

CHURCH

Is knowing and obeying God important to us?

At this time of year, we begin planning our intentions, as January marks a new beginning and is the ideal opportunity to implement physical, emotional, and spiritual lifestyle changes. CS Lewis is quoted, “You are never too old to set another goal, or dream a new dream.” You notice I used the word developing, because whatever our goals, including drawing closer to God, is a process like losing weight, exercising, or any other vision we are focused on. For example, eating a salad today and resisting the pie is not going to automatically make us skinny, but it’s a positive first step. Likewise,



HOLLAND
LIVING ON PURPOSE

being determined to succeed is how we become more aware of God's voice. Are we spiritually in control of how we speak and act, or do our carnal emotions control us? Are we seeking the easy way to solve our problems, or a lifestyle change that surrenders our thoughts over to God's will? One of our most

One of our most powerful vows would be to dedicate time each day to prayer and meditation. If we are serious about personal transformation, we will seek God's help to guide us in the things we know we need to do or that we need to stop doing. For example, I heard someone say the other day that if a person is serious about

person is serious about conquering bad eating

habits, they would ask God to help adjust their cravings. I agree, but what if the love of food is more powerful than their desire to become healthy? What if the person does not really want to surrender this powerful addiction? What if a person loves money, pornography, being lazy, selfish, abusive, or smoking, or alcohol, more than they care about what God thinks? Until the desire to change becomes more important than staying the same, our visions are nothing more than dreams. When the mind changes, the deeds and actions of the body will follow. No matter what people say, our body is God's temple, and the way we treat it is very important to Him.

If we asked God to deliver us from our weaknesses, He would

get involved? What if we sincerely asked the Lord that for every time we lusted to do something we know is a sinful negative behavior, that He would make us nauseated? Too extreme, you might say? I believe this is how desperate we must become in order to break free from the chains that hold us in spiritual and mental bondage. Let's go ahead and try it, I dare us. The reverential fear of God includes having an awareness of His authority. Do we care that when we defy Him and allow sin to govern our lives, we are hurting Him? Do we care what He thinks or how much He's concerned about our wrong decisions? How much do we meditate on the reverential fear of God, and the price He paid to redeem us from an eternal death?

Spiritual obedience to God and accomplishing His desires come from the inside out. To change what is on the outside, we must first rearrange what is on the inside. When Christ is invited to sit on the throne of our hearts to be the King and Master of our lives, only then can we comprehend what it means to take up our cross and follow Him. The refiner's fire is not just a religious slogan; it is a requirement to comprehend the difference between a religious masquerade and a personal, intimate relationship with Jesus. His salvation is not just Him being a Savior; this heavenly concept is founded on His desire to become our Lord. The question we are faced with is do we really want to be a living sacrifice for Him? (Read Romans 12:1-2).

Our lives are filled with as many distractions as we allow, and we can be as filled and as close to God as we want. We are servants to whom we obey, Romans 6:16. How bad do we want God? Ralph Waldo Emerson once said, "What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us." Romans 8:31 declares, "What then shall we say of these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" Well, we know the devil is against us, but at the end of the day, our free will to choose is the only thing that can prevent what Christ died for us to be.

ordained minister, chaplain, and author. Read more about the Christian life at Billyhollandministries.com.

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A vertical collage of six different dog breeds stacked vertically against a pink background. From top to bottom: a Pug, a Papillon, a Rottweiler, a Shih Tzu, a Bernese Mountain Dog, and a Border Collie.

