

Following the Pattern in the New Year

Joe Slater

What do you suppose God's people were doing on New Year's Day roughly 3500 years ago? Would you believe they were putting up the tabernacle? "*On the first day of the first month, you shall set up the tabernacle of the tent of meeting*" (Exodus 40:1). "*And it came to pass in the first month of the second year, on the first day of the month, that the tabernacle was raised up*" (40:17).

Earlier in Exodus (chapters 25-31) God had given Moses explicit and detailed instructions about the tabernacle and all of its furnishings, beginning with this exhortation: "*According to all that I show you, that is, the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all its furnishings, just so shall you make it*" (25:9). The Lord repeated this command several times as He specified the dimensions, materials, design, etc., of the tabernacle and its furnishings. "*And see to it that you make them according to the pattern which was shown you on the mountain*" (25:40). "*And you shall raise up the tabernacle according to its pattern which you were shown on the mountain*" (26:30). "*As it was shown you on the mountain, so shall they make it*" (27:8).

Moses and the Israelites took God seriously! "*Thus Moses did; according to all that the Lord had commanded him, so he did*" (Exodus 40:16).

The tabernacle and things associated with it were a shadow of the better things Jesus Christ established in the New Covenant. The Hebrews writer taught that we ought to be even more diligent to be faithful in the New Covenant than Moses and the Israelites were in the Old Covenant (Hebrews 2:1-4; 10:28-31).

In this new year, let us renew our determination to follow God's pattern set forth in the New Testament!

Today

Today, I will live as if it is the most important day I possess, because it is actually the only day I have.

Today, I will whine and complain less. I will be thankful more, because I know that gratitude makes a better person out of me.

Today, I will criticize less and praise more, because the people I love need to know that I love and approve of them.

Today, I will take more time with God my Father and less with earthly pleasures. I know that I need His strength and guidance.

Today, I will pray more and play less. I want my heavenly Father to know my heart, to hear my concerns, and to realize how thankful I am to be His child.

Today, I will remember my brother more and myself less. I will consider his feelings, his needs and wants more and my own a little less.

Today, I will speak of Jesus more and my other interests less. Today, He must increase, and I must decrease (John 3:30).

Today, I will remember the souls of all men. I will remember the person who is rude to me still has an eternal soul. I will remember the youth and the weak might see me do something wrong and imitate it. I will remember that my good may encourage another to do right.

Today, I will remember that I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live but Christ who lives in me. Today I will live by faith in the one who loved me and gave Himself for me.

--Phil Sanders (via *Bulletin Gold*)

Playing Second Fiddle

"Do not exalt yourself in the king's presence, and do not claim a place among great men" (Proverbs 25:6).

An orchestra conductor was once asked what the hardest position was to fill. His answer: "Second fiddle." It is not a position where one is exalted by self or by others. It serves to assist the first-chair fiddler.

Do you know any second-fiddle people?

The Bible tells us about a fellow who was content to play the role of second fiddle. His name was Andrew. He was a follower of John the Baptist, but when John said, "Behold, the Lamb of God," off went Andrew in search of Him. There are three places where we see Andrew playing second fiddle. Here they are:

1. John 1:35-42 shows us that Andrew was so excited about finding Jesus that he ran to tell someone. That someone was his brother, Peter.

2. In the second instance, Jesus was preaching to about 5000 men along with women and children. Jesus wanted to feed them when they became hungry. Philip complained that there was no food available to feed such a crowd. Someone found a boy with five loaves and two fish. Guess who that someone was: Andrew! (John 6:5-13).

3. In the third place, some Greeks (Gentiles) came to see Jesus. We don't know why they came, nor did His disciples know. When they asked to see Jesus, Philip didn't know what to do. He went to Andrews and said, "These Gentiles want to see Jesus." Andrew didn't have to wonder what to do. He and Philip brought the matter to Jesus (John 12:20-22).

In all three episodes, Andrew did something important – he took people to meet Jesus. First, he took his brother; next, he took a young boy; finally, he took some strangers.

Do you know what is interesting about all of this? Andrew never became one of the prominent apostles. He didn't seem to care about that. Second fiddle is OK!

--Richard Dent (via *Old Paths*)