

AIMING FOR GODLY GOALS

Romans 12:1-3, 9-13

☞ Back in the mid-90s, I was in an **accountability group** of men where we were challenged to **set goals** for each year; goals in our relationship with God, in our relationship with our wives, in our relationship with our children, in our relationship to our ministry.

(Show 2000 sheet and explain how the accountability worked.)

In the year 2000 I decided to keep the goals I had set the year before. They have become my life goals:

- ☞ TAKE GOD SERIOUSLY
- ☞ KNOW GOD INTIMATELY
- ☞ LOVE GOD PASSIONATELY
- ☞ OBEY GOD FAITHFULLY
- ☞ SERVE GOD WHOLEHEARTEDLY

We're taught that **goals must be:**

- Measurable
- Realistic
- Attainable

I believe my life goals **meet that criteria.**

☞ I've **titled the message** for this morning "Aiming for Godly Goals."

As we look at our passage of Scripture today, I want us to consider goals that would fall into one or more of my life goals.

In your **bulletin** is a small sheet you might use to capture what we're saying this morning. I'll be sharing numerous Scripture verses that you may want to jot down the references to, should you want to go back over these thoughts later.

One of my professors at the Grand Rapids School of the Bible and Music was dear George **Tuinstra**. He would often tell us that the Bible is its own best commentary. I agree with him 100 percent!

Paul reminds us in **Hebrews 4:12** that "...the word of God is alive and powerful. It is sharper than the sharpest two-edged sword, cutting between soul and spirit, between joint and marrow. It exposes our innermost thoughts and desires."

God may choose to speak to your heart through some of what I say this morning, but He is **sure to speak** to your heart through His living Word.

Just now I'm reading a **book on the life of Joseph** written by Chuck Swindoll. If I want to know what was meant by a certain paragraph, who would be the best person to ask? Chuck Swindoll! The best person to explain what he meant when he wrote a book is the author.

What's my point? Simply this! Let the **Holy Spirit** be your teacher this morning as you listen to His Word!

🔊 Let's turn our attention to **Romans chapter 12**.

🔊 Please stand and read the passage with me.

(Read verses 1-3)

🔊 *(Read verses 9-13)*

I maintain that the goals we're looking at this morning **meet all three criteria**. They must, or they would not be given to us as commands from our Lord through the pen of the Apostle Paul!

🔊 **"...present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship."** (1b)

Greek: present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy to God, well-pleasing, the reasonable service

🔊 **God's goal for my relationship to Him.**

🔊 **Goal: SURRENDER**

(Read from Bible) Romans 6:12-14 - "Do not let sin control the way you live; do not give in to sinful desires. Do not let any part of your body become an instrument of evil to serve sin. Instead, give yourselves completely to God, for you were dead, but now you have new life. So use your whole body as an instrument to do what is right for the glory of God. Sin is no longer your master, for you no longer live under the requirements of the law. Instead, you live under the freedom of God's grace." NLT

🔊 **"...do not be conformed to this world,..."** (2a)

Greek: and be ye not conformed to this age

🔊 **God's goal for my relationship to the world.**

🔊 **Goal: SPIRIT GUIDED**

Romans 8:5-6 - "For those who are according to the flesh and are controlled by its unholy desires set their minds on and pursue those things which gratify the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit and are controlled by the desires of the Spirit set their minds on and seek those things which gratify the [Holy] Spirit.

Now the mind of the flesh [which is sense and reason without the Holy Spirit] is death [death that comprises all the miseries arising from sin, both here and hereafter]. But the mind of the [Holy] Spirit is life and [soul] peace [both now and forever].” AMPC

If you’ve been watching our **announcement** PowerPoints each Sunday, you may have noticed that I often include a “**one another**” slide. In today’s PPT it was “**Teach one another.**” There are many times in Scripture where we are specifically told how we are to act toward one another. I’m going to **share some of them** in connection with the following goals.

