

Setting Goals

Listed Scriptures

Lk 4:16-22

Lesson Aim

- 1) That your students will practice writing and evaluating short-term and long-term goals

Memory Verse

"Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth, before the difficult days come and the years draw near when you say, 'I have no pleasure in them.'" (Eccl 12:1)

Bible Reading For This Week (for students and teachers)

Lk 1-7

W A R M U P



Imagine yourself dead for a minute. Ask yourself this question, "What will they say about me when I'm dead?" How will others remember you? What will they write on your tombstone? Here are some epitaphs:

HE DIED AS HE LIVED---Billy the Kid

THAT'S ALL FOLKS—Mel Blanc

HE LIVED VICTORIOUS FOR GOD ALL HIS LIFE AND NOW HIS SOUL WENT TO GOD—Jim Johnson

Thinking about the end of your life is good for you, because it forces you to think about your life now. It's too late to plan for greatness when you've got one foot in the grave. Rather than waiting until tomorrow, you've got to do something about it today. Can you imagine an architect designing a building without first

having a vision of the finished product? Is there a professional football player out there who doesn't play the game with the end view of winning in mind? Would a teacher work hard to create a lesson plan unless she knew in advance what the class should be like? Why should your life be any different? Unless you are making some goals for your life and making the right choices now, you won't have the best possible outcome. That's why today's focus is on setting some goals for ourselves.

B I B L E S T U D Y



Part 1

The Lord Jesus- Living Out a Life-long Goal

A goal gives us something to try for, a direction to go towards, and a place to end up. Too often, we don't take time to think about our goals, and we usually end up going nowhere! In today's lesson, we can see that as soon as Jesus Christ started His work, He announced the goals that He wanted to achieve. Let's read Luke 4:16-22.

Have students take turns reading it out loud. Have them underline all the actions that were a part of Jesus Christ's goals. Circle all the people the Lord Jesus wanted to reach. Ask them to put a check mark by the goals they think were the most difficult for Jesus Christ to reach. They should be ready to explain why they chose those goals.

Healing the blind and ministering to the poor were certainly difficult. But how about accepting the cross? Jesus Christ wanted to set us free from the bondage of sin. That means He had to be willing to take our sin and die on the cross. It is clear that these goals were not easy. Think about the following questions:

1. Where did Jesus Christ announce His goals? (Nazareth, His hometown.)
2. The people of Jesus Christ's day were not aware of what would happen to Him. What do you think they thought He was claiming that He would do? (Perhaps liberate Palestine from the Romans, do miracles, make sure prisoners were let out of jail.)
3. Jesus Christ set biblical goals. Christians can set some of the very same goals He set. What goals might a growing Christian pick from the Isaiah passage

the Lord Jesus read? (We can tell others about Christ and His good news. We can help the poor. We can tell people the message of salvation.)

4. Based on what you remember about the life of the Lord Jesus, what were some of the difficulties He had in reaching His goals? (Satan did his best to tempt the Lord Jesus to change His goals. People tried to kill Him before He reached His goals. Yet Jesus Christ was always aware of what He had to do, and He worked toward His goals.)
5. Have students put a star by the goal they feel was most needed for Jesus Christ's day. Why? Double underline the goal they feel is most needed for the church today. Why?
6. What does all this tell you about the type of person Jesus Christ was and the goals He had? (Jesus Christ was a man of action—preaching and healing. Jesus Christ was interested in people who needed help. He was guided by the Spirit of the Lord.)



Part 2

Preparing to Serve God

When we talk about goals, we think of planning. But, to actually achieve our goals, we have to carry out our plans and work towards the goals. In the Bible, there are many who prepared themselves when they were young for a very noble cause – to serve God. Let us now take a look at how these people equipped themselves for God's service.



A. Samuel

Samuel served the Lord from his childhood. Read 1 Samuel 2:18–21 and discuss the following questions with the students.

1. How was Samuel's childhood different from that of the rest of his peers? (Samuel was meant to serve God in the temple from the day he was born. His mother, Hannah, had asked God to grant her a child, and in return, she would dedicate this child to Him to serve Him all the days of his life. As a result, we can imagine how different a childhood Samuel would have from his

peers. When he was weaned, he was sent to the temple to train under Eli, to be a priest.)

2. What kind of hardships do you think Samuel had to endure, being consecrated to the Lord for full-time service at such a young age?
(Little Samuel did not get to enjoy the many things that other kids enjoyed when they were young. He probably did not have many friends to play with. He did not get to see his parents as often as other children did. When other children could throw tantrums and demand things from their parents, Samuel had to learn how to be a good servant to God. Living in the temple was probably not as luxurious as living at home with his parents. He probably had to do a lot of manual work too, helping out with the chores of the temple.)
3. What qualities did Samuel have to cultivate in order to be able to serve God at such a young age and sustain it through his adulthood?
(All the hardships suffered as a young child probably trained Samuel to be physically able to take hardships. In addition, he probably had a lot of patience and endurance. Having lived in the temple, and growing up with a lot of training in God's words as a result, Samuel must have been equipped with an in-depth knowledge of God's words. He must have established a close relationship with God too since he was not with his parents from a young age. Over the years, God must have become his best friend.)

B. Daniel

Daniel and his friends withstood foreign influences and excelled in a foreign land. Read Daniel 1:1, 1:6-19 and discuss the following questions.

1. When Daniel and his three friends refused the food of the king, what spiritual qualities were demonstrated?
(As exiles, as young boys, the allure of good food offered by the king seemed hard to resist. Yet, Daniel and his three friends knew that this food was probably offered to idols. They refused to eat of such food. They would rather have gone hungry and settled for plain vegetables and grains than go against God's commandment and eat food offered to foreign gods. This shows great integrity, fear of God and self-control. It is not easy resisting good food if you are a captured prisoner.)

