

Creating a Plan For Growth

Getting the Big Rocks in the Jar

The approach of a new year provides an outstanding opportunity to intentionally think about the opportunities we have to steward the grace of God in our lives. How can we better appreciate and pursue God, our spouses, and our children? How can we pursue in a more focused way the goal of conformity to the image of Christ? The following questions are designed to serve us to that end. Because it is far too easy to do this in self-sufficiency, the following verses are designed to remind us of our need for grace to make fruitful all planning that we do and all steps that we take. Let's begin this exercise by opening God's word.

1. **Our purpose:** To Love God and his people: "Which commandment is the most important of all? Jesus answered them, 'The most important is, 'Hear O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' The second is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." Mark 12:29-31

2. **Our posture:** dependence upon Jesus for grace: "Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me, you can do nothing." John 15:4-10

3. **Our Confidence:** "He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake." Psalm 23:3; also Phil 4:13

4. **Our great goal:** Conformity to the image of my Savior. "Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me. Col. 1:28-29

I. My Pursuit of God in the Spiritual Disciplines

- What will be my scheduled time and place for meeting with God?
- What is my plan for reading through the scriptures?
- What is my plan for memorizing God's Word?
- What will be my approach to prayer?

II. Extra Reading

- How would I describe my current pursuit of study outside of my devotional times?
- What "serious books about the bible" should I read over the next three months?
- What "serious books about the bible" should I plan to read over the next year?

