



BIBLEWAY MINISTRIES

MAKING A DIFFERENCE—THE BIBLE WAY



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Many prepare for the new year with celebrations, while others prepare New Year's resolutions which sometimes will last anywhere from one week to an entire month. But what can we do to really prepare for a new year? We all know that we should grow in our walk with God, value our families more, and accept the challenge to be a better person. But all other items are so far down on the list that we struggle to move beyond these priorities. However, it is the accomplishment of these priorities that puts the matters of each year in proper perspective.

Ike Reighard wrote an article entitled "Four Important Friends That Every Pastor Needs." As I read the article, it occurred to me that these friends will be beneficial to us all as we move into the new year. For many of you, this year has included a combination of delight, disappointment, and discouragement. Some of you were happy to set foot into 2014, and some of you are happy to move on to the new beginnings of another year.

As you start your year with new relationships, look for a Developer. This is someone who will help in your spiritual development as a person. This is the individual who brings out the best in you, the person who simply cares for you. As you get older, it is important to have such a person in your life. If you are fortunate to be married to this kind of person, you are indeed blessed. The developers are the people who dare to encourage you when no one else will. They are the ones who will tell you that you can make it if you try, after everyone else has given you a dozen reasons why you cannot. We all need a friend who believes in us!

For 2015, you will also need a Designer. This is the person who is the mentor. They can impart to you words that will provide inspiration. They can always

find a word in Scripture or life lessons which are able to remind you that you are never the only one who has experienced or is presently experiencing a particular ordeal. This person also reminds you of two things:

1. You were not an accident in the eyes of God; and,
2. God has a plan for your life!

Two simple-but-powerful truths!

The next friend is the Disturber. This person may utilize one or both of the previous skills. But what makes the disturber important is that he or she will challenge you when you fall short in your abilities, realize your shortcomings, and even drift into wayward thinking. The disturber reminds you that rather than to lay there in the pool of self-pity, it is better to pick yourself up, dust yourself off, and keep going. The disturber will dare to ask you the right questions that will cause you to ask, what is God trying to teach me during this moment in time? Sometimes we cry when we find we've been slow learners and have wasted time — all because there has been no disturber in our life to cause us to ask the question.

The final friend is the Discerner. Although it has been appropriate to summarize the thoughts behind the developer, designer, and disturber, there is no better way to describe the discerner than in Reighard's own words:

In a lifetime of relationships, perhaps only a handful of people are willing to play this vital role because it requires mutual vulnerability. More popularly known as accountability partners, discerners bring the gift of spiritual insight into our lives. They know how to speak the truth in love. They know how to exhort and rebuke, seeking to keep their friend on the right track. They are also vulnerable — the true friends who will walk into the room of your life while everyone else is walking out. (cont. next page)

I'm not asking you to forsake any other goals that you've set for 2015. I'm merely suggesting that you include the pursuit of these four friends in your list of objectives. These friends will be the glue, cement, and motivation for accomplishing any other goals that you set!

The very best to you and yours as you don this new year!

Dr. L.W. Edwards



Q. In view of the recent events in Ferguson and New York City, what is the best way for the Church to achieve racial reconciliation?

A. Before I answer this question, let me say that people with different

backgrounds and experiences view this issue from diverse perspectives. This explains the sometimes-dramatic difference in responses to the question of reconciliation.

For example, notice the answers provided by two state representatives who grew up amidst the turmoil of racial tensions in Mississippi:

Rep. Pickering:

. . . I think what we're seeing now is the closing of a tragic chapter in Mississippi's history, one that shaped everyone in the state. Now there is unity where there was once division.

That unity and the relationships built in situations like the Philadelphia Coalition were key in finding solutions to build communities and improve the lives of people in Mississippi. For a long time, Mississippi's experience defined the state in a negative way; hopefully now, with the work the state has done and continues to do, we can be defined in a positive way.

I think that we would love to be known as the state that leads the nation in efforts toward racial reconciliation, and I think that we have made more progress than in other parts of the country. The good news is that Mississippi has led at every level — and in particular at the local level, the state has turned a corner in racial reconciliation, in racial justice, in civil rights.

. . . I would like to think that in ([Read full article](#))



Dr. Edwards is available to speak at churches and special events. If you would like to have him as your special guest, here is his contact information:

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