

Grace Commitments for the New Year

New Year's Resolutions. People often make them, and then they are by the wayside by the third week of January. Perhaps there is a different way we can consider things we want to do in the coming year. Mind you, these always don't come automatically. Perhaps we could call these commitments just that—commitments. How about "Grace Commitments." That is, by God's grace, we will do these things, and with His constant help. And when we veer away from them, instead of feeling guilty, rather we start right back where we left off to do them! That's part of the nature of God's grace, anyway.

This is not an exhaustive list, though it is meant to spur your thinking along these lines. The Grace Commitments we could make for 2022 could be:

1. **To regularly (daily) read God's Word**, so we know Him and His will for us more fully. There are a number of helps to aid you to read through the Bible in a year (or less). We have ones from World Missionary Press available. If we commit to reading God's Word daily, then that aids us in reading through the Bible in a year (or less).
2. **To regularly (daily) engage in significant prayer.** We often pray at mealtimes and whatnot, and we tell people we will pray for their concerns. Yet will we take the actual time really to pray and intercede to the Lord in an extended fashion?
3. **To talk about the Lord Jesus Christ** to someone weekly or more often. This is talking of necessarily bringing someone to Christ for salvation, but to speak of Him beyond generalities. For instance, to share our testimony, or to tell what Christ has been doing in our lives lately.
4. **To enjoy being with the people of God in worship regularly** (weekly). Someone has said that many Christians feel like regular attendance is once per month. Really? God has appointed in His Word that believers congregate weekly—yes, on the Lord's Day, unless altogether impossible—to worship Him and fellowship with other Christians. And I have noticed that, since COVID, more Christians wanting to be together in-person to worship Christ.
5. **To worship and fellowship with a mind to give**, rather than to receive. Offer your time and voice and attention to God and to others as you come to church.
6. **To give regularly to the work of Christ through the Church.** The local church remains the essential activity of the Holy Spirit in this age, until Jesus returns. Let's make sure it receives the "firstfruits" of God's bounty—before our offerings or donations to other ministries or charities.
7. **To encourage specifically at least one person per week in the church.** Sometimes this begins with just getting to know someone else in the church. Take the opportunity to seek out someone you don't normally talk to, and talk to them! Remember that God thinks someone else is so significant that He gave His Son for, and we may also go out of our way to appreciate their significance, too. One great way to encourage others is to send a personal note through the mail.
8. **To pray for a specific person or family in the church weekly.** We have a printed annual church directory that is a very useful tool in this matter. This also may aid you in doing #6 above.
9. **To volunteer or agree to serve** when asked for a specific ministry in the church. If you want to learn what your spiritual gift is, or you want to develop your spiritual gift(s), the greatest opportunity is to jump in to serve the Church, even in places you might not really appreciate.
10. **To be noun-adjective-adverb Christians.** That is, to be a Christian (one who loves and serves the Lord Jesus Christ), to be Christian people (reflecting our love for the Lord Jesus Christ), in a Christian manner (to live as He would command us to live).