

Why Striving to Serve God Won't Work Through Our Own Efforts

Starting the new year strong is one thing; ending strong is entirely another. Now that we are into February 2021, many have already given up on their New Year's resolutions and others are on the verge.

As humans, not only as believers, we all have an innate desire to better ourselves. Smokers want to quit; we all want to get in shape and eat healthy. We want to spend more time with family and less time on frivolous things, and many of us want to focus more on our financial goals that we haven't been disciplined enough to obtain over the years. Regardless of what it may be, as humans, we all have desires to grow, mature and succeed, but often we lack the wherewithal to achieve them.

The apostle Paul says in Philippians 2:13 (NLT), "For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him." Here, the great apostle tells us God is the one planting desires in our hearts, and He doesn't stop there. He doesn't merely give us a longing for righteousness and leave us trying to muster up our own strength and will power to get it done.

No way! He infuses a holy desire deep within us, and He also supplies the power and fortitude we need to accomplish it. The key to walking out our God-given dreams is to fully yield our hearts to Jesus in surrender and trust.

We must acknowledge that we are bankrupt on our own, and in Him we live, move and have our being. He is the source of all strength, self-control, endurance, discipline and so forth. Jesus even said to His disciples that, apart from Him, we can

do nothing (see John 15:5).

People of the world look within themselves for the motivation and ability to accomplish their goals. But as children of God, we are in the world but not of it, and we aren't supposed to be living like those who don't know God.

Not only does the Lord implant His purposes within us, He supplies the power and resources we need to accomplish those purposes as we surrender to Him and rely completely on His bounty. Unfortunately, even believers are striving and live by the arm of flesh. We came to Christ by no merit of our own, but we're trying to serve the Lord and work His will by our own power and might ... and it simply won't work!

On the latest episode of *Awaken Podcast*, Michael Lombardo speaks more deeply into this vital subject. {eoa}

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