



# New Year's Resolutions...

## *T h e N a t u r a l W a y*

*Text:* Jn. 15:4-5, Gal. 5:22-23, Phil. 2:13, Matt. 6:33

### *In my years...*

as a Christian I've come to this "new year's resolution"



thing more than 20 times. Frankly, the more I try to force myself to change, by

the will of my flesh, the more it seems to end in utter failure and ultimately discouragement for me. On the other hand, when I am "led" by the Holy Spirit (Who lives inside of me) to change a pattern in my life, (and without any help from me in the changing) it seems to work out to a victory won.

Self Control (and isn't this what it's all about?) is a "fruit" of the Spirit. (Gal. 5:22-23)

### ***Fruit Doesn't TRY to grow***

A tree doesn't wake up one day and say, "today I will produce an orange," no, fruit bearing is simply a natural outcome of water, healthy soil, the sun, weather conditions etc. All these elements are completely out of the tree's control. Jesus said in John 15:4-5 "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch CANNOT bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you, unless you abide in Me. 5 "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me, and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing." (NASB)



### ***So, when it comes to New Year's Resolutions,***

I believe they are conceived and achieved only by "abiding" in Christ. What does it mean to "abide" in Christ? The answer to this question is the answer to every resolution, and fruit bearing experience we will ever have as Christians. To abide means to "***make a permanent stay, or be at home with.***" In a practical sense, I'd say it's spending time with God in a real relationship. Bringing our burdens, our worship, intercession, our cares to Jesus in prayer; listening to that still, small voice of the Holy Spirit Who lives within us; immersing ourselves in His Word, applying and practicing the truths we learn from the Bible; naturally telling others about what God is doing in us, and what He wants to do in them....these things, this relationship with our Creator; these things are the water,

the good soil, the sun, and food that naturally produce the "good fruit" of \*love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness, and self control that the whole world is longing for and striving for. As Christians, we are not told to make the fruit, we are told to bear the fruit; to let the fruit grow on us. It is not our job to manufacture this "fruit," it's our Creator's job and pleasure to see this fruit manifest in His children.

Our only job is to cooperate with God Who is at work in us. (Phil. 2:13)

So, this New Year let's resolve to know our God better, more intimately; to seek Him diligently, seeking first His Kingdom and His righteousness; and all the other things, the fruit and stuff will come...naturally.... in time...as we abide in Christ. Peace In, Big D:)