

Foundations for Christian Living



1 | God's Agenda: What, Why and How

Essential Skills for Spiritual Growth

1. Evaluate what God is doing
2. See what is true about yourself
3. Do something about it

What is God's Agenda for Your Life?

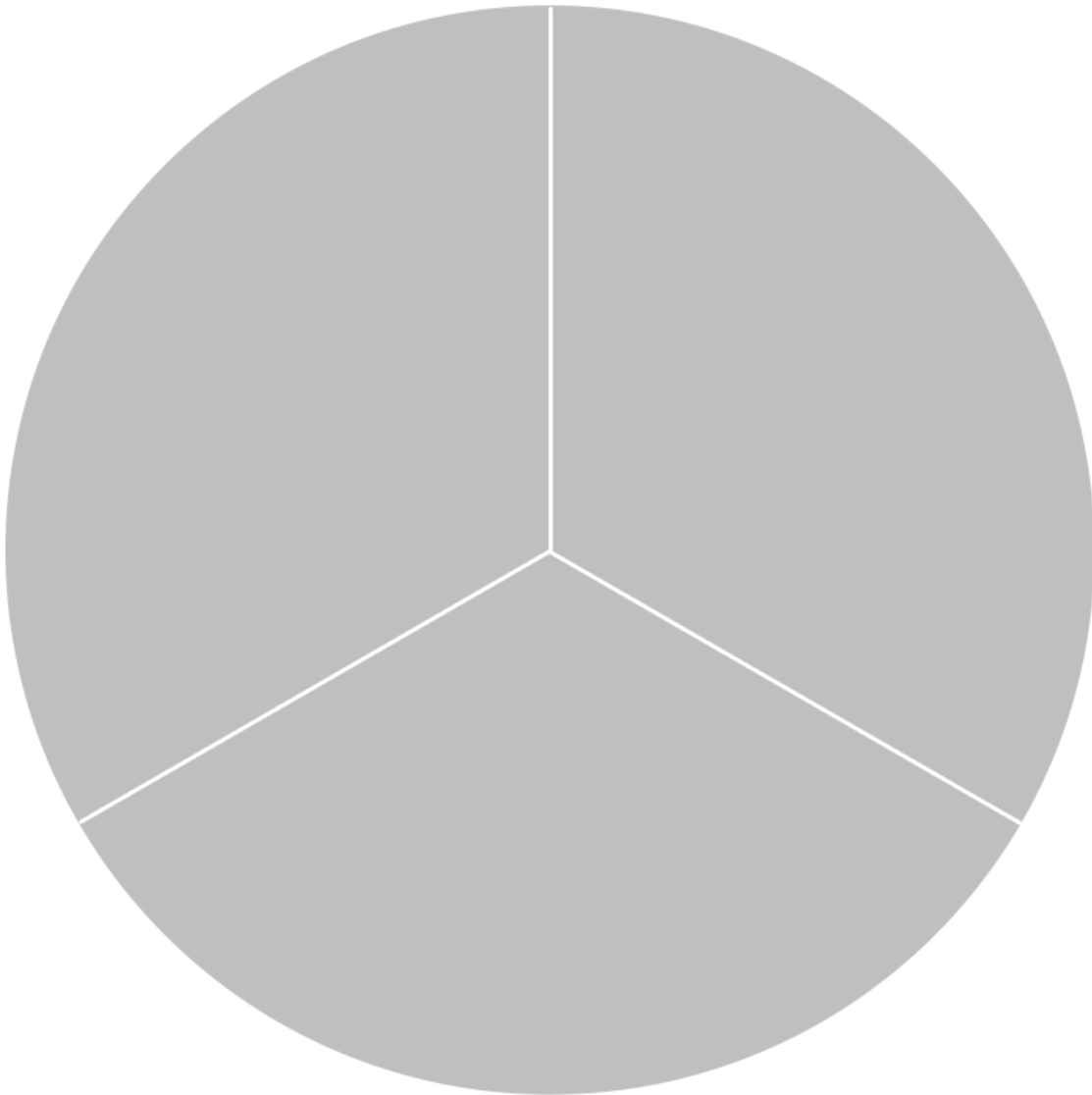
1. Learning to evaluate what God is doing requires you to... understand God's agenda.
2. What is God's agenda...? ...to make you like Christ.

