

“The One Thing” – Part 1

Date: January 14, 2018

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A. 2018 **CAN** be a successful year for you reaching your goals!!!

- Making a New Year's resolution is a great way and time to make a positive change in your life's habits, whether it's going to the gym, waking up earlier, or saving your money, etc.
- **BUT**, it's very rare if people keep their resolutions for the whole year. According to U.S. News, **approximately 80% of resolutions fail by the second week of February**, so the odds are against us.
- According to a researcher approximately **50 percent of the population make resolutions each New Year**. Among the top resolutions are **weight loss**, **exercise**, **stop smoking**, **better money management**, and **debt reduction**.
- To make resolutions work, involves **changing behaviors** — and **in order to change a behavior, we have to change our thinking** (or "rewire" our brain). Habitual behavior is created by thinking patterns which become strongholds for our behavior when we're faced with a choice or decision. Trying to destroy that thinking pattern by "not trying to do it" in effect just strengthens it. **Change requires creating new thinking.**
- “When we set goals, we're taught to make them specific and measurable and time-bound. But it turns out that those characteristics are precisely the reasons goals can backfire. “An **area of focus** leaves every positive possibility and opportunity open. All this while moving forward on the things you value most.”

B. “In 2018, let’s be in that 20% that stick with their goals and achieve success.

- How can we really do that when we have failed so many times?

1. We should resist setting unrealistic goals.

- Any goal we set is going to take discipline and perseverance in order to achieve it, so we might as well be realistic about it.

2. We should resist having too many goals.

3. We should let God know what **one thing** we desire of Him in 2018.

- **Psalm 27:4** (4One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in his temple.)

- **Mark 10:17** [The Rich Young Ruler] (17As He was setting out on a journey, a man ran up to Him and knelt before Him, and asked Him, “Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?”)

- You might want someone special in your life to come into a saving relationship with Christ.
- You might want Him to break a stronghold or addiction in your life or a love one’s life.
- You might want to get married or engaged to be married in 2018.

4. We should ask God what **one thing** He desires of us for 2018, instead of having our own good intentions.

- **Mark 10:18-23** [The Rich Young Ruler] (the remainder of the story)

C. Once we think we have **the one thing** God wants for our individual life in 2018, we should:

1. Ask God to **give us a passion** for that goal.
2. Ask God to **give us the necessary grace to change our way of thinking** that has created habits that have kept us in bondage from breakthroughs in that area.
3. Ask God to **give us the necessary grace to persevere to create the new habits** that will allow us to accomplish what He has told us that He desires for us to accomplish in 2018.

D. In 2018, let's start the year the same way we started 2017, with prayer and fasting.

- **We are calling a twenty day congregational fast starting tomorrow.**

1. By praying, we are letting it be known that we are dependent on our heavenly Father for a successful 2018.
2. By fasting, we are denying our flesh of some of what it might want in order to hear God better.
3. By fasting, we making more time to spend in prayer.

E. COMMUNION