2. Why do you think they could maintain their stance and glorify God in the midst of foreigners?
(Daniel and his friends must have had very strong foundations in the word of God, as well as training in self-control, to be able to maintain their stand. By telling the guard to feed them plain vegetables and grains, they also exhibited great faith in God. This does not come without prior experiences in God. Whenever we turn to God, we build up experiences that will strengthen our faith and help us out in later times of trouble.)

C. Timothy

Timothy was trained from a young age to be a good worker of God. Read Acts 19:22, Acts 20:4 and 2 Timothy 1:5. Discuss the following questions.

1. What are some of the good works of Timothy? (Timothy was well trusted by Paul. Paul sent him to minister in Macedonia when he could not go himself. Timothy was a constant companion in the ministries of Paul. We can infer that he must have been an easy-going person who could work well and interact well with other workers and believers. He must have also been able to take physical hardship as missionary trips, especially during Paul's time, were not easy journeys.)
2. Timothy's faith was established at a young age. How can a youth equip himself to be a good worker of God, like Timothy did?
(We know that Timothy was well trained in the scriptures from a young age, by his mother and grandmother, Eunice and Lois. This is definitely one indispensable quality a youth who wants to work for God must possess.)

C H E C K F O R U N D E R S T A N D I N G



- 1 What was the Lord Jesus' goal in life, according to Luke 4:18?
- 2 What was the goal in life set for Samuel even before he was born?
- 3 What are some of the important qualities a good worker of God must

possess? How can one be trained for these qualities? (Refer to examples from the lives of the Lord Jesus, Samuel, Daniel and Timothy.)

L I F E A P P L I C A T I O N



Goals

What are your goals in life? What are your goals like? Do you have goals both for yourself and for those whom you love? Do you include God in your goals? When Paul, the apostle, met the Lord Jesus for the first time, he asked, "What do you want me to do?" (Acts 9:6). In your goals and plans, do you ever ask this question? Here are two real-life testimonies of church members who have resolved to live their lives for God's use:

Testimony 1

During one NYTS, one brother was fasting and praying to God about his future. He was about to graduate from college in a year, and had many questions on his mind. Will he even get a job? What positions should he apply for? Which city should he move to? Will he do well in his career? For many days during the NYTS, even though he fasted and prayed very hard, he didn't feel that God was really with him, until one afternoon when he felt God finally talk to him in his prayer.

In that prayer, this brother suddenly felt like God's voice was directed at him (though he didn't physically hear anything). In this prayer, he felt so strong that God was posing a question to him, "What about ME?" He then realized that his prayers had all been about HIMSELF and what he wanted to do in his life on earth. He had not thought about what he wanted to do for God or what God wanted him to do.

That prayer was a great awakening for that brother. He started to know what he ought to do. After talking with pastors and fellow brothers and sisters, he found answers to all his questions and had a part for God in all his plans. Now, he's got a good job in a city away from home and he's actively helping out with the church there, for the members there really needed more help in building up the church.

Testimony 2

Some twenty, thirty years ago, the True Jesus Church was not established in as many continents as it is today. There were two teenage brothers in Taiwan who made an agreement between themselves that when they got older, they would go

together to Europe, where the church had not been established, and bring the gospel there. They began on their ambition for God by putting it in their prayers. They also worked really hard on learning the languages spoken in Europe. After college, they applied to graduate schools there. They were accepted and they studied very hard in graduate school. After that, they got jobs there and settled down in their newfound homes. Together with some other members who went to Europe to study or to work, they met together for services and preached to whomever they met. Thank God, the churches in Europe have been established and more members have been added over the years.

Questions to think about:

1. From these two testimonies, what were the important steps involved in the plans the believers had for God?
2. No one can be the solitary hero in any work for God. The support of brothers and sisters is really important in our plans for God. Describe the roles of the brethren in the plans of these believers.
3. What were the sacrifices these brothers made in their plans for God? What do you think were the difficulties they had to overcome?
4. Have you ever thought about your goals? Have you ever taken the time to actually write the goals you long to reach, and then evaluate them? If not, here is a pattern you can follow.
 - a. Begin by writing one spiritual goal you would like to accomplish this month. Write it down. You might write, "My goal is to learn more about the Bible," or "My goal is to have a better prayer life."
 - b. Second, you need to be able to measure it in some tangible way. You will need to rewrite your goal if it is not measurable. For example, a better prayer life could be measured by getting up 10 minutes earlier each day and praying or praying for all family members each night before going to sleep. These are clear goals because they can be easily measured. You can tell when you've reached your goal. Remember to write your goals in terms of specific actions.
 - c. Now, go ahead and write several spiritual goals for the future—for this year and next year, or for the next 2-3 years.
 - d. Fourth, evaluate your goals. Because these are spiritual goals, ask

yourself the following questions for each goal.

- *If I accomplish this goal, will Jesus Christ be glorified?
- *Does this goal help me and/or others become more like Jesus Christ?
- *Is my goal a specific action I can see or measure?
- *Will I know when I have accomplished my goal?
- *Is it possible to reach my goal?
- *Does meeting this goal require the work of the Holy Spirit?
- *You can add other questions you might think are helpful in determining whether a goal is spiritually valuable.

- e. Now, prepare to share your goals with your class. Tell them about the process you went through to get your goal written and evaluated. You may want to share with the class during the next month how you're meeting your spiritual goals.

R E F L E C T I O N & P R A Y E R



What we have done today is to organize a few steps in your journey of life. It may seem unimportant to set a goal this month. But it is a step. Then having met this month's goal, you may want to take some more steps next month and the months after. It's great to begin setting goals. It's a good habit that will help your journey down the road. Close the class with a prayer, remembering as you pray that only with His help do you meet your spiritual goals.