How does God accomplish his agenda?

1. God accomplishes his agenda by saving you.
 - a. You have a big problem.
 - b. There is nothing you can do about your problem.
 - c. There is a solution to your problem.
 - d. You have to respond.

2. God accomplishes his agenda by growing you.

The Learning Cycle



Why is that God's agenda?

THE STANDARD

GOOD	BAD

1. Because he wants to use you.

2. How?
 - By changing your motivation.
 - By changing your view of people.
 - By changing your mission.

3. ...to be able to live a life of value as you become like Jesus.

2 | Daily Bible Reading: Developing the *Skill* and *Discipline*

Step #1: Journal

- *“Journaling is learning how to Process Life.”*

1. What happened over the past 24 hours?
2. How am I responding to what happened?
3. What questions am I asking about what happened?
4. What are my responses and questions revealing about me?
5. What do I need to do about what is being revealed?

Step #2: Read

Step #3: Assignment

Involves Learning Observation Skills

1. Be an investigator, not a record-keeper.
2. Ask questions!
3. Matthew 26:6-13

Involves Learning Interpretation Skills

1. What are the answers to the questions I am asking?
2. What did it mean to those who heard it?
3. Context, history, background, etc...?
4. What other passages can help?
5. Matthew 26:6-13

Involves Learning Application Skills

1. What does that interpretation mean for me today?
2. How does it apply to my situation?
3. Milk vs Meat

4. Matthew 26:6-13

Involves Learning Implementation Skills

1. Be doers and not hearers only... James 1:27
2. “The Bible was not written to increase your knowledge, but to guide your conduct.”
(Bridges)
3. Create a plan to integrate the learning into your life.

Step #4: Memorize

Step #5: Commit

Step #6: Pray

Bible Reading Quiz

1. How long does it take to read a page in your Bible?
2. How many seconds does it take to read a page in your Bible?
3. How many pages are in your Bible?
4. How many seconds does it take to read your Bible (B x C)?
5. How many minutes does it take to read your Bible (D/C)?
6. How many days does it take to read your Bible at...?
 - 15 min/day
 - 30 min/day
 - 45 min/day
 - 60 min/day

3 | Daily Prayer: Developing the Skill and Discipline

How to do Devotions... Quick Review

1. Journal
2. Read
3. Assignment
4. Memorize
5. Commit
6. Pray

Have the right motives

1. The hypocrites were selfish
2. Our motives are selfless

Have the right content

1. The hypocrites content is babbling
2. Our content should always keep in mind... Col 4:2-3

Have the right mindset

1. Who God is... Our Father in Heaven
2. What God wants... Hallowed be Your Name
3. Our physical condition... Give us today our daily bread
4. Our spiritual condition... Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors
5. Our future condition... Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil

Organize Your Prayers

1. Daily items
2. Weekly items
3. Timed items

Content of your prayers... Pray the Bible

1. What struck me from this text?
2. What truth does it communicate or illustrate?
3. How can I apply it to my life?

4 | Making Decisions Biblically: Three (3) P's

Why is this important?

1. Conflicts with standards
2. Lack of supernatural power
3. God is not pleased

Who do I consider?

1. Myself
2. Brother/Sisters
3. Enemies of the Cross

Where do I look? (3 P's)

1. Prohibitions
2. Principles
3. Patterns

Paradigms

1. The Bible doesn't say anything about...
2. The Bible says something about everything

Biblical Content

1. Prohibitions... Does the Bible forbid or command this decision?
2. Principles... Does the Bible say anything that informs this decision?
3. Patterns... Does the Bible provide examples of people facing this decision?

