



**This New Years Eve allowed a new dimension of celebration for over a hundred young people and parents, ringing in the New Year with new traditions in a hopeful future.**

**The elements of commemoration of a New Year are often experienced as good food, music, dancing, party decorations and the camaraderie of friends and family old and new. The expectations of the grand, resetting goals for prosperity, and the anticipated achievement of all sorts of "good stuff" merge with the merriment and joy.**

**But let us part from this appealing portrait for a few moments and re-examine the eves of quite a different time as recounted by a young veteran of Lifeway's recovery program. He recalled the times of New Years Eve as a time to get loaded, to succumb to peer and culture pressure to drink until drunk and just do something that was "over the top." He had no other desires nor did he recognize that his only resolution was to get more intoxicated than he ever did before and score higher than he ever did before in hopes of achieving.....what? What did he care? Bah-boom.**

**This New Year's Eve, however, was among the eves that Joel could remember. This evening Joel held a glass so full not of bad dreams and empty goals but of the spirit of a purposeful life. The toast this evening was to uncountable friends and immeasurable love and living his life with a dynamism to not only accomplish his own dreams but to also help others reconstruct their own.**

**The evening began with a Speaker's Meeting, with the benches of a meeting room supporting the young people and families in their new right of possessing sobriety and deepening its hope.**

**Enormous fun and games filled the evening, alternating gaming events with step meetings for the young people (and also for the parents). Josh's younger sibling of 9 won the dance contest, being the smiles and entertainment for the midnighters. Cindy (a parent) serenaded the group in song. Guitar Hero, ping-pong and pool tournament competition intensified appetites for the millions of snacks that lined tables from end to end (and around the corner some). The drink of the evening, referred to as "The Potion" and "diabetes in a cup" was made by the kids with orange sherbet and orange soda and oranges and more orange.**

**Midnight New Years Eve at Times Square could not have been any more celebratory than was this gathering of sober acquaintances. A grand time was owned by all and all without the use of mind-changing chemicals. This new sober style.....well, it is just way over the top.**