

Something EVEN BETTER THAN New Year's Resolutions

by Rev. Terry M. Nelson

One of the wonderful things about celebrating the new year is the chance to start again or begin something fresh and worthwhile. There is one thing that can be more helpful in our lives than simply having a set of resolutions. That one thing is a goal.

A goal is a clear statement of what we desire to accomplish. It serves as a roadmap to follow as well as an internal motivation to move us forward with the actions necessary to make our desire a reality. Paul Meyer has stated, "No one ever accomplishes anything of consequence without a goal. Goal setting is the strongest human force for self-motivation." There is something about the personal goal that pulls us forward to see its fulfillment.

In order for goals to serve us, they must consist of several key components. First, they must be written and reviewed. In our busyness, we will often forget the things that are most important to us. We run to stay caught up with demands on our time rather than orchestrating the use of our time to achieve what we want.

Second, our goals should be personal and compelling. The realization of a goal has to add value, health or enjoyment to life to warrant the investment of time and effort needed to reach it. Many goals fail to move us because, in the end, there is no real life-enhancing benefit of reaching for their fulfillment.

Third, goals have to be realistic and specific. Goals serve as mile markers as we travel toward the ultimate destination that we desire to reach. They must be within our power to accomplish. They must also be clearly stated with every detail of action required for success.

German author Johann Wolfgang von Goethe said, "Thinking is easy, acting is difficult, and to put one's thoughts into action is the most difficult thing in the world." His statement rings true because there are so many external demands on our time. As you set your goals in 2006, remember that if you do not plan your life, someone else will. Apply the principle of Proverbs 23:7, which says, "As a man thinks within himself, so he is." Do something even better than making New Year's resolutions. Set some life changing goals.



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