

Preparing  
for a  
*Purposeful* Year



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## **Preparing for a Purposeful Year (or Season)**

*These are my notes from a December 2021 programme where I was invited to speak to a group of Christian women on how to prepare for a new year. I believe the insights are timeless and can work for any year, mid-year or season for that matter.*

I appreciate the opportunity to share some insights that I hope will help us to prepare for a purposeful and beautiful 2022.

### **I think it's important to start by sharing some foundational truths about planning and setting goals as a Christian:**

1. God already has plans for us for 2022 and the rest of our lives.

*You saw me before I was born. Every day of my life was recorded in your book. Every moment was laid out before a single day had passed.*  
*Psalms 139:16*

The Holy Spirit is working tirelessly to bring us into alignment with His plans, but we have a part to play (by discerning and yielding).

2. We live our lives in partnership with God. He leads and we follow.

So, we can't make our own plans and then bring Him in to bless them for us. We make our plans with Him, following His leading and guidance (which is not as complicated as we sometimes make it out to be).

3. God expects us to plan.

*Good planning and hard work lead to prosperity (Proverbs 21:5a).*

Using what we know naturally and what He has revealed to us by His Spirit, we should prayerfully plan our steps.

There are times that God will interrupt our plans and change our courses completely and we will walk into things we didn't orchestrate or plan.

But it is His prerogative when and how He chooses to do so. So, we cannot fold our arms and keep waiting for that without making any plans.

Many of the Patriarchs and Matriarchs of the Bible walked into things they didn't plan or imagine. Abraham. Joseph. Moses. Ruth. Mary. But they were not sitting and waiting for God to act. They went about the natural order and

demands of their day. Sometimes, God allowed them to carry on with things as planned and sometimes, He turned their plans upside down.

4. He has the final say.

After prayerfully making our plans and setting our goals, we should hold on to the Lord more tightly than we hold on to those plans. So that if He's changing our direction, we can discern and switch gears to follow. We live for His glory and His plans are always for our good.

The Lord will help us in Jesus' Name.

**Having laid these foundations, let us go into the specifics of how to play our part in making 2022 a purposeful and productive year.**

A year is purposeful when you have a clear sense of direction, and when you continue on that path and eventually achieve what you set out to achieve (or even better).

For this to happen, two things must be in place:

1. Clarity of Goals
2. Systems for Accomplishment

### 1. Goals Clarity

When you are clear on your direction, it becomes easier to set specific goals and stay true to the process of achieving those goals.

There are different domains of life, and they are all connected. And we can set goals in any of these areas:

- a) Spiritual
- b) Wellness (Physical / Emotional & Mental)
- c) Marital
- d) Parental
- e) Familial
- f) Vocational (Academic / Career / Business)
- g) Financial
- h) Lifestyle (Material Acquisitions / Living Changes / Recreational)
- i) Intellectual (Knowledge / Growth), and
- j) Social (Relationships / Community / Service / Contribution)

*Please, note that you don't have to set a goal in every single area to make your year purposeful. The fewer your goals, the higher the likelihood that you will achieve them.*

In fact, my counsel is that you find what I call your 2022 Domino Goals. These are 3 - 4 goals that should be your major focus, for the entire year.

Every other thing should come after them. And furthermore, you can focus on just one of the Domino Goals per quarter.

Some people may even focus on only one major goal per year. That's great as long as it's an effective goal.

Our time is fixed, our energy is finite and our focus is limited. This means that, at each given time, we have to be extremely picky about where we choose to focus our limited resources.

**So, let me ask you:** If you could focus on achieving only one goal for the next three months, and put your entire spirit, soul and body into it, knowing that the achievement of that goal would have a huge impact on your life in general, what goal would that be?

That is what I call your Domino Goal; your 'game-changer' goal.

It is that goal which, once you achieved it, would make a huge difference in several other areas and domains of your life.

You can determine your Domino Goal(s) by prayerfully taking a honest look at this season of your life and situation, as the Holy Spirit leads you.

- What are the biggest challenges that affect many other areas of your life?
- What are your biggest desires and promptings?
- What are those things you have carried in your heart for so long?
- What are those important things you began and really need to bring to completion?

These are examples:

- Developing a passionate relationship with the Holy Spirit
- Identifying and replacing a wrong, harmful mindset
- Restoring some aspect of your health
- Getting a remote job
- Moving into your own house or changing apartments
- Losing a specific amount of weight
- Changing jobs or careers

- Starting a business
- Buying an asset
- Write a best-selling book
- Becoming a more involved parent

Whatever it is, you can prayerfully identify your next focus and determine to put your resources and energies there.

(My workbook **Clarity for Goal-Setting** will be useful to you at this point. It contains 10 coaching questions and guiding notes that will help you to get clear so that you can set goals that please God and take you forward in any area of your life. You can get it at [www.thelifeaholic.com](http://www.thelifeaholic.com)).

## 2. Systems for Accomplishment

At this stage, once you're clear about your direction, you should put systems in place.

As James Clear, the author of Atomic Habits, said: *We don't rise to the level of our goals, we fall to the level of our systems.*

This means that no matter how important the goal is, if you don't have habits, systems and structures in place to achieve it, life will distract you. The 'urgent' things will drown out even important things.

So, you want to put systems in place and plan your actions and resources so that as much as possible you can automate your habits and increase the possibility of achieving your goal.

Because the nitty-gritty is in the daily/weekly discipline in the long haul of working towards your goal.

For instance, if the goal is to get remote work, strong systems can be to hire a Coach, or to pay and register at a trusted remote work platform, or to join (or start) a WhatsApp group of friends who want to do the same thing so that you can motivate each other and bring in some accountability.

*Note, though, that the stronger your systems, the more likely you are to achieve the goal.*

Some systems are better than others, especially if it involves other people. When other people are involved in some way, you won't have to rely on your personal discipline alone.

For instance, if you want to lose weight: These could be your systems:

Good systems:

- Set an alarm for morning exercise
- Register at a gym
- Eat a large breakfast
- Carry a water bottle to drink more water
- Download a weight-loss app to monitor your progress

Better Systems:

- Set an alarm and keep it far from you so you have to get up and turn it off (less temptation to snooze)
- Prepare and set your exercise wear by your bed, so you're more motivated to put it on when you wake up
- Join a weight loss group where people will call you if they don't see you at the gym
- Every Sunday, replace all your weekly snacks with healthier ones so that you're not tempted to binge on unhealthy food
- Hire a personal weight-loss coach. Generally, once you hire a personal coach for anything, it really increases your chances of discipline. Because it is your coach's day job to keep you focused and accountable.

So, to reiterate, for the year to be purposeful, we need to:

1. Know we're co-creating it with God. It's not entirely on Him or entirely on us.
2. Prayerfully and clearly discern our most important goals (Domino Goals) and make them our major focus
3. Set up daily/weekly systems for accomplishing those goals.

I hope this has been helpful to help us all prepare for a purposeful 2022. I pray that as we will seek the Lord's will and walk with Him, and all our expectations will be exceeded in Jesus' Name.

Love and light,  
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(Find more helpful resources at [www.thelifeaholic.com](http://www.thelifeaholic.com))