

Once, when the people of God had become careless in their relationship with Him, the Lord rebuked them through the prophet Haggai. "Consider your ways!" (Haggai 1:5) He declared, urging them to reflect on some of the things happening to them, and to evaluate their slipshod spirituality in light of what God had told them.

Even those most faithful to God occasionally need to pause and think about the direction of their lives. It's so easy to bump along from one busy week to another without ever stopping to ponder where we're going and where we should be going.

The beginning of a new year is an ideal time to stop, look up, and get our bearings. □ To that end, here are some questions to ask prayerfully in the presence of God.

1. What's one thing you could do this **year** to increase your enjoyment of God?
2. What's the most humanly impossible thing you will ask God to do this **year**?
3. What's the single most important thing you could do to improve the quality of your family life this **year**?
4. In which spiritual discipline do you most want to make progress this **year**, and what will you do about it?
5. What is the single biggest time-waster in your life, and what will you do about it this **year**?
6. What is the most helpful **new** way you could strengthen your church?
7. For whose salvation will you pray most fervently this **year**?
8. What's the most important way you will, by God's grace, try to make this **year** different from last **year**?
9. What one thing could you do to improve your prayer life this **year**?
10. What single thing that you plan to do this **year** will matter most in ten years? In eternity?

In addition to these ten questions, here are twenty-one more to help you "Consider your ways." Think on the entire list at one sitting, or answer one question each day for a month.

11. What's the most important decision you need to make this **year**?
12. What area of your life most needs simplifying, and what's one way you could simplify in that area?
13. What's the most important need you feel burdened to meet this **year**?
14. What habit would you most like to establish this **year**?
15. Who do you most want to encourage this **year**?
16. What is your most important financial goal this **year**, and what is the most important step you can take toward achieving it?
17. What's the single most important thing you could do to improve the quality of your work life this **year**?
18. What's one **new** way you could be a blessing to your pastor (or to another who ministers to you) this **year**?
19. What's one thing you could do this **year** to enrich the spiritual legacy you will leave to your children and grandchildren?
20. What book, in addition to the Bible, do you most want to read this **year**?
21. What one thing do you most regret about last **year**, and what will you do about it this **year**?
22. What single blessing from God do you want to seek most earnestly this **year**?
23. In what area of your life do you most need growth, and what will you do about it this **year**?
24. What's the most important trip you want to take this **year**?
25. What skill do you most want to learn or improve this **year**?
26. To what need or ministry will you try to give an unprecedented amount this **year**?
27. What's the single most important thing you could do to improve the quality of your commute this **year**?
28. What one biblical doctrine do you most want to understand better this **year**, and what will you do about it?
29. If those who know you best gave you one piece of advice, what would they say? Would they be right? What will you do about it?

30. What's the most important **new** item you want to buy this **year**?

31. In what area of your life do you most need change, and what will you do about it this **year**?

The value of many of these questions is not in their profundity, but in the simple fact that they bring an issue or commitment into focus. For example, just by articulating which person you most want to encourage this **year** is more likely to help you remember to encourage that person than if you hadn't considered the question.

So let's evaluate our lives, make plans and goals, and live this **new year** with biblical diligence, remembering that, "The plans of the diligent lead surely to advantage" (Proverbs 21:5). But in all things let's also remember our dependence on our King who said, "Apart from Me you can do nothing" (John 15:5).