John: (Question inaudible)

I would say not but maybe I could explain my own situation. I found that one of my problems, and I think I have many problems, but one of the problems was selfish ambition -- a desire -- and you can see it in those silly guys like ourselves that find ourselves on stage and nearly always have this problem or come against it sooner or later -- selfish ambition, a desire to be well thought of, a desire to be well known, a desire to be looked up to, to be respected, all that kind of thing. I found that however much I resolved, from that comes pride and jealousy and envy and criticism because you have to knock down other people to make sure that at least in your own eyes, you are more important than them. So I found that however much I resolved to overcome the pride or the jealousy or the envy or the criticism, I could not. So I went to the Holy Spirit and said what is the basic problem underneath these works of the flesh -- jealousy, envy, pride -- and the Holy Spirit gradually over a period of days and indeed weeks began to show me the problem was a simple one. I think this is the heart of it, John. This isn't something that I can tell you how to do, it is something that you have to find out from the Holy Spirit yourself because your situation and everybody's situation is going to be a very personal one and different from mine. But I went to the Holy Spirit and asked what lies under this jealousy and under this pride. Of course, gradually over the days and the weeks and the months the Holy Spirit began to show me the very simple fact that it was a selfish ambition within me, a desire to be somebody. Then the Holy Spirit gradually began to show me how utterly opposed and different that was to my dear Savior who was the King of the Universe and yet, was willing to be regarded as a criminal, as a political odd man out, as somebody that was despised and insulted and struck with whips for me.

I began to see, of course, that my attitude was utterly opposed to His and not only utterly opposed but was ridiculous in the light of who He was, and that He was asking me, "Will you join me on this Cross, will you be willing to be what I am?" -- and it was at that time that I saw that there wasn't a real choice. The only choice was you reject Him completely or of course, you see that you have to be willing to take your place with Him on the Cross. So that was the question that I had to settle, John, was I willing to take my place with Jesus on the Cross, which meant was I willing to be badly thought of by other people. Not only that, was I willing to be despised by other people, not only that, but was I willing to be an absolute failure as Jesus appeared to be in the eyes of His friends and His relatives, not only that, but for me was I prepared to be a nothing, a zero if God wanted that for His glory. It was in that deep area that I had to make my peace with God and I think each man and woman has to do that separately and alone because I can try to tell you it, but it's impossible to tell you all that is involved there. Suffice it to say that I did come to a place where at last, Lord Jesus, I would rather be with You than with all the important and the famous people in the world, I would rather do something that would bring glory for You than do something that will make me approved of by my peers. It was then that the Holy Spirit cleansed me -- and I hate to say this because I know you shouldn't say you are free from sin, you should let other people say that -- but at least I don't have problems, it seems to me, with the pride, ambition, envy and the jealousy that I had in those days because the Holy Spirit cleanses that out from you. So John, when that is cleansed by the Holy Spirit then it seems to me it's easy to make resolutions about other things that took place in your life as a result of that.

John: Would you say that before when you were talking about the will that it could also be described as attitude?

Rev. O'Neill: I would say that the attitude was what I was describing there. The attitude is the attitude of the whole spirit to things and the will is the agent that expresses that attitude and the fact is that while that inner attitude is unchanged, the will will express that but when that attitude is changed so that the beauty and the love of Jesus comes into it, then the will can

express that. I would say that there is where the work needs to be done, in the spirit, which is why we talk about the spirit needing to be filled or the cleansing of the spirit and then the will is simply the human agent that expresses that to the rest of the psychological being and then to the physical being. I would say that this is more the realm of attitudes because that's where I had my problems. It was not so much in individual actions or individual words, it was an attitude or a response or my whole motive life that was unclean and it was unclean of course, because I wasn't willing to be on the Cross with Jesus.

Susie: (Inaudible)

So Susie's bringing up the issue could you be delivered from the old self or delivered from carnality, delivered from the power of sin in your life and still have problems exercising your will, because for instance of demonic oppression. There are three levels of demon activity in a personality. There is demonic obsession where the mind becomes obsessed with certain thoughts, certain ways of thinking, gets certain fixations. Then there is demonic oppression, which is simply Satan oppressing us with maybe many temptations or many hard or heavy trials. Then there is demonic possession, which is the possession of the spirit by demons and that can only take place, it seems to me, when the will is submitted to Satan. I believe it's a contradiction to say that your spirit could be filled with the Holy Spirit and get possessed by a demon, so I think that you cannot have. It is possible that a mind could be obsessed by Satan with certain ways of thinking to such an extent that the mind would be reluctant, for instance, to obey the will, and it is possible in that case that the will will have to exercise itself often over the mind. All I would say is that victory is assured because the victory has been won in there and the mind has to eventually submit.

Now it may take continual exercising of the will over it, but it will submit and it's not something where a person has to be delivered from a demon. In fact, the Bible says "He who is within you is greater than he that is without" and so you are able, once your spirit is submitted to Jesus, to exercise your will successfully and victoriously over your mind or emotions. So I would say yes, it can make it a longer, drawn out battle than would otherwise be the case, but to a certain extent it is just a variation of the need to have our mind and emotions renewed that everybody will face. I, in my own life, have tried to steer well clear of what you remember the black comedian joked, "the devil made me do it." I have tried to steer well clear of using any excuse that, "well, it's Satan." Instead I have tried to deal very strongly with "Holy Spirit, it's me, deal with me, show me, and if it's something else then show me that later." I would tend to go that way. If I could put it this way, obsession of the mind is a pretty obvious thing. It is fairly obvious when a loved one's mind is obsessed with Satanic activity. Similarly emotions, when their emotions are controlled by Satan, it's pretty obvious. I think the greater number of us who are out operating in the ordinary world are not facing that kind of problem.