🔔 **To not “...think more highly of himself than he ought to think;...”**
(3a)

➡ Greek: *not to have high thoughts beyond what it behooves to think*
(behooves = is fitting)

🔔 God’s goal for my **self-image**.

🔔 Goal: **HUMILITY**

Luke 22:25-26 - “Jesus told them, ‘In this world the kings and great men lord it over their people, yet they are called friends of the people. But among you it will be different. Those who are the greatest among you should take the lowest rank, and the leader should be like a servant.’”
NLT

Philippians 2:3 - “Don’t be selfish; don’t live to make a good impression on others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourself.” TLB

🔔 Be humble toward one another. (1 Peter 5:5)

Verses 4-8 speak of the members of the body of the church

🔔 **“Let love be without hypocrisy.”** (9a)

➡ Greek: *Let love be unassumed* (think **identity theft** pretending to be what it’s not!)

🔔 God’s goal for my **love**.

🔔 Goal: **AUTHENTICITY**

“Once people love others without hesitation, they will want to fulfil the rest of God’s commandments as well.” ASB

2 John 1:6 - “**Love means doing what God has commanded us**, and he has commanded us to love one another, just as you heard from the beginning.” NLT

1 John 2:5 - “But those who **obey God’s word** truly show how **completely** they love him. That is how we know we are living in him.”

1 Tim 1:5 - “The purpose of my instruction is that all believers would be filled with love that comes from a pure heart, a clear conscience, and genuine faith.”

📖 Abound in love toward one another. (1 Thessalonians 3:12)

📖 **“Abhor what is evil; cling to what is good.”** (9b)

➡ Greek: *Shrinking from the evil, cleaving to the good*

📖 God’s goal for my living.

📖 Goal: PURITY

Habakkuk 1:12-13 – “O Lord my God, my Holy One, you who are eternal...you are pure and cannot stand the sight of evil.”

Psalms 86:11 – “Teach me your ways, O Lord, that I may live according to your truth! Grant me purity of heart, so that I may honor you.”

1 Timothy 4:12 – “Be an example to all believers in what you say, in the way you live, in your love, your faith, and your purity.”

1 Timothy 6:11 – “But you, Timothy, are a man of God; so run from all these evil things. Pursue righteousness and a godly life, along with faith, love, perseverance, and gentleness.”

📖 Do not grumble against one another. (James 5:9)

📖 **“Be devoted to one another in brotherly love;...”** (10a)

➡ Greek: *in brotherly love to one another loving warmly, i.e., loving one another warmly in brotherly love.*

📖 God’s goal for my response to others’ needs.

📖 Goal: COMPASSION

John 13:35 – “Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples.”

Philippians 2:1-2 – “Is there any encouragement from belonging to Christ? Any comfort from his love? Any fellowship together in the Spirit? **Are your hearts tender and compassionate?** Then make me truly happy by agreeing wholeheartedly with each other, loving one another, and working together with one mind and purpose.” Paul is assuming the answers to the four rhetorical questions is a resounding YES!

📖 Show kindness and mercy to one another. (Zechariah 7:9)

☞ “...give preference to one another in honor;...” (10b)

Greek: *in one another preferring*

☞ God’s goal for my response to the affirmation of others.

☞ Goal: **OUTWARD FOCUSED**

Philippians 2:4 – “Abandon every display of selfishness. Possess a greater concern for what matters to others instead of your own interests.” TPT
(*The Passion Translation*)

☞ Show honor to one another. (Romans 12:10)

☞ “...not lagging behind in diligence;...” (11a)

➔ Greek: *in zeal not slothful*

☞ God’s goal for my energy in service.

☞ Goal: **DILIGENCE**

Deuteronomy 6:17 - “You must diligently obey the commands of the Lord your God—all the laws and decrees he has given you.”

Ecclesiastes 10:18 – “Laziness leads to a sagging roof; idleness leads to a leaky house.”

☞ Sharpen one another. (Proverbs 27:17)

As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.

