

## Personal Assessment and Goal Setting Paper

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I want to start off by saying making goals are important as they are guideposts for the direction you are heading, like the yellow arrows on the Camino. However, I commit to holding them loosely because ultimately, I want to mature as a son of God by being led by the Holy Spirit. I don't want to grip onto these goals for the sake of feeling successful, especially if they somehow lead me astray from God's calling on my life. Otherwise, I would be missing the entire point of surrendering to the Lord. He is the one who directs my steps. I would not dare plan my own future because I am not God. So, I make these goals with the added phrase; "Lord willing." He alone knows my future and He wants me to walk by faith, not by sight. "If we had strength and faith enough to trust ourselves entirely to God, and follow Him simply wherever He should lead us, we should have no need of great effort of mind to reach perfection. But as we are so weak in faith, as to require to know all the way without trusting in God, our road is lengthened and our spiritual affairs get behind."<sup>1</sup>

I obey and know His voice because He is the Good Shepherd and I, His sheep. I desire to obey Him no matter the cost, even if that means giving up some of my goals below. Intimacy with the Father is my one true goal and all the other goals are negligible in comparison. I am devoting my life on this earth to chasing after Jesus, not for what He can give me, but to just be with Him. He is my obsession.

One of the main things I'm learning since taking this class is understanding the season the Lord currently has me in. He has me hidden in the wilderness as He continues to heal me from my past. The grief journal and counseling were the beginning of a major step to this healing process and I'm grateful. It has been difficult, but the Lord allows us to go through difficult seasons because He trust in us. If we want to share in His glory, we also must share in His

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<sup>1</sup> Fenelon, Francois. *Let Go*. (GodSounds, Inc., 2017), 35.

suffering. God is also solidifying my identity in Christ so I can grow in my spiritual authority over the enemy. I believe this wilderness season is ending soon, so this goal setting exercise comes at a perfect time.

### Spiritually

My spiritual goals can be summed up in one phrase; “Seek His face.” I long to be intimate friends with the God of the universe for He promises that as I draw near to Him, He will draw near to me. Each morning I will continue to practice the spiritual disciplines to enter His presence, for He is all my soul desires. I am then compelled to walk in obedience and carry His presence to those I encounter each day. It’s a life worth living. A life full of purpose. A life marked by His love for me.

My goals are the following:

1. ABIDE in Jesus every morning. SEEK HIS FACE.
2. Praise/worship/prayer/listening in silence/study/reading God’s Word.
3. Read spiritual books.
4. Pray in tongues throughout the day.
5. Share the Gospel and my testimony freely.
6. Be quick to pray for others.
7. Make disciples who make disciples.
8. Obey God’s Word and Holy Spirit’s promptings.
9. Linger in His presence.
10. Be faithful with the time and place God has me.
11. Share what God is teaching me with others.

I have an accountability group that meets once a week, and we ask each other questions about our abide time and how we are obeying what God is telling us. We set weekly goals and post it to the group so we can be held accountable. One of my prayers that keeps me growing spiritually, is for my hunger and thirst for God to never be satisfied. In this season of singleness, I am devoting my time and energy to my Lord and Savior. I only want to be anxious about pleasing the Lord.

## Emotionally

This is the area of my life where I need the most growth and I know the best step forward is to have the right counselor to process life with. After completing the five required sessions with a counselor leading up to the Camino, I was asking God if I should continue with this certain therapist. I felt like she wasn't asking me the right questions and did most of the talking during the sessions. Just this past weekend, I met a professor and counselor named Tom at a disciple-making workshop in Florida. We instantly connected and he helped me discover a major part of my identity through our hours of discussion. My gifting is to pastor/teach and Tom began to speak this truth into my life. I'm starting to see God's specific call on my life more clearly as I engage in community with the body of Christ. I believe the Holy Spirit has answered my prayers by bringing Tom and I together and I'm excited to start working with him.

My goals are the following:

1. Meet with a counselor once a week.
2. Spend time writing down my thoughts each day.
3. Be vulnerable with trusted friends about emotions I'm experiencing.
4. Learn how to rest in God as I go.
5. Laugh more (don't take things so seriously, other than things of God).

Being honest and vulnerable with others is the best path forward to becoming emotionally healthy. Also, spending time in prayer with God to process through my feelings and listen to what He has to say. Having Tom as my counselor who I'm committed to and he to me will help with accountability to these emotional goals. I'm starting right away with Tom as we are meeting on Friday, July 28. I'm sure some of these goals will shift according to his leading.

