



Recalibrate.

New Year, New Beginning

TIPS TO A SUCCESSFUL GROUP

- **ENCOURAGE PARTICIPATION.** While not everyone will be ready or willing to help lead or answer questions, participating and reading God's word with others will help build confidence in each member and the group. Encourage all members to read sections and/or scriptures aloud for the group.

Week 1: Recalibrate your Mind

ICEBREAKER

What's one area of your life you'd like to see growth in over the next 12 months?

INTRODUCTION

As we have entered a new year, it's natural to reflect on what we are carrying over from last year. The world, with its demands, pressures, and uncertainties, often leaves us feeling weighed down and drained. But as we step into this new season, it's a great time to shed the weight of what's been burdening us. In this series, we'll explore how to recalibrate our whole self with God. This week, we will focus on the process of recalibrating our mind to reduce the pull of our worldly desires and step toward aligning our thoughts, feelings and emotions more closely with God's purpose and guidance.

READ I

A new year can represent a new start and chance to do better or make improvements. We commonly make new year's resolutions full of hope and promise for the future. This year consider making a Holy resolution focused on what God can do with and through you this year. With God at the center of your goals, you can greatly improve your life.

Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.... Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you.

-Romans 12:2-3 (NIV)

Paul's wisdom in Romans can help us in making our Holy resolutions this year. First, he warns us not to follow the patterns set by worldly influences, but instead to be changed by renewing our thought life to follow Jesus and Godly influences. Set goals designed to recalibrate your mind by spending more time with God, other believers, and His word (the Bible) this year. Next, be realistic about where you are in your faith and your capacities. Make prayerful resolutions you can follow through on with God's help.

What is one Holy new year's resolution you can realistically commit too? (Examples: Praise and worship more, pray before making big decisions or purchases, complete 21 Days of prayer and 3 day fast, read/listen to Gods word) Discuss how others can support you in being accountable to your resolution(s).

READ I

Recalibrate means to adjust settings or to get closer to a certain standard. For believers that standard is firmly set in Jesus, and while we will fall short at times, we are called to recalibrate towards God's standard to become more Christ-like.

"And have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator."

-Colossians 3:10 (NIV)

Colossians 3 encourages believers to prioritize heavenly values and shed their old, sinful ways. Verse 10 underscores the transformative nature of this spiritual journey, urging followers to embrace a renewed self, recalibrated with the image of their Creator. It emphasizes a thoughtful commitment to the virtues of **compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience in our interactions with others**. To adopt a Christ-like mindset fueled by a spirit of **forgiveness, gratitude, and unity**.

Review the words in bold above. Choose one virtue you would like to see growth in during this new year, with God's help. What's one thing you can do to start doing it this week?

READ I

Our mind is often calibrated to match whatever is in control of our thoughts. The apostle Paul often describes the battle for control of our mind as a fight between the flesh and desires of our sin nature against the Holy Spirit.

*"...For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want."
-Galatians 5:16-17 (NIV)*

One important way to help the Spirit side win is to starve our flesh. Here are three parts of our fleshly mind that we should fast from as we recalibrate our minds this year:

Doubt. These are natural thoughts that question God, Jesus, and the Bible. The key is to process them with Jesus, just as the disciple Thomas did with his doubts about Jesus rising from the dead. Don't let doubts stop your spiritual growth this year.

Negativity. These are thoughts of fear, or focusing on what is or could be wrong or bad. Negativity invites stress, illness, sadness, and brokenness into our lives.

Sin. These are thoughts that focus on ungodly desires which lead us into temptation and actions that hurt our spirit. Sin is missing the mark of what God wants for our life.

Which of these three parts of your fleshly mind do you need to starve most this season? Discuss how you can fast from one or all of these during next week's 3 day church-wide fast starting on January 15th.

READ I

The next way we can help the Spirit side win is to feed the Spirit what it desires:

*"...those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace."
-Romans 8:5-6 (NIV)*

Here are three things the Spirit desires us to do in order to keep it well fed:

Study. Be a disciple, which requires us to be students and appliers of God's word.

Worship. Regularly praise and give thanksgiving to God to help maintain an open and grateful heart. One that is ready to receive His blessings, power, and understanding.

Pray. Communicate honestly with God daily to grow in your relationship with Him.

Which of these three do you need to do more of this season to keep your spirit fed? On January 15th we start our church-wide 21 days of prayer, discuss how participating can help to keep your spirit well fed and in control of your mind.

READ I

Our eyes represent our perspective and what we choose to focus our thoughts on.

“The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are healthy, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eyes are unhealthy, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness!” -Matthew 6:22-23 (NIV)

When our eyes are constantly fixed on despair, bitterness, lust, pride, or other impurities, it corrupts our whole self. The more darkness we consume through our eyes in what we watch, who we hang around with and what we do, the more our mind is corrupted.

But, by the grace of God, we can recalibrate our mind onto truth, honor, justice, purity, and all things lovely and good (*Philippians 4:8*). As we fix our eyes on Christ, our minds are filled with light that can transform everything it touches. The more light we let into our heart and mind through scripture meditation, worship, prayer, positive friendships, and service, the more we can see things change for the better right before our eyes.

What are some things you consume through your eyes that negatively affects your thoughts and feelings (Examples: News, social media, scary movies etc.)? Describe how you feel after watching these things. Do you think that fasting from these things to keep your eyes more fixed on God would help to heal and recalibrate your mind?

WHAT WILL YOU DO?

This week, recalibrate your mind onto God's truth and do not conform to the patterns of this world. Make a realistic Holy resolution focused on spiritual growth, while staying open to receive grace when you fall short. Make a plan to renew your mind through scripture meditation as part of our "21 Days of Deep Breath Devotionals" and to participate in our 3-Day Fast, both of which start on January 15th. Pray on and decide what you will fast from your eyes and mind to starve the flesh and empower the Spirit. Let's encourage one another to transform our thinking and experience a great 2024!

CLOSE IN PRAYER:

Dear Heavenly Father, thank You for blessing me to see a new year and all the promise and possibilities it brings into my life. Renew my mind on You and all the blessings I will receive in my faithfulness. Help me to put on my new self by putting into practice the virtues of my faith. Give me strength and courage as I plan and prepare to fast and pray with my church. Guide me in how to best starve my flesh to feed my Spirit as I work to give complete control over my mind to You so I can be recalibrated with the standard of Christ for my thoughts and actions. In Jesus' name, amen.



Make Time to be in God's WORD

Reading God's Word daily re-patterns the way you think & transforms your mind. Doing your daily devotions is an excellent way to record, process, & share what God is teaching you on a personal level. We do this using S.O.A.P.

- S - Scripture**
- O - Observation**
- A - Application**
- P - Prayer**

Here's an example:

S: *Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.' "*

--Matthew 4:4 (NIV)

O: Jesus said that we can't live on food alone. Our life is sustained through His Word.

A: Just as food is important to me, God's Word is even more because it will sustain me and give me the strength to live out my life.

P: Jesus, thank You for reminding me that I need Your Word to give me the wisdom & strength to follow You. Help me to make time to spend with You daily. In Jesus' name I pray, amen.

SCRIPTURES FOR S.O.A.P.

Day 1:

Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.
--1 Peter 1:13 (ESV)

Day 2:

to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

--Ephesians 4:23-24 (NIV)

Day 3:

Think about the things of heaven, not the things of earth. For you died to this life, and your real life is hidden with Christ in God.
--Colossians 3:2-3 (NLT)

Day 4:

We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ.
--2 Corinthians 10:5 (ESV)

Day 5:

"Jesus replied: 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.'

--Matthew 22:37 (NIV)