☞ “...fervent in spirit, serving the Lord;...” (11b)

Greek: *in spirit burning, the Lord serving*

☞ God’s goal for my enthusiasm in service.

☞ Goal: **FERVENCY** (passion, enthusiasm, eagerness, commitment)

1 Sam. 12:24 – “Only fear the Lord, and serve Him in truth **with all your heart**, for consider what great thing He has done for you.”

☞ Through love, serve one another. (Galatians 5:13)

☞ “...rejoicing in hope;...” (12a)

Greek: *in hope rejoicing*

With eternity's values in view, Lord.
With eternity's values in view;
May I do each day's work for Jesus
With eternity's values in view.

☞ God’s goal for my perspective.

☞ Goal: **ETERNITY**

(Alfred B. Smith)

1 Thessalonians 1:3 – “As we pray to our God and Father about you, we think of your faithful work, your loving deeds, and **the enduring hope** you have because of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

1 Corinthians 13:13 – “Three things will last forever—faith, hope, and love—and the greatest of these is love.”

Romans 15:13 – “I pray that God, the source of hope, will fill you completely with joy and peace because you trust in him. Then you will overflow with confident hope through the power of the Holy Spirit.”

Hebrews 10:24-25 – “Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, **especially now that the day of his return is drawing near.**”

🔔 Stir up one another to love and good works (Hebrews 10:24-25)

🔔 “**...persevering in tribulation...**” (12b)
Greek: *in affliction showing endurance*

🔔 God’s goal for my perseverance.

🔔 Goal: **ENDURANCE**

1 Timothy 6”11 – “But you, Timothy, are a man of God; so run from all these evil things. Pursue righteousness and a godly life, along with faith, love, perseverance, and gentleness.”

1 Corinthians 9:22 – “When I am with those who are weak, I share their weakness, for I want to bring the weak to Christ. Yes, I try to find common ground with everyone, doing everything I can to save some.”

2 Thessalonians 1:4 – “We proudly tell God’s other churches about your endurance and faithfulness in all the persecutions and hardships you are suffering.”

🔔 Encourage one another. (1 Thessalonians 5:11)

🔔 “**...devoted to prayer...**” (12c)
Greek: *in prayer steadfastly continuing*

🔔 God’s goal for my prayer life.

🔔 Goal: **EARNESTNESS**

Colossians 4:2 – “Devote yourselves to prayer with an alert mind and a thankful heart.”

James 5:16b: “The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results.” NLT

Ephesians 6:18 – “Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion. Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all believers everywhere.”

Acts 1:14 – “They all met together and were constantly united in prayer, along with Mary the mother of Jesus, several other women, and the brothers of Jesus.”

🔔 Pray for one another. (James 5:16)

🔔 “...**contributing to the needs of the saints,...**” (13a)

Greek: *to the needs of the saints imparting*

🔔 God’s goal for my relationship to fellow believers.

🔔 Goal: **PARTNERSHIP**

Acts 20:35: “And I have been a constant example of how you can help those in need by working hard. You should remember the words of the Lord Jesus: ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’” NLT

Gal. 6:10: “Therefore, whenever we have the opportunity, we should do good to everyone—especially to those in the family of faith.” NLT

🔔 Care for one another. (1 Corinthians 12:25)

🔔 “...**practicing hospitality.**” (13b)

➡ Greek: *hospitality pursuing* (Be **eager** to practice hospitality)

🔔 God’s goal for my relationship to strangers.

🔔 Goal: **PURSUIT**

1 Peter 4:9 – “Cheerfully share your home with those who need a meal or a place to stay.”

🔔 Show hospitality to one another. (1 Peter 4:9)

🔔 **Determine before the Lord to strive for these goals this week!**

Based on June 3, 2020 CEF chapel message by John Luck

Scripture from *New American Standard Bible*

Greek from *The Zondervan Parallel New Testament in Greek and English*

Therefore, I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect. For through the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think...

Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor; not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer, contributing to the needs of the saints, practicing hospitality.

Romans 12:1-3, 9-13