

Just One Word – Part 2

Ready:

"The LORD came and stood there, calling as at the other times, 'Samuel! Samuel!' Then Samuel said, 'Speak, for your servant is listening.'"

-1 Samuel 3:10 (NIV)

Set

In yesterday's Impact Play, we talked about the value of a one-word theme for the year. Now, if you are like me, you have done your fair share of year-end goal-setting, but, as time goes by, you begin to feel guilty as you fall short of the goals. For me, I got so frustrated at one point with the whole process of resolutions that I boycotted the whole idea and avoided setting any goals at all. That didn't work either. Instead, I just felt guilty about being the slacker who didn't set any goals. In both cases, I always wound up feeling defeated.

Despite all of the hype, I still love the fact that the New Year can be an opportunity to wipe the slate clean and start over. We are free to finally lose that 10 pounds, commit to daily devotions, win more games, train harder, pray more faithfully, spend more time with family, pay off bills, raise grades or even share Christ with more teammates and friends. But the reality is that those long lists of resolutions rarely become a reality.

One solution to this is to strip it all away and boil it down to one key word for the upcoming year, making it basic and simple.

So, let's get to the practical side of the one-word theme concept. Here are seven steps to help you discover your one-word theme. Keep in mind that the process takes time, but that it is worth it. Whether you are an athlete, coach, parent or business leader, this process can facilitate breakthrough for you in every area of your life.

1. Prepare your heart through prayer and fasting.

Spend time in prayer and ask God to reveal the one word to you. Remember, it is not you who chooses the word, but God who reveals to you what He wants to teach you in the coming year. Spend extended time in prayer, and consider fasting. Through fasting, God can increase and heighten your reliance upon Him for the one word. He will speak specifically and clearly into your heart. At a minimum, I recommend getting away for one full day and spending time before the Lord. That invested time will pay big dividends. God will speak when you consecrate yourself and intentionally put yourself in a posture to hear from Him.

2. Search the Scriptures.

While reading your Bible, ask the Lord to highlight or bring to your attention a verse or story.

This provides great insight and will help you ground your word in THE Word. Commit that verse or passage to memory.

3. Evaluate all of your roles.

Each of us plays many different roles in life (e.g., athlete, coach, parent, spouse, leader, athlete, friend, brother, etc.). As you pray and think through those roles, pay attention to what God shows you. This step will help you understand the lives you impact and those that impact you. What is it that God wants to take hold of in your life and use for His glory? What area of your life do you need to surrender? What character trait does God want to develop within you? Which fruit of the Spirit does He want you to live out? These are several starter questions that can get you going in the right direction.

4. Do NOT seek counsel from others.

Seeking advice from godly counsel regarding issues or problems is essential, but I would highly recommend not asking for one-word ideas from friends, spouses or accountability partners. Everyone will give you an opinion, but you aren't seeking their opinions. You're not even seeking your own opinion. You're seeking God's opinion.

5. Ask God for the word.

This is where the rubber meets the road. Boldly ask God for the word. Just as Samuel said, "Speak, Lord, your servant is listening," you need to humble yourself and ask God to drop the word into your heart, mind and soul. Be open and willing. The word can be a fruit of the Spirit (kindness, faithfulness), attribute of God (holiness, mercy), discipline (prayer, memorization), person (spouse, child), biblical principle (harvest, stewardship), spiritual focus (devotion, intimacy, passion), character trait (commitment, perseverance), values (integrity, teamwork) or characteristic of Christ (serving, humility). This is not meant to be list from which to choose, but rather a starting point to get you thinking and to help you as you begin to listen for the Lord's prompting.

6. Share your word with trusted people.

Once you have your word, it is important to share it with your best friend, husband or wife, accountability partner or pastor. One year, I didn't share my word with anyone except my wife and three accountability partners. Prayerfully consider who you need to share your word with. Ask them to pray for you and to hold you accountable so that God can do His work in you.

7. Live out your word.

As you begin to live out your word on a daily basis, be sensitive to the Lord's leading. Be open to learning more as He reveals Scripture, quotes and books for you to use. Keep a journal and write down the insights and lessons throughout the year. Evaluate your commitment on a regular basis, and make sure that you pray about what God wants you to learn.

Are you ready for the year? I pray that this year is a breakthrough year for you as the Lord takes you to the next level and uses your one-word to bring Him glory!

Go

1. What is God saying to you now about your one-word theme for this year? Commit some serious time to praying and asking God to speak to you.

Workout

Psalms 27:4

Psalm 84

Overtime

"Lord, I pray for a breakthrough year. Use this one-word theme to bring You glory. Stretch me through this process. Reveal to me truth and revelation. Please make it plain to me. Speak, Lord, Your servant is listening."



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