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Most people spend more time planning their summer ______________ than they do planning their ____________.

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WORD STUDY: “Perish” = Hebrew word referring to fruit that is past its prime. It is no longer ripening; it is rotting.

Having a God-given vision and godly goals for our lives keeps us _____________.

You start dying when you have nothing worth ____________ for. You start living when you find something worth ____________ for.

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Researchers came to this conclusion: imagined movements trigger synaptic changes at the cortical level. In other words, the simple act of imagining something has a powerful neurological effect. How you think and what you think about remaps your brain. Or to put it in goal-setting terms – the goals you set literally determines the shape of your mind.

10 Steps to Setting Life Goals

1. START WITH ______________________

   Catherine Marshall (Book: The Adventure of Prayer) said, “Dreaming is praying. The more I pray, the more I dream. Dreaming is a form of praying and praying is a form of dreaming.” She goes on to say: “There is no limit to what this combination of dreams and prayer can achieve.”

   Always make sure that you set goals in the context of prayer.

   Goal setting is a stewardship issue. It is making the most of the time, talent, and resources that God has given you.

   You may want to consider taking a personal retreat and writing out your life goals:

   \[ \text{Change of } P_{\text{goal}} + \text{Change of } P_{\text{goal}} = \text{Change in } P_{\text{goal}} \]

2. CHECK YOUR ______________________

   Goals can be subject to interpretation. If you don’t know the motive behind them, they may come across as selfish or self-serving.

   Some of my life goals involve travel. One of the ways I worship the Creator is by appreciating His creation! Another aspect of my life goal list is that I do not have accumulation goals, but giving goals and goals of influence.

   If your motives are wrong, you will lose the favor of God and He will not bless your efforts. But if your motives are right, I believe God will help you to accomplish those goals.

   Some motives that are healthy and holy: 1.) You can set a goal to honor God. 2.) You can set a goal to maximize your potential. 3.) You can set a goal to make a difference. 4.) You can set a goal because it will bring you joy. (The chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever.)
3. GET _______ FROM OTHERS

In 1940, when John Goddard was 15 years old, he wrote out his “My Life List” of 127 goals. He has achieved most of them. The point is if John Goddard had not have set those goals, he would have never achieved those goals.

Goals create what psychologists refer to as “structural tension” in your brain. The brain wants to close the gap between your current reality and your goal. God has designed our brains to be a goal-seeking organism.

One of the ways you can get in a goal-setting mode is to look at the goals of other people—they will inspire you.

4. THINK IN ________________________________

I think some of our minds go blank when we think about goals. Thinking in categories helps. Remember Jesus’ plan for personal development? Luke 2:52 — intellectual, physical, spiritual, and social.) Some goals may seem more spiritual than others but for the child of God, all good goals are godly goals. Physical discipline will help you to be more disciplined spiritually too.

5. BE __________________________

“Getting in shape” is not a goal. That is a wish. Goals need timelines. I have attached an age for when I would like to accomplish that goal to some of the goals on my life list.

Your goals also need to be measurable.

David Yonggi Cho (Pastor of World’s Largest Church) said, “God doesn’t answer _________ prayers.”

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Sometimes we pray in such vague terms that there is no way that God CAN or CANNOT answer our prayers. I think we’re vague because we don’t want to hold ourselves (or God) accountable – or we’re afraid of being let down.

J.C. Penney said, “Give me a stock clerk with a goal and I will give you a man who will make history. Give me a man without a goal and I will give you a stock clerk.” REMEMBER: Goals are dreams with deadlines.

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Habakkuk 2:2 says, “Write down the vision and make it plain on tablets.” Include your life goal list in your prayer journal. Most of us fail to give God the credit when He answers our prayers because we’ve forgotten what we’ve asked for by the time He answers it.

The first step to accomplishing a goal is simply writing it down! The shortest pencil is longer than the longest memory. The weakest ink is better than the best memory!

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The best memories that I have at the end of the year were once goals. One of my favorite Hebrew words is Ebenezer. It means, “hitherto the Lord has helped me.” The accomplishment of a goal is an “Ebenezer moment.” Celebrate everything you can as much as you can.

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Michelangelo said, “The greater danger for most of us is not that our aim is too high and we miss it; but that it is too low and we reach it.” You need some goals, conceived in prayer, that are absolutely ridiculous. But by faith, you set the goal.

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