

Make Next Year Your Best Yet

1 Samuel 14:1-23

December 29, 2019

It's not uncommon at times like this to take a little walk down memory lane and think about the year past. If you haven't already done that over the last week or so, I would encourage you to take some time over the next couple of days before the New Year takes off to do just that.

If I asked you to tell me about the best year you've ever had, could you do it? What if I asked you about the worst year you've ever had...would you be able to tell me about that year? Was it last year?

Little **CHANGES** over time make a huge **DIFFERENCE**.

I can illustrate that for you from the story of Jonathan's surprising victory over the Philistine garrison in Micmash, a town located about 7 miles northeast of Jerusalem, that is recorded in **1 Samuel 14**.

Let's look at 6 little changes from this story that I believe can make a huge difference towards making 2020 our best year yet...

1. Start one new **DISCIPLINE**.

Disciplines/Habits close the gap between what you want and what you achieve. You go from being an "I'm gonna" kind of person to a person of action.

2. Stop one old **ACTION**.

Don't just do more, do more of what matters most. It's not about adding another To Do item to your list. It's about focusing on the little things that will actually help make the greatest difference in your life.

3. Pick one person to **EMPOWER**.

Your group/organization won't become stronger by what you do, but by who you add value to/empower.

4. Develop one new **APPROACH**.

Sometimes, it's not what we're doing that's the problem, it's how we are doing it. You can do the right things in the wrong way.

5. Start one new RELATIONSHIP.

If you want to change who you are, change who you are with.

6. Take one STEP OF FAITH.

Faith-filled human initiative can serve as an entrance point for the Lord's saving action.

6 Jonathan said to the young man who carried his armor, "Come, let us go over to the garrison of these uncircumcised. It may be that the Lord will work for us, for nothing can hinder the Lord from saving by many or by few."

"Everyone who's ever taken a shower has had an idea. It's the person who gets out of the shower, dries off and does something about it who makes a difference." Faith that doesn't result in action isn't really faith to begin with.

What new discipline will you start in 2020?

What one action will you stop that will open the door to growth and impact in your life?

Who are you going to bless this coming year? Who's your ONE going to be?

What will you do differently that you are already doing now?

Who are you going to develop a relationship with this year that will impact the both of you for the better?

What's your step of faith going to be in 2020? What will you trust God for in the coming year?

Let's talk about making next year about best yet...

1. What was your best year to date...worst year to date?
2. What was it that motivated Jonathan to suggest to his armor-bearer that they head over to the Philistine garrison without telling anyone else (v.1)?
3. How do we become "sideline" people and what can we do to change that?
4. If someone who didn't know you was trying to determine what kind of person you are, what would the people around you be saying about you (v.3)?
5. What did Jonathan believe about the LORD (v.6)?
6. Do you have someone in your life that says "I am with you heart and soul" (v.7)?
7. What did Saul think about the LORD (v.18)?
8. Why did Saul ask Ahijah to "Withdraw your hand" (v.19)?
9. What impact did Jonathan's actions have on other people (v.21-22)?
10. What little change will you make as you enter 2020 that you believe will make a huge difference in your life over time?