Thoughts

1. We cannot afford to make biblically uninformed decisions about **ANYTHING**.
2. Why do we fight for the right to live at the lowest common denominator?

Goal of this section?

1. Know what's biblically right
2. Honor God by doing it
3. Have His power

Final Thoughts

Decision-Making Goals

1. Prevention (Flee)
 - a. Sexual Sin
 - b. Ungodly
 - c. Undisciplined Bum

2. Production (Pursue)
 - a. Develop a Relationship
 - b. Grow Spiritually
 - c. Disciplined

5 | Making Decisions Biblically: Ten (10) E's of Decision-Making

10 E's of Decision-Making

Production: In light of what I am trying to accomplish.

Expedience... will it be spiritually profitable?

1. Scripture
2. Meaning
3. The Principle
4. Application

Edification... will it be build me up?

1. Scripture
2. Meaning
3. The Principle
4. Application

Protection: In light of what I am trying to avoid.

Excess... will it slow me down?

1. Scripture
2. Meaning
3. The Principle

4. Application

Enslavement... will it bring me into bondage?

1. Scripture
2. Meaning
3. The Principle
4. Application

Equivocation... will it hypocritically cover my sin?

1. Scripture
2. Meaning
3. The Principle
4. Application

Peace: In light of what I am comfortable with.

Encroachment... will it violate my conscience?

1. Scripture
2. Meaning
3. The Principle
4. Application
5. Who do I consider?
 - a. Myself
 - b. Brothers/Sisters
 - c. Enemies of the Cross

Prospects: In light of those in my world.

Example... will it help other believers by my example?

1. Scripture
2. Meaning
3. The Principle
4. Application

Evangelism... will it lead others to Christ?

1. Scripture
2. Meaning
3. The Principle
4. Application
5. Who do I consider?
 - a. Myself
 - b. Brothers/Sisters
 - c. Enemies of the Cross

Emulation... will it be what Jesus would do?

1. Scripture
2. Meaning
3. The Principle
4. Application

Exaltation... will it be glorify God?

1. Scripture
2. Meaning
3. The Principle
4. Application

6 | Developing Biblical Growth Strategies

Essential Skills for Spiritual Growth

1. Evaluate what God is doing
2. See what is true about yourself
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Biblical View of External Behavior

1. Externals are a true indicator of our internal realities
2. We must work to see what they indicate
3. We must do something about what we see

Step #1: Make good diagnosis...

1. Honest assessment (Ps 139) ... *“Do we want to conquer bad habits and old enslavements to remove every obstacle to the fullest enjoyment of God, so that people might see and give Him glory?”* (Piper)
 - a. Possibilities
 - David - Ps 139
 - Cain - Gen 4:1-16
 - Peter - Lk 5:1-11
2. Use Biblical indicators (James)
3. Input from others

Step #2: Determine next steps...

1. Process not destination (Jn 15, Gideon)

2. Need for next step

Step #3: Develop growth strategy...

1. What actions needed? (1 Cor 10:13)
 - a. Three Truths
 - i. Common to man

 - ii. Never more than I can bear

 - iii. Always a way out

 - b. Types of Resources available

2. Input from others

3. Pray (James 1:5-8)

Step #4: Form accountability...

1. To Evaluate growth
2. To Evaluate diagnosis
3. Utilize body (Heb 3:12-13)
4. Effective Accountability
 - a. Doesn't Rely Exclusively on Accountability
 - b. Is Involved Early Rather Than Late
 - c. Involves Someone with Maturity
 - d. Involves Someone with Authority
 - e. Should Avoid Explicit Details
 - f. Places the Responsibility for Confession on the Person with the Problem
 - g. Must Actually Hold People Accountable

Step #5: Make adjustments...

1. Based on accountability
2. Based on follow up

5 Steps...

1. Make good diagnosis
2. Determine next steps
3. Develop growth strategy
4. From accountability
5. Make adjustments