

SO WHETHER
WE ARE AT HOME
OR AWAY,
WE MAKE IT OUR
AIM
TO PLEASE HIM.



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AIM

“So whether we are at home or away,
we make it our **aim** to please him.”
2 Corinthians 5:9

IT'S A JANUARY THING. The Christmas tree (and corresponding sweater) goes back into mothballs and our minds go into the future. In January, there is a natural movement toward setting goals and turning leaves. It can be a helpful inclination — if we can make the most of it and, to make the most of it, our intentions must become plans.

God, being the inventor of the calendar, works with the calendar as well. Undoubtedly the Holy Spirit stirs up vision and intention in the hearts of Jesus' disciples in January but there is an enemy to that good goal-setting, leaf-turning progress. The enemy is ... February! It sneaks up on all these intentions and smothers them out with a blanket of “the demands of real life.” If we, like the Apostle Paul, would aim to please God in the actual working out of our life, then we must beat back February with a vengeance.

AIM is a resource to help you in that fight. It is designed to get you to think deeply about your life and prayerfully consider what “aim[ing] to please him” looks like in the year to come. Please take this booklet and work through it diligently until some tangible next steps appear. Pray for the Holy Spirit to give you some good old-fashioned goals for this year and pray for the conviction to reach them. Turn your intentions into plans and make the most of January. February is licking its chops to devour it.

*“Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise,
making the best use of the time, because the days are evil.
Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.”*
Ephesians 5:15–17

HELPFUL INFO

This booklet is just a guide to help you as you intentionally seek first the kingdom of God in the upcoming year. There are several ways to make use of the content and questions, all of which is left up to you.

There are six sections, five handling specific areas of reflection and one for writing in all of your “cleaned-up” conclusions: Abide in Me, Put to Death, Stir Up, Be Ambassadors, See the Glory and Review & Apply.

Our recommendation is to go through each section and jot down your thoughts for each question. If you don't write in complete sentences, don't sweat it — just get your thoughts out. If you generally find you write more than is needed, feel free to grab an extra sheet or two of paper and continue to write. This isn't a homework assignment you'll be turning in at the end, but is simply meant to be a tool to help you be intentional in seeking God for the coming year.

You can do the whole thing in one sitting, over the course of six separate times, on your own, with your spouse or family, or in some other small group setting. Whatever is most beneficial for you.

Toward the end, we've provided space to clean up and condense your thoughts into one place. It's your choice whether or not you use it.

Some things you'll see along the way and what they mean:

R This symbol is an indicator of a resource that might be helpful in going deeper for the section you're working through.

C This symbol, seen in the “Review & Apply” section, indicates ways to be united with others in the church body in the coming year, that we might emulate the church in Acts 2:42, 44:

*And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching
and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. ...
And all who believed were together and had all things in common.*

ABIDE IN ME

“**Abide in me**, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.”
John 15:4-5

1. Describe your relationship with God today in terms of ...

... reading the Bible:

... prayer:

... faith:

... obedience:

2. How can your relationship grow deeper this year in these areas?

3. What simple steps would represent an improvement?

4. How can others help you be successful?

5. Would a Bible reading plan help?

How will you make the plan readily available when you read?
(Will you print it out, view it electronically, etc.?)

What time can you consistently spend in thoughtful reading?

 Some great options and additional resources are available at <http://summitview.com/resources/growing-deeper>.

6. What might help you be steadfast in prayer?

Some practical ideas:

The last portion of this workbook is dedicated to developing a prayer list for the year. At this point, what are a few items you'd like to see appear on that list?

 A list of passages on prayer can be downloaded from <http://tiny.cc/NTPrayer>.

PUT TO DEATH

“**Put to death** therefore what is earthly in you.”

Colossians 3:5

1. What sins are currently entangling you? (Hebrews 12:1-2)

2. What way(s) out of sin has God provided for you?

Get input from Christians who know you and your life.

3. What does repentance (turning away from this sin) look like?

4. How can you ensure this turning will happen?

STIR UP

“Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. And let us **consider how to stir up one another to love and good works.**”

Hebrews 10:23-24

1. Who might you be called to encourage in the faith this year?
(i.e., fellow D-Team members, believing friends and family, etc.)

2. How often do you have a meaningful discussion with another believer about the Word of God and how it is working in your life? How, practically, might you improve that frequency?

3. What service to the body do you think God is calling you or your family to?



A Life Transformation Group (“LTG”) might help you find greater accountability in these areas. More details available at <http://summitview.com/resources/leader-resources/discipleship>.

BE AMBASSADORS

“Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ,
God making his appeal through us.
We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.”
2 Corinthians 5:20

1. Who is in your sphere of influence?

Who are your neighbors? Could you write their names down on the chart below?

	ME/MY FAMILY	

2. What does it look like to be salt and light in your sphere?
What must change in your life to work toward that reality?

3. What other believers might you invite into your sphere?

4. What new ways could you serve people in your sphere this year?

5. How can your life be less frantic and compartmentalized this year and more purposeful and integrated?

 Check out “Thorns,” a message by Aaron Ritter, available at <http://summitview.com/teachings/media/m/2227/t/thorns>.

6. What is at least one opportunity to share the gospel that you would like to commit to praying for this year?

SEE THE GLORY

“Did I not tell you that **if you believed
you would see the glory of God?**”

John 11:40

1. What biblical promises are you clinging to this year to ...

... refresh your soul?

... build endurance?

... reject sin?

... love sacrificially?

... live generously?

... proclaim boldly?

What other promises are you clinging to?

2. Use Matthew 6:7-13 and other passages to shape your prayer list.

Guiding passages:

Praises for what God has done and is doing:

Prayers for God's will to be done in ...

... your family:

... in the family of God:

... in your sphere of influence:

For Gospel witness and personal boldness:

What mountains need moving?

Struggles with personal unbelief and sin:

God's provision:

“I believe; help my unbelief!” Mark 9:24

REVIEW & APPLY

ABIDE IN ME

I want to grow deeper in relationship with God in these areas:

Some simple steps I can take to work toward this:

This is how I plan to read the Bible this year:

Some practical ways I can be steadfast in prayer:

PUT TO DEATH

Sins that currently entangle me:

Practical ways to ensure the turning of my heart away from these sins:

- C** I've decided to seek openness and transparency in these areas of growth and dealing with sin with the following people:
- Individual(s): _____
 - LTG/Accountability Group Discipleship Team
 - Other: _____

STIR UP

I want to make a point to encourage the following people this year:

Practical ways I can improve the frequency of meaningful conversations:

I plan (or my family plans) to serve the body in the following ways:

BE AMBASSADORS

I want to pray for, love and seek opportunities to share the gospel with the following five people from my sphere(s) of influence:

Practical ways I can be salt and light to these individuals:

Changing myself

Loving and serving

- C** I want to bring these other believers into my mission to be an ambassador of Christ to the people I've listed above:

SEE THE GLORY

These are the top three biblical promises I want to cling to this year:

These are three areas of unbelief and sin for which I want to seek God in the upcoming year:

My prayer list for the year:

-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-

 I commit to having a regular time to pray with others, so we might “continue steadfastly in prayer” and be able to engage with each other’s burdens and celebrate God’s answers together.

Details: _____