## Socially

One of the most revealing lessons that I've been learning this year is the importance of being immersed in community. There is a limit to our maturity with Christ when we approach

our relationship with God as a solo mission. I believe in my Western and white context; it is tempting to value individualism over community. Even deeper, I believe it's the ploy of the enemy to get believers isolated so that he can pick them off one by one. "Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up! Again, if two lie together, they keep warm, but how can one keep warm alone? And though a man might prevail against one who is alone, two will withstand him—a threefold cord is not quickly broken" (Ecclesiastes 4:9-12). We are stronger together against the devil's schemes and we need the whole body of Christ unified to function properly. That is why God gives and withholds certain gifts to His children so that we can rely on each other to be strengthened in the Lord.

My goals are the following:

1. To have a best friend (brother in Christ) who is around my age and is passionate about God's kingdom.
2. To start a house church and to dive deep into making disciples who will make disciples. My first step is to seek those who are hungry to grow. By September 4, I will have the plans in place for house church, by selecting a day and time to gather once a week.
3. To spend as many lunches/dinners with family and friends as possible.
4. To not engage in perverse talk or jokes.
5. To build in recreation time a couple times a week to engage in fun activities with Christians and non-believers.

First and foremost, to achieve these goals I need to continue to abide in Christ each day because apart from Him I can do nothing. I commit to setting a calendar reminder every two weeks to re-state these goals, so I can evaluate how I'm progressing. I need to give myself grace because relationships will take a lot of time to develop. I don't want to waste time, so I need to invest in people who are willing to walk closer with the Lord through obedience.

Physically

Right before the Camino, while reading “Let Go” I had a profound experience with the Holy Spirit regarding my physical body. I felt like God was leading me to go on a two-week liquid only fast where I would also fast from physical exercise. It would commence as soon as I returned home from the Camino. I was convicted of my impure motives behind physical fitness, and it was time to repent and renew my mind.

The following is what I heard the Spirit say to me, “Truly I say to you, no longer will you find confidence in your physical appearance for it’s all vanity. Being physically fit and performing in athletics are empty wells and old wineskins for you. They will not bring you what you are looking for. Come to me, I am all you need. Let go of these empty cisterns.”

I struggled through tears and deep moaning because I didn’t want to give up my physicality. It was like my identity and confidence in my flesh were being torn away and it was painful. God was telling me that I needed to take up this cross by allowing my body to wither away slowly during this fast. I did suffer by losing over 15lbs of primarily muscle but what I gained was a new perspective in surrendering everything to the Lord. I’m so grateful that God trusted me with this request because I have come to know that He trusts his closest friends with the most difficult tests.

My goals are the following:

1. To practice one day of rest from physical exercise per week.
2. Cardio: Swim/biking/running.
3. Strength training: x3 a week.
4. Stretching for injury prevention.
5. Nutrition – continue to eat clean foods. Drink lots of water. Electrolytes. Coffee and tea. Limit deserts to only weekends. Fruit for after dinner sweets.
6. Walks in nature a few times a week.

I will be meeting with a Christian brother who I met recently at a disciple making workshop. He is a former world champion in gymnastics, and he shared his testimony about

approaching physical fitness with godliness. I'm scheduled to meet with him this upcoming weekend to discuss physical goals and how to approach them with pure motives. God is so good to provide this relationship!

### Cognitively

I want to continue to grow in my knowledge of the Lord and I believe there are certain goals that can help facilitate this. Mostly it's about allotting time to grow in this area and with so many distractions it is important to be clear in goal setting.

My goals are the following:

1. Read everyday (Bible is my most read book)
2. Limit TV watching (sports, movies, shows)
3. Not taking (sermons, podcasts)
4. Puzzles and games
5. Writing
6. Learn how to play guitar

I'm grateful that ATS provides all the stimulation I really need to grow cognitively. I'm very excited for classes to start back up again but even with a lull in the schedule I have found myself hungry to continue my education without any required assignments. ATS has instilled within me a longing to always be teachable.

One of the desires of my heart was to go and find a healthy community of believers in Christ by packing up and moving somewhere else. After much waiting, it is clear to me that God has me where I am in South Carolina for a specific purpose. I'm finally learning to accept and to stop resisting the place that I am in. I'm grateful for the awareness of my own resistance to the Holy Spirit because now I can be led by Him and surrender to His timetable. The people in my community need to be discipled and God is calling me to invest time and energy into them. I trust that the Holy Spirit will show me who is hungry for Jesus, and I will teach them to be a

disciple that hears, obeys, and shares what Jesus commands. I'm very excited to be on God's mission and to make disciples who makes disciples.

#### Bibliography

Fenelon, Francois. *Let Go*. GodSounds, Inc., 2017.

