

Happy New Year!

A few goals for 2011

12/26/10

Setting goals is important. People who set goals tend to get things done. People who do not set goals tend to not to accomplish as much.

However goal setting needs to have a good foundation. Goals ought to reflect priorities and our priorities need to be based on God's Word. For example while setting a goal to eat less and exercise more is a worthy goal it ought to be in line with our priorities of:

God – first
Family – second
Work – third
Etc.

While eating less and exercise more is a good goal it ought to be place below another goal.

“Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.” Proverbs 4:23

We tend to “guard” things that are extremely:

Valuable

Money is pretty important in our society and as a result we place it in a place where believe it will be protected. The bank. They place it inside of a giant steel vault and it would not be uncommon to see a uniformed police office inside of the bank for extra protection.

Important

The House tends to be a pretty important place and as a result it is will guarded to keep out those who are not invited in.

Unique

Fort Knox is the Depository of our nation's gold. It is protected by numerous layers of physical security, alarms, video cameras, armed guards, and the Army units based at Fort Knox. Why? Because gold it valuable, important and unique.

In 2011, I think it would be an excellent idea for us to start considering the importance of our “hearts”. Not the thing that pumps our blood but the thing God is so very passionate about. Your heart. The real you. You heart is valuable, unique, and important and if you don't actively and aggressive work to “guard” it, it will come under tremendous attack from our enemy the devil.

The Bible tells us that, ... “everything you do flows from it.” Really??? Everything? Absolutely.

If your heart is in good sharp, good decisions are made. Decisions that honor God, bless others and benefit you.

The opposite is also true, when your heart is hurting, wounded and under attack, bad decisions are made. Decisions that dishonor God, unhurt other people and devastate you and your relationships.

If you are being selfish, mean, and hateful – it's a heart condition. If you are being kind, loving and joyful – it's a heart condition.

Below are a few ideas of biblical ways that you can begin to actively and aggressively work to “guard your heart.”

1. Stop sinning

“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”
Romans 3:23

We are all sinners by

Nature – we were born sinners

Choice – we choose to sin

Practice – we keep doing the same sin over and over.

After the civil war was over and the slaves had been set free many slaves decided to stay with their former master and continue to do what they were told. They were set free but they chose to live as slaves.

The New Testament says that is exactly how many Christian choose to live today. Christ died to set them free, the Holy Spirit has given them the power to be free, but just like those former slaves we still choose to obey our old master, sin.

“Do not let sin control the way you live, do not give in to its lustful desires ... we are no longer slaves to sin” Romans 6:2

No one can be delivered from his sin until he gets to the place in his life where he discovers his need for a daily, hourly and by the minute relationship to the Savior.

“O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” Romans 7:24

2. Restore my relationships

“If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.” Romans 12:18

Certainly, there are some people who just want to fight and be angry with you. You have tried to make peace with this individual but they just keep on being mean and hateful. You cannot force someone to be in a relationship with you who chooses not to be.

The scripture is not talking about this person. The scripture is teaching us that there are people who I have offended and if I would humble myself and reach out to them, a healthy relationship would be possible.

Being “right” is never more important than the relationship.

If that was the case we would all still be left in our sins and without a Savior. Jesus was “right” but somehow He found a way to connect with us. He didn’t let his “righteousness” keep him from finding a way to connect to us.

He forgave me

He forgives me

He will forgive me

3. Give up my grudges

“Bear with each other and forgive each other whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you” Col 3:13

What’s a grudge? A grudge is a deep ongoing resentment that we cultivate in our hearts against someone else.

A grudge is an unforgiving spirit that leads to unforgiving attitudes and unforgiving actions.

Harbouring a grudge is about nursing a dislike for someone.

What you need to know is that grudges are dangerous because they are destructive.

Grudges destroy marriages.

Grudges break up families.

Grudges ruin friendships.

Grudges split churches.

4. Forget your failures

“Forgetting what is behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on towards the goal for which God has called me heavenwards in Christ Jesus.” Phil 3:13-14

I don’t think the scripture is asking us to not remember our mistakes as this would be impossible. I believe that God is telling us to not let your past be your future.

Otherwise, how could these men have accomplished so much for God, given their rather tainted background:

Saul – Paul – remember his former job?

I don't think for a second that Paul forgot that he used to murder Christians.

David – remember Bathsheba?

I don't think David ever forgot that he was an adulterer.

Peter – remember the little girl that accused Peter of being a follower of Jesus Christ around the nice warm fire, where Peter denied he even knew Jesus 3 different times?

I don't think Peter ever forgot that he was a liar.

In other words, don't let your past failures keep you from doing something great for God.

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