

**Intro:** Most of us will make some New Year's resolutions!

- Top 10 Resolutions for 2016
- Results
- What is missing? (SPIRITUAL GOAL!!!)

Philippians 3:7-17

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**1. Paul Models For Us How To Set A Spiritual Goal.**

Vs 7-11

**Know Christ:** Lit = *I want to know Jesus more fully and completely!*

- Greater Righteousness: I want to see greater level of spiritual transformation
- Know Christ better: I want to move beyond a surface relationship
- Know power of resurrection in my life: I want to experience Spiritual power in my life (Over sin...In Prayer)
- Know Fellowship of Suffering: I want to be able to walk through difficult times like He did..WITH Him
- Be like Him in His death: I want to be willing, able, successful...in living my life for God...Others
- Be like Him in His resurrection: I want to see God bring about amazing NEW LIFE in dead things I have now

I want to challenge you this morning: Set a Spiritual Goal ...Start where you are!

- Know the bible better
- More effective in prayer
- Overcome a specific sin I'm struggling with
- Find a place of ministry
- Be more regular in worship
- Give more

**APPLIC:** So, if you want to do that, look with me at what Paul does...he shows us how to be successful

**2. Make the Right Decision: Choose What You Lose: Sacrifice.**

Vs 8

Before you can go forward, before you can gain...you have to lose

This is where many, if not MOST of us fall short! We ADD TO our life...without every counting the cost, and saying

- > Few, if any of us have ANY more bandwidth
- > When we say, "I'm not going to have to change anything" I'm just going to ADD....
- When we do that we destined to fail

Paul said:

I have made a mental decision! Rearranged my thinking A change has taken place: Gain has now been counted as loss!

- Decision: What was to my profit...I have decided to count as loss: I have made decision Done in the past  
Choice I continue to make *Continue to have implications and ongoing decision*
- Loss: Removal, Injury, Lack  
Those things that were important to me...I have laid to the side...Consider them no longer important
- Reason: I have something in my life that is more important, more valuable, more essential to than what I lose  
Knowing Christ was more important to him than his family, his heritage, his RELIGION  
*When you religion gets in the way of your relationship with Jesus, get rid of RELIGION*  
*Religion is about WHAT you do...RELATIONSHIP IS about WHO YOU KNOW*

**Quest:** *What are you willing to lose? Comfort; Time; Money; Effort? All depends on what you are going to gain, right?*

**APPL:** Gym on Friday: Worst day in over a year. Ten times I wanted to stop: Never did. Didn't do it well, did it

Thursday: At the hospital: And then at the Rehab with someone suffered massive stroke...

Lose a little time...Little money...Little comfort Small price to pay

That is what Paul said: I lost some things..You think it is a lot...for me...Small price to pay to know Jesus way I do!

**3. Make the Right Preparation. Get Ready (4)**

Vs 12-14

If you are going to be successful, part of the 8%, There are a couple of things you have to do to get ready

Like Painting: It is all in the preparation! Paint...ONLY CHANGES THE COLOR! Doesn't do ANYTHING else!

- Accept: I'm not THERE yet! Obtained: Lit = *I don't yet have it in my hands. I am not holding on to it Arrived*
- Forget what is behind: Forget: *To put something out of your mind*

How do you do that? When you have made a mistake, or you have been hurt, you have been harmed, and you don't want to live in the past anymore, instead you want to prepare yourself to go forward

Find Forgiveness:

- >Forgive yourself: I have made a mistake: I have sinned: I have fallen short 1Jn 1:9
- >Forgive others: Pray and release the other person from heart: Place them in God's hands Mk 11:25
- Mark 11:25: "When you stand praying and remember" FORGIVE

a. May mean making amends:

- For yourself: Mt 18:15 One on one
- For Them: Mt 5:23 Altar

In order to go forward...we have to do in a spiritually "Clean" way!

- Asking for Insight 2 Cor 1:3-5 Comforts us
- Express Faith: Heb 11:1-2 God, I don't SEE it yet...Don't see how..I believe YOU!

**APP:** Just saying...I want things to be different...is not enough...YOU have to take responsibility and PREPARE YOURSELF

**4. Pursue Your Goal In The Right Way.**

Vs 12-17

Once you have prepared correctly, then you have to Go After it Correctly!

- Pick One Area vs 13: ONE THING I DO!  
You cant do it all. Narrow your goals down to something that is important, bite sized and manageable  
*We overestimate what we can do in the short term, and underestimate what we can do in the long term*
- Make a plan you can live with  
>Im going to eliminate THIS  
>I'm going to change THIS  
>I'm going to ADD this!
- Pursue it with all your energy:  
Straining Lit = *to stretch out* Runner  
Pressing Lit = *to follow after in order to possess* Hunter
- Identify a Partner who will encourage, walk with and hold accountable!  
Vs 17: *Join with others in following my example*  
Find people that are walking the same way, pursuing the same goal..WALK TOGETHER WITH THEM!  
IT is SO MUCH EASIER when you aren't walking alone!

**CONCL:**

- What is your goal? Prayer? Sermon Series  
Bible? Great groups starting  
Ministry? Wonderful Opportunities

**EX:** I want to be able to pray more...Better...More Effectively...See God work

1. Pick the Goal
  2. Make the Sacrifice: (Unless Providentially hindered, BE HERE! NOTES, DO WHAT TEACHES Rearrange; Get CD's
  3. Practice every day: Go to bed earlier  
Get a notebook  
Do it, even when I don't feel like it
- Do it for First 3 months of the year...You will be amazed!

**EX:** Bible:

1. Get the brochure
2. Pick one
3. Rearrange your schedule
4. GO...keep going until Summer

**EX:** Ministry:

1. Call one of our Pastors
2. Pick one to serve in
3. Rearrange schedule: NO one has lots of spare time...Going to have to give something up
4. Do it...until Summer

**EX:** Forgive:

1. Make the Call
2. Write a Script
3. Determine...Doesn't matter how they respond, I'm going to honor God
4. Do it!