

Jesus said you cannot change some things, and it does not help to worry. You cannot add one cubit to your stature. Whatever triumphs, momentum, disappointments or setbacks you may have experienced in 2012, the past is behind you and a new year is beginning now. You have hopefully rested and feasted. Time to dig out of your Christmas hibernation and look ahead.

“But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow” (Matthew 6:33-34a). This is not a pass to avoid planning for the new year or taking responsibility. This is an admonition to avoid worrying and to avoid trying to do it in the flesh. As you look forward, keep the main thing in focus. Be faithful, and the Lord will provide.

As you probably know, I am big on goal setting. I set goals every year in El Salvador except one, which was actually the one year when the church decreased in number. I have always put personal emphasis on goal setting at this time of year. This first week of January is when we have our Planning for Progress meetings here in the office. I am very glad for the opportunity to look ahead.

It is helpful to have measurable benchmarks to strive toward. It is also important to focus your personal goals on your performance, not on the outcome. Your performance is something you can control. The outcome is not. God gives the increase. Yet, if the Lord gives you a word for the year, it may be a vision for the outcome, and it will be impossible to perform on your own, anyway. So, keep the balance between God’s supernatural leading and your personal, realistic goal setting.

I trust each of you takes time in fasting and prayer to seek the Lord’s direction. With that established, I would like to ask you to consider taking a few minutes to ask yourself the following questions.

1. In what three areas of my life do I want to see the most growth this year?
2. How do I intend to go about pursuing it?
3. How will this year be different from last year?

May the Lord bless and keep each of you as you go about your Father’s business in 2013.