

# GOALS

By Dr. Greg Wiens

From the feedback I received, the last two articles on what spirituality looks like must have hit some buttons! Several people have asked if I was being challenged because I wrote so passionately; the answer is no. I have learned over the years not to write at problems, but to deal with them. For me, this is simply an area where there has been a great amount of misunderstanding.

Another area that isn't seen as spiritual is goals. Somehow when we identify certain targets we want to aim at, or when we make plans to accomplish something in the Kingdom, some view us as "too businesslike." It is like to be spiritual; you must be impulsive and unprepared.


Again, I think this is a very shallow reading of the scriptures for Jesus and the disciples continually made plans, which came to fulfillment or had to be changed. In Matthew 15:21-28 we read of Jesus being asked to do something that he "didn't plan on doing" by a Canaanite woman. He was tired and had planned to get away from everything. Ironically, through her faith and her persistence, Jesus clearly changes his mind from his original mission and says so. Jesus made plans and worked his plan. This is never more evident than during the last few weeks of his earthly life. In Matthew 16:21-28, Jesus portrays what he must do in the next few days to fulfill his mission.

Of course we can say that Jesus' mission was different than ours, so we don't need to make plans or have clear goals as he did. Obviously, that wasn't the case for the disciples. They were very careful about their plans and had specific objectives that guided their behavior. Read Romans 15:24,

*<sup>23</sup>But now that there is no more place for me to work in these regions, and since I have been longing for many years to see you, <sup>24</sup>I plan to do so when I go to Spain. I hope to visit you while passing through and to have you assist me on my journey there, after I have enjoyed your company for a while. <sup>25</sup>Now, however, I am on my way to Jerusalem in the service of the saints there. <sup>26</sup>For Macedonia and Achaia were pleased to make a contribution for the poor among the saints in Jerusalem. <sup>27</sup>They were pleased to do it, and indeed they owe it to them. For if the Gentiles have shared in the Jews' spiritual blessings, they owe it to the Jews to share with them their material blessings. <sup>28</sup>So after I have completed this task and have made sure that they have received this fruit, I will go to Spain and visit you on the way. <sup>29</sup>I know that when I come to you, I will come in the full measure of the blessing of Christ.*

Notice in verse 24, Paul had specific plans (goals) to go to Spain, which had not been realized. He didn't give up, but he continued to pursue these goals. In verse 28, he states he had to complete his immediate tasks before he could task on the next goals he wanted to pursue. He knew something of timing and priorities.

Research tells us that only 8% of us actually have goals that we pursue throughout the year. That is disappointing; because if we aim at nothing, we will surely hit it. Our mission in the local church is to transform our communities with the good news of Jesus



Christ; we are to change the spiritual landscape of our neighborhoods. Nothing is more critical than this. So why don't more of us as leaders set specific goals on how we are going to accomplish our mission this next year.

We all know that you can keep eternally busy doing the work of a church and never see the Kingdom of God expanded one iota. There are enough meetings and committees and people who want to talk with us, that we can fill our calendars and appear to be very busy. But we aren't effective. For me, and countless other millions throughout history have used goals to align our efforts with our intentions. We need somehow to translate our best desire to be effective for Christ into daily living. Goals allow us to allocate our time so that it aligns with our mission, and we will change eternity for others.

Every year, I submit my goals to our Elders and they review them. They push back if they don't feel that the goals of Florida Church of God Ministries won't help us fulfill our mission, which is to build up local churches to change the spiritual landscape of their communities. Every year, the Elders do a review of our previous years goals to see if we have been effective in fulfilling our mission. I am held accountable to these goals and they form my priorities and the way we do ministry. You can go to our website and review our goals for 2010 to see what we are working on this year.

I would encourage you to develop a way of aligning your desired priorities with your daily activities. There are simply too many distractions that others and the enemy will use to keep us off mission. Jesus had goals and plans, as did his followers; I would think we should do no less.