

When You Wish Life Was Like An Etch-A-Sketch CLEAN SLATE – Part 1

Chris Goins • January 3, 2010

Isaiah 43:18 (MSG), *Forget about what's happened; don't keep going over old history.*

Isaiah 43:18 (NLT), *...it is nothing compared to what I am going to do.*

Isaiah 43:19 (ESV), *Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.*

Five Practices For Making A New S.T.A.R.T.

1. **S – Stop Making Excuses.**

Proverbs 28:13 (NLT), *People who cover over their sins will not prosper. But if they confess and forsake them, they will receive mercy.*

Proverbs 28:13 (LB), *A man who refuses to admit his mistakes can never be successful. But if he confesses and forsakes them, he gets another chance.*

Three Basic Reasons We Fail:

1.) We Don't Plan Ahead.

Proverbs 27:12 (LB), *A sensible man watches for problems and prepares to meet them. The fool never looks ahead and suffers the consequences. (Luke 14:28)*

2.) We Don't Listen To Others.

Proverbs 15:22 (NCV), *Plans fail without good advice.*

Proverbs 11:14 (NKJ), *Where there is no counsel, the people fall; But in the multitude of counselors there is safety.*

3.) We Give Up Way Too Soon.

Proverbs 24:10 (NLT), *If you fail under pressure, your strength is not very great.*

2 Corinthians 4:8-9 (NLT), *We are pressed on every side by troubles, but we are not crushed and broken. We are perplexed, but we don't give up and quit.⁹ We are hunted down, but God never abandons us. We get knocked down, but we get up again and keep going.*

2. **T - Take Stock.**

Psalms 77:1-6 (MSG), *I yell out to my God, I yell with all my might, I yell at the top of my lungs. He listens.*

² *I found myself in trouble and went looking for my Lord; my life was an open wound that wouldn't heal...*

³ *I remember God—and shake my head. I bow my head—then wring my hands. Selah*

⁴ *I'm awake all night—not a wink of sleep; I can't even say what's bothering me.* ⁵ *I go over the days one by one, I ponder the years gone by.* ⁶ *I strum my lute all through the night, wondering how to get my life together.*

Galatians 3:4, *You have experienced many things. Were all those experiences wasted? I hope not!*

Some Questions To Ask At The Beginning of a New Year:

- 1.) What's one thing you could do this year to increase your joy in God?
- 2.) What's the most humanly impossible thing you're asking God to do this year?
- 3.) What's the single most important thing you could do to improve the quality of your family life this year?
- 4.) What spiritual practice do you most want to make progress in this year?
- 5.) What's the single biggest time-waster in your life, and what will you do about it this year?
- 6.) What's the most helpful new way God might want to use you to strengthen your church?
- 7.) For whose salvation will you pray passionately this year?
- 8.) What major life-lessons did you learn and what's the single most important way you will, by God's grace, try to make this year different than last year?
- 9.) What one thing could you do to improve your prayer and devotional life this year?
- 10.) What single thing that you plan to do this year will matter most in ten years? In eternity?

3. A - Act In Faith.

Matthew 9:29, *According to your faith will it be done to you.*

Proverbs 16:9 (LB), *We should make plans – counting on God to direct us.*

Five Basic Areas For Setting Goals:

- Spiritual (*Prayer, Bible Reading, Worship*)
- Relational (*Family, Friendships, Small Groups*)
- Physical (*Diet, Exercise, Rest*)
- Financial (*Giving, Savings, Budget*)
- Calling

21 Days of Prayer and Fasting

January 10-30

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4. R – Refocus.

Proverbs 4:23 (GN), *Be careful how you think; your life is shaped by your thoughts.*

Romans 12:1 (MSG), *So here's what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life—your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life—and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him.*

Romans 12:2 (NLT), *Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will know what God wants you to do, and you will know how good and pleasing and perfect his will really is.*

Practical Actions for Changing Your Mind

1.) Read God's Word Daily.

- *Have a plan (Check out www.youversion.com for 20+ Bible Reading plans).*
- *Begin your time with prayer.*
- *When possible, read out loud.*
- *Don't give up.*

2.) Pray over what you've read and resolve to apply it.

3.) Journal your thoughts.

4.) Meditate on God's Word.

Psalm 1:1-3 (ESV), *Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; 2 but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night. 3 He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers.*

5.) Memorize It.

Joshua 1:8 (ESV), *This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.*

5. T – Trust God, Big Time.

Zechariah 4:6 (NCV), *"It is not by force nor by strength, but by my Spirit, says the LORD Almighty."*

2 Corinthians 5:17 (NLT), *What this means is that those who become Christians become new persons. They are not the same anymore, for the old life is gone. A new life has begun!*

Colossians 2:13-14 (MSG), *When you were stuck in your old sin-dead life, you were incapable of responding to God. God brought you alive—right along with Christ! Think of it! All sins forgiven, the slate wiped clean, that old arrest warrant canceled and nailed to Christ's Cross."*

**This Week's Verse To
Meditate On / Memorize:
Isaiah 43:18-19**

21 Days of Prayer and Fasting

For Additional Information on the upcoming 21 Days of Prayer and Fasting and helpful "Daniel Fast Friendly" recipes, Chris has posted several articles and links on his blog at www.chrisgoins.org.