

Introduction: What will make this year different than last year?

Life change can happen in your life, but maybe it doesn't happen the way you think it does.

In Christ we become new creations.

2 Corinthians 5:17

Threefold practice for change:

1. Look _____

2. Look _____

3. Look forward

Key areas to evaluate

- Relationship with the Lord
- Most important relationships
- Physical health
- Other relationships
- Work / Career / Education
- Personal ministry
- Emotional health

Knowing where you are is the prerequisite to moving from where you are to where you and God want you to be.

Set spiritual priority

But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

Matthew 6:33

- Get in shape spiritually

Don't go it alone

...A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

Ecclesiastes 4:12b

He who walks with wise men will be wise, but the companion of fools will suffer harm.

Proverbs 13:30

Abide in Christ

I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.

John 15:5

- Refuse to rely on sheer willpower, habits, and hacks.

Final thoughts

- Refuse to _____ yourself with other people.
2 Corinthians 10:12
- Refuse to be a _____ pleaser.
Luke 16:15
Galatians 1:10

Conclusion

- Evaluate
- Look back
- Look up
- Prioritize

Discussion Questions:

1. Chip lists some areas for evaluation (e.g., relationship with the Lord, physical health, emotional health). If you were completely honest with yourself, which area has been most neglected, and what small step could you take toward it this month?
2. Where have you seen God deliver you dramatically and immediately? Which area of your life currently requires more daily endurance and patience, trusting God for the ongoing, incremental work of sanctification?
3. What does "seeking the kingdom of God first" look like in your daily schedule and decision-making? What is the *one thing* you could practically change this week to move your spiritual health from a secondary priority to a first priority?
4. Who is a wise, honest person in your life that you could trust to walk alongside you in one of your areas for change this year?
5. If relying on sheer willpower and life "hacks" is insufficient for lasting change, what is the one concrete action you will take this week to intentionally *Abide in Christ* (John 15:5) as the primary source of your strength?