



I. Goalsetting – God and Goals

Thank you for starting the first episode of the series, Goalsetting! Below are notes from the script and some discussion questions to guide you to a deeper understanding of this reflection.

NOTES & QUOTES FROM PODCAST

Anyone who has recently worked or studied remotely has heard about the importance to set up a routine and set daily goals. If we didn't, it is likely that at the end of the day we are left wondering 'where did the day go?'. It is important to have goals and set routines to bring about purpose and urgency when our default position is to relax or procrastinate.

In 2002 a Christian leadership institute I am associated with asked me to develop a course on "Biblical Goalsetting." Initially I hesitated to say "Yes" as I doubted if goalsetting was a valid activity for Christians to engage in. A month later I accepted the invite, Here's why.

The Bible presents two concepts of man – the first one we find in Gen 1:27 that says, *"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them."*

The second concept is that "Man by nature is depraved or wicked." This can be found spread across the pages of the Bible and in our daily news stories.

A few of our wicked ways are listed in Mark 7:21-22, that include *"evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, coveting, deceit, envy, slander, pride"* and the list goes on.

We all are much more familiar with the concept of "man being depraved and wicked" than the one about "man being made in the image of God."

Having the "image" or "likeness" of God in its simplest terms means we were made to resemble God. It refers to the immaterial part of humanity that sets us apart from the animal world. It includes an intellectual, moral and social likeness to God.

We were originally created righteous and innocent, morally reflecting God and his holiness. Our conscience or "moral compass" is a remnant of our original state of being sinless creatures. Whenever someone recoils from evil, praises good behavior, or feels guilty or shame, he or she is confirming the fact that we are made in God's own image.

Socially, we were created for fellowship. Every time someone marries, makes a friend, hugs a child, or attends church, he or she demonstrates the fact that we are made in the likeness of God.

Therefore, both concepts of man are valid! But, what does this all have to do with goalsetting?

Let me submit that of the two concepts of man it takes no effort at all to live the depraved wicked concept.

That's our default position and we comfortably wallow in our own sinfulness.

But, to live up to the “made in God’s image” concept requires special effort on our part. This is where I believe setting goals can be helpful for everyone, especially to Christians.

One of my favorite verses in the Bible is Luke 2:52. In this verse, Luke describes how Jesus developed from a boy to a man. “*And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.*” There are four areas in which Jesus, who is God, grew.

Jesus grew in stature that is physically, he grew in wisdom – that is intellectually, he grew in favour of God that is spiritually, and he grew in favour of man – that is socially.

If we set goals and achieve them in these four areas of our lives, we will experience a well-rounded life. We will also move out of our default comfortable zone.

Let’s all grow as Jesus did in a wholesome and balanced way in all four areas of our life.

1. FIRST CONCEPT OF MAN IN THE BIBLE:- Made in God’s Image

Having the image of God refers to the immaterial part of humanity apart from the world including the intellectual, moral and social likeness to God.

2. SECOND CONCEPT OF MAN IN THE BIBLE: Depraved and Wicked

Though we bear the image of God, the image also bears the scars of sin. The effect of sin is clear in our intellectual, moral, social, and physical actions and behaviour.

3. BOTH CONCEPTS OF MAN ARE TRUE!!!

4. FOUR AREAS WHERE WE CAN SET GOALS: Grow to be the person we were created to be

The four areas in which Jesus grew are in wisdom, stature, in favour with God and in favour with man, we need to set goals and achieve them in these areas and grow as Jesus did.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. In what ways will you be able to show you are created in God’s image?
2. In the list mentioned in Mark 7:21-22, are you able to identify things that you might be doing that may not live up to the “Image of God” concept?
3. What are things you can do to demonstrate the fact that you are made in the likeness of God?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Let me encourage you to use the, “Goal Planning Sheet - fillable form” provided in the website and begin to set goals in the four areas that Jesus grew in. For your convenience the document is a fillable pdf. God bless you as you begin to realize the full potential God created you for.

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