

# GOAL SETTING

## MENTORING TOOLS

*<sup>13</sup>Now listen, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money.” <sup>14</sup>Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. <sup>15</sup>Instead, you ought to say, “If it is the Lord’s will, we will live and do this or that.” <sup>16</sup>As it is, you boast in your arrogant schemes. All such boasting is evil. <sup>17</sup>If anyone, then, knows the good they ought to do and doesn’t do it, it is sin for them.*

– JAMES 4:13-17

Few things in life are accomplished by accident, which is why it’s important for us to set specific goals. However, in our planning, we should always seek the Lord’s guidance and not simply aim for our own earthly ambitions.

Whenever a new goal comes to mind, we should consider whether it is in line with God’s will. Some topics may be scripturally clear, but many are not, so we must also examine our motives. Are we seeking to please God or ourselves? Are we pursuing money, power, or self-advancement without considering its pitfalls ([1 Timothy 6:9-10](#))? Does a desire for holiness and God’s glory influence our plans?

What’s more, we must hold our goals loosely in case God, in His providence, changes them. As Christians, we are servants of Christ and should readily yield to Him. So if our plans are upended, we must ultimately trust the Lord’s goodness, omniscience, and wisdom because He alone knows the best path for us.

As with many of the leadership qualities we will explore in the months to come, goal setting is a whole-life exercise. It is impossible to set sustainable, scalable objectives for your business that don’t take into account your personal, relational and spiritual growth as well. And not just for yourself as a leader, but for every employee and contractor with a role to play.

As business leaders, we tend to think in terms of performance and achievement. “To whom much is given, much is required.” We feel responsible, therefore, to plan, invest and execute well. It’s the role God has called us to, and we will ultimately answer to Him for our actions. But the full counsel of scripture makes it clear that the Lord is much more interested in your spiritual growth than in your business objectives.

Now often, Christian leaders will bow up on that last sentence and say, *“My purpose in business is to honor God in what I do and how I do it, so my success is an indicator of my focus, obedience and spiritual health. If I’m not planning and executing well, then I’m not faithfully stewarding the time and influence God has given me.”* We must take caution with that mentality, though, because not all execution and performance is ours to determine. We plant and water, but God supplies the growth. (1 Corinthians 3:6) As has already been noted, God in His providence may lead us down a path for a season and then abruptly change our direction with little notice or explanation.

## TYPES OF GOALS

If Christlikeness is our ultimate objective, our motives and personal disciplines are perhaps more important than our performance. The ends don’t justify the means, right? If we perform well but our motives are corrupt or we’re still indulging our secret sins, then is Christ really glorified in us?

When we think wholistically about ourselves – who we are, what’s tripping us up, and where we’re heading – we see goal setting on at least three different levels:

- PERFORMANCE GOALS**      Specific, time-centered and measurable objectives.
- BEHAVIORAL GOALS**      Actions and habits focused on *how* to reach your goals.
- PRUNING GOALS**          What you need to eliminate that has been hindering your success.

Take a moment and complete the exercise on the next page. As you think through these different areas, take it easy on yourself and set small, short-term goals that are within your power to achieve.

<b>PERFORMANCE GOALS</b>	Specific, time-centered and measurable objectives.
<b>BEHAVIORAL GOALS</b>	Actions and habits focused on <i>how</i> to reach your goals.
<b>PRUNING GOALS</b>	What you need to eliminate that has been hindering your success.

**FAITH.** How will you strengthen your relationship with God through His word, prayer, fellowship and service?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**FAMILY.** How will you strengthen your marriage and family?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**FINANCES.** How will you steward your finances and demonstrate generosity?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**WORK.** What are your personal goals related to your role in the organization?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**HEART.** What change do you want to see in your physical, social and emotional self?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

*I have come that they may have life and have it to the full.*

– Jesus

*We plan the way we want to live, but only GOD makes us able to live it.*  
– PROVERBS 16:9 (MSG)

We've already noted that while we get to plan the way you want to live, only God gives us the power and energy to actually make the transformation. Why? Because God provides the three things we all must have to reach our goals and change our life.

#### **WE NEED GOD'S SPIRIT TO EMPOWER US.**

God's Spirit can help us to make changes we can't make on our own. It's not based on willpower; it's based on God power. It's not based on trying; it's based on trusting. Zechariah 4:6 says, *"You will not succeed by your own strength or by your own power, but by my Spirit," says the Lord All-Powerful*" (NCV).

#### **WE NEED GOD'S WORD TO GUIDE US.**

The Bible is the owner's manual for life. The more we read it, study it, memorize it, and meditate on it, the more successful and fulfilled we're going to be in life. When Joshua was given the great dream of taking over the Promised Land — a goal that would take him the rest of his life — God had these words for him: *"This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success"* (Joshua 1:8 NASB).

#### **WE NEED GOD'S PEOPLE TO SUPPORT US.**

We will not be able to reach your goals on our own. It takes a team to fulfill a dream! A crowd can't support us, but a small group can. They know when we're sick, when we're having a tough time, when we need a break. We can share your goals and your successes and failures, and they will rejoice with us and encourage us to keep going. We don't just need accountability; we need encouragement and companionship with people who understand the weight we carry. Ecclesiastes 4:12 says, *"By yourself you're unprotected. With a friend you can face the worst. Can you round up a third? A three-stranded rope isn't easily snapped"* (The Message).

What people around you, including this Trusted Advisor Forum, can you rely for support as you pursue your goals?

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1 "Setting Goals," In Touch Ministries, <https://www.intouch.org/read/magazine/daily-devotions/setting-goals>

2 "Types of Goals," CBMC, Brent Vawter/Ralph Larimore

3 "Three Things You Need," Rick Warren, <https://pastorrick.com/devotional/english/the-three-things-you-need-to-reach-your-goals>