Speaker 3: How much time should we spend in praying or reading the Bible each day?

Rev. O'Neill: I think all of us have gone through all our times when we've said an hour was necessary for us, a half an hour was necessary for us, fifteen minutes for us, one minute as we get into the car, that kind of thing. We've all gone through that so I think, brother, you can't settle it by stating a time but it is obvious that a certain amount of time is required to withdraw the mind from its normal activities, from thinking about your job, thinking about your clothes, thinking about your money situation, thinking about your friends, thinking about your studies. It takes time for the emotions to be withdrawn from their interactivity with other people and it does seem very difficult to get together with God in a quiet, peaceful way, so that there's a real relationship

between you and Him set up in under half an hour. It seems very difficult to do it. Presumably it is like most other things, as you do it over the years, so you are able to come into His presence much faster and much more effectively. I would say this: the guideline should be when do you really feel you've got hold of God? Do you feel you have really got hold of God? That should be the guide for us and we should not get up off our knees until we do get hold of God.

I think one of the great mistakes that many of us make is we say 15 minutes is the time I can give or half an hour is the time I can give, and then we get up from God's presence whether we've got in touch with Him or not and that is what turns our prayer life into just our kind of prayer wheel that we turn every day. So I would judge it maybe more on that level, brother, have I really got hold of God? In regard to Bible study, it is very difficult to see that you can do more than just read 10 verses and read a brief comment very quickly in less than 15 minutes. It is very difficult to see how you can do much more than just superficially accept somebody else's comments on scripture in less than 15 minutes. It would seem, again, that you need at least half an hour to begin to wrestle with scripture in yourself and ask the Holy Spirit to interpret this to you. So brother, maybe that's some guide.

It is obvious loved ones, that if you - and I guarantee this, and I am prepared to bet heavily if you were betting people -- but you're Christians and you cannot bet -- but I am prepared to bet heavily that if we went round all of you here in this room, the problems that you have in your lives stem from lack of an effective and regular Quiet Time. I would say that without any question, if we went around each one of us here in this room, you would be heartily amazed and ashamed at the five minutes, the 10 minutes that we give to prayer three times a week, sometimes once a week, some of us don't pray at all regularly. You would be amazed how few of us read the Bible regularly day after day. You would be amazed how few of us read it with any kind of Bible study notes by our side. You would be amazed how few of us read it with commentaries that will take us any deeper in our understanding of scripture. Of course, it would be surprising to find any of us that actually write notes as we study the Bible. So I think you'd be surprised and yet, loved ones, that's where everything hangs.

It's on that that our whole relationship with God hangs and if all of us in this room would only begin half an hour of prayer and half an hour of Bible study every day, in the morning if you can do it, but as long as you do it regularly, it would change your life. Your life would be changed and you wouldn't be always asking to find out how things come about, you would know it. You would have no need for anyone to teach you because the Holy Spirit would teach you and that is the greatest need. Jesus spoke the truth when He said, "Unless you become as little children you will in no wise enter the kingdom of heaven" and most of our relationship with God comes back to very simple things like regular prayer and Bible study every day.

Speaker 4: (Question inaudible)

Rev. O'Neill: Yeah, that was my excuse. That was my excuse: my mom was illegitimate and I felt that I had inherited from her her inferiority complex and I felt in some way that was not only the rationalization for my situation but it was justification for it. I felt that and the Holy Spirit just showed me that wherever there is an inferiority complex, it is still a preoccupation with position one way or the other, in that case, inferior position, but it is still preoccupation with position and with whether we are inferior or superior and therefore self is still seeking for a position apart from God. I think that things are very understandable. I think that's the cleverness of Satan that he makes it all very reasonable and very rational and very plausible but it is still a

sin that will cast us into hell and steal from us the brightness and the beauty of heaven. It is still, therefore, a hateful thing in God's eyes and still will bring about our destruction.

So loved ones, will you deal with the things in your life as they need to be dealt with? I would encourage you strongly to make some resolutions for 1980. That's the only way you are ever going to redeem and reclaim the whole of your promised land and that personality of yours is precious, it is precious, it is unique, there is no other like it and there is no other to replace it in heaven. There will be no other to replace it in God's friendship. If you miss heaven, God will miss you and he will mourn over you. Your personality is a precious one and Jesus came to redeem it wholly and fully. I ask you to allow Him to do that and to take part in it with Him with all your heart. Let's pray.

Dear Lord, we thank you for your death on Calvary, the great mystery and great miracle that changed us and transformed us. Lord Jesus, if you can see any area where our will has no power in our lives then will you make that plain to us now so that we can deal with that carnality, so that we can come into a right relationship to you on the Cross. Then Lord, will you show us where our will is to exercise itself over our mind and emotions, where we are to make New Year resolutions, where we are to change our ways, to change the way we talk to people, to change the way we think. Then Lord Jesus, we pray that you would be pleased with the beauty and the glory of our lives that results from such resolutions. Lord, we thank you for 1980. Thank you for a whole decade stretching before us. Thank you, Lord Jesus, for the joy of looking forward to years where we don't need to fear because we know that our place with You is already settled and should we die tomorrow, we will be by Your side. Lord, thank you for that we can now enjoy the ride through this decade and we can enjoy it with you and have our lives made useful by your life and count for something in eternity. Lord, thank you. We give ourselves to you now for this New Year, the first year of the rest of our lives as newly born babes this day who will live for your glory. Now the grace of our Lord Jesus, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with each one of us now and evermore, amen.