

Setting Personal Goals by Faith

BY RICK WARREN

Goals give you hope to keep moving forward. They help you persevere and endure.

Even God sets goals. He has goals for planet earth. He has goals for history. He has goals for eternity. And you can be certain he has goals for your life!

You may have heard me say this before: When you're going through a difficult time, what do you do? You don't make your home there. You don't even camp out overnight. You just keep going.

You do this by having a goal that goes beyond. The Bible says, "[Jesus] never lost sight of where he was headed—that exhilarating finish in and with God—he could put up with anything along the way: Cross, shame, whatever. And now he's there, in the place of honor, right alongside God" (Hebrews 12:2 The Message). He looked beyond the pain to the payoff. God wants you to do this too.

But not every goal is a good goal. Some goals are selfish and unwise. So, how do you know what kinds of goals to set? Ask yourself these three questions:

1 Will it honor God?

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When your goals cause you to trust him more, love him more, and love others more, it brings glory and honor to God. These are the kinds of goals he will bless. The Bible says, "When you eat or drink or do anything, always do it to honor God" (1 Corinthians 10:31 CEV).

2 Is it motivated by love?

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God doesn't bless goals motivated by greed, competition, envy, or guilt. He honors goals set out of love: "God, I want to do this because I love you and want to love others." When you set loveless goals, you treat people as projects, and you end up losing sight of what matters most. That's why God wants you to "let love be your highest goal" (1 Corinthians 14:1 NLT).

3 Will it require depending on God?

3

If your goal doesn't require faith to achieve it, then it's not a God-pleasing goal. Hebrews 11:6 says, "Without faith it is impossible to please God" (NIV). Sheer willpower won't work. You need God's Spirit to empower you and God's Word to guide you.

As you think about your goals for this year, remember: Let the size of your God determine the size of your goal. Jesus says, "According to your faith let it be done to you" (Matthew 9:29 NIV). The depth of your faith will determine how much God blesses and transforms your life.