



WEEK 1: Who Before Do

January 2, 2022

Ephesians 5:15–17 - Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, ¹⁶ making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. ¹⁷ Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

HABITS, not intentions determine your destination

Galatians 6:7–9 - Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap. ⁸ For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life. ⁹ And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.

CAUTION in the self-help season: The self-help industry mixes truth with error and can be both helpful and harmful!

How can it be HARMFUL? It seeks to answer BIG LIFE QUESTIONS God has already revealed

Question 1: How do I DEFINE “the good life”?

Question 2: How do I ACHIEVE “the good life”?

Genesis 3:4–5 - But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die. ⁵ For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

How can it be HELPFUL?

Luke 16:8 - The master commended the dishonest manager for his shrewdness. For the sons of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than the sons of light.

While the word “HABITS” doesn’t show up anywhere in the Bible, the concept of “consistent behavior over a prolonged period” is all over its pages

1 Timothy 4:6–16 - If you put these things before the brothers, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, being trained in the words of the faith and of the good doctrine that you have followed. ⁷ Have nothing to do with irreverent, silly myths. Rather train yourself for godliness; ⁸ for while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come. ⁹ The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance.

¹⁰ For to this end we toil and strive, because we have our hope set on the living God, who is the Savior of all people, especially of those who believe. ¹¹ Command and teach these things. ¹² Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity. ¹³ Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching. ¹⁴ Do not neglect the gift you have, which was given you by prophecy when the council of elders laid their hands on you. ¹⁵ Practice these things, immerse yourself in them, so that all may see your progress. ¹⁶ Keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching. Persist in this, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers.

“Behavior that is incongruent with the self will not last. You may want more money, but if your identity is someone who consumes rather than creates, then you’ll continue to be pulled toward spending rather than earning. You may want better health, but if you continue to prioritize comfort over accomplishment, you’ll be drawn to relaxing rather than training. It’s hard to change your habits if you never change the underlying beliefs that led to your past behavior. You have a new goal and a new plan, but you haven’t changed who you are.”

- James Clear, *Atomic Habits* p. 32

The VERY first thing God does when we finally surrender to His best is change our identity (we don’t clean up our lives and THEN come to God)

- We are a NEW CREATION if we are in Christ (***2 Corinthians 5:17***)
- We are CHILDREN of God IF we receive Christ (***John 1:12***)
- We are DISCIPLES of Christ IF we deny ourselves and follow Jesus’ example of taking up our cross (***Matthew 16:24; Luke 24:27***)
- We are SERVANTS of Christ IF we aim to please God rather than people (***Galatians 1:10***)

When looking at what you are going to change in 2022, Start with identity, rather than outcome

- Does a new creation (say/think/desire/do _____)?
- Does a child of God (say/think/desire/do _____)?
- Does a disciple (say/think/desire/do _____)?
- Does a servant of Christ (say/think/desire/do _____)?

2 Corinthians 5:17 - Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.