



February 1, 2007

Did You Say “Ouch?”

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It happens to all of us. We receive that little reminder in the mail that politely says, “Time for a check-up.” Has it been six months since that last dental visit? Has it been a year since my last pap test? My, how time flies! Here we are, at the end of January, and perhaps we should remind ourselves that it is time for a check-up – how are we doing with the goals we set for 2007? Did I hear you say, “Ouch?!” Occasionally accountability can be downright . . . painful.

One goal might have been to read through the Bible or the New Testament during 2007. How have we managed in January? As you know, everyday life can swoop down on us, distract us, and draw us away from our daily meditation on God’s word. However, great blessings come to us when we allow the breath of God to enter each day. *“All scripture is breathed out by God and is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and training in righteousness”* (2 Timothy 3:16).

Another goal might have been to lose weight and/or get in better physical shape during 2007. How much weight have we lost? Are we in better shape? I’m afraid I heard you say, “ouch,” again. Losing weight and getting in shape is not about trying to look like Denise Austin. Most of us simply want to feel better. In feeling better, we hope to have more vim and vigor. Having more vim and vigor will enable us to be better wives, mothers, and Christian servants. Paul said we are *“earthen vessels”* (2 Cor. 4:7). Put another way, our bodies are clay pots. As best we can, we should we try to keep our clay pots in good functioning condition. In doing so, we can better serve others and allow our light to shine.

One more goal might have been to be more positive throughout 2007. Are we more positive? Do we try to see the good in ourselves and in others? There’s that ‘ouch’ again! Negative things come about usually through unwholesome thoughts and ungodly actions, like unforgiveness, complaints, and gossip. The Philippian letter is overflowing with inspired remedies for negativism. Paul said, *“Finally, brethren, whatever things are true,”* whatever things are noble, just, pure, lovely, and of good report, *“if there is any virtue and anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things”* (4:8).

What were your goals for 2007? Setting goals is certainly a worthwhile way to accomplish good things, even spiritual things. We take small steps each day, and remind ourselves, periodically, it’s time for a check-up. Finally we look back over the year to see we’ve made a giant leap. All of a sudden, the sacrifice of time is merely an investment, the physical discipline is worthwhile, and yes, even the ‘ouches’ seem a distant memory.

Today’s Verse: *“Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”* Phil. 3:13-14

Today’s Challenge: Read the book of Philippians – only four chapters

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