

Personal/Small Group Sermon Study

Week of January 1, 2023 A.D.

SETTING PERSONAL GOALS BY FAITH

Without goals, life is absolutely meaningless. Why are goals important to my life? What kind of goals are worthy of my time, money, and effort? Let's talk about that in this study.

(Note: For every question which appears in this study, always give the reasoning and/or the explanation for each of your answers.)

Read Ephesians 2:1-5

1. Refer to verses 1 and 2. What is the meaning of these two verses? In your answer, please discuss and explain what is meant by: (a) dead in your transgressions and sins; (b) in which you used to live; (c) when you followed the ways of this world; (d) the ruler of the kingdom of the air; and (e) the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient.
2. Please explain the meaning of verse 3.
3. Refer to verses 4 and 5. What is the meaning of the word "transformation"? What are some common "transformations" which a typical person may experience in his or her life? Please discuss and explain the "transformation" which is described here by Paul. Can a person be a Christian without experiencing a genuine transformation?

Read Romans 12:1-2

4. What is the meaning of verse 1? In your answer, please explain what is meant by: (a) brothers; (b) God's mercy; (c) offer; (d) living sacrifices; (e) holy; (f) pleasing to God; and (g) spiritual act of worship.
5. Is verse 2 a command or a suggestion? What is the meaning of verse 2? Can a person be a Christian without seeking to obey verse 2? How and when does a Christian fulfill and/or accomplish the behavior pattern described in verse 2?

Read Philippians 3:12-15

6. Was Paul a "purpose driven" person? If so, what was Paul's purpose? Does God want all Christians to be "purpose driven"? If so, why? If not, why not?

7. Does Paul have a goal? How important are goals in the life of every person? Are all goals beneficial and/or worth the effort? If not, what distinguishes a beneficial and worthy goal from those goals which are not beneficial or worthy?

Read 1 Corinthians 6:19-20

8. Please analyze, critique, and discuss this statement: "The only goals which will be blessed by God are those goals which honor God."

Read 2 Corinthians 5:6-10

9. Does "walking by faith" require that we "depend on God"? Does God bless us when we depend on God? What are the immediate and the long-term blessings of pursuing goals that are pleasing to God?

Read 1 Corinthians 16:13-14

10. Will God bless and/or honor any goal which is not motivated by love? What goals are you currently pursuing (a) which are motivated by love? and (b) which are not motivated primarily by something other than by love? Please explain why you are pursuing each particular goal.

Read Zechariah 4:6 and John 6:63

11. Can a person achieve goals that will be blessed by God if those goals are not directed and motivated by the Holy Spirit? How does a person receive direction and motivation from the Holy Spirit?

Read Joshua 1:8

12. How do you define: (a) prosperity and (b) success? Do you want to be prosperous and successful? If not, why not? If so, what is your plan of action to achieve prosperity and success?

Consider: As followers of Christ, we are to be the most highly motivated and goal-oriented people on the planet. We are called to love and to serve the God of the universe and His Son Jesus who is our Savior. And, God wants to transform us from being ordinary people into being fearless and energetic ambassadors for Christ and His Kingdom. Are you willing to allow God to complete His transformation in you? "You think about that!" Amen.