

Quick Start Guide

Starting 2012 Right

Sermon Small Group Notes
Speaker: Pastor Dave Patterson

USING THIS SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE

- This Sermon Discussion Guide is only a tool to aid you in meeting the needs of your group. For most groups, there are too many questions to answer in one session together.
- Feel free to adapt the format to meet the needs of your group. If your group is mature and wants to dig deeper, add Scripture and ask suitable questions. Remember that this is only a guide.
- Personal application is key to everyone's growth and should be included in every discussion. When asked how he or she intends to apply a certain principle a group member may say, "I need to spend more time in the Bible and in prayer." It is important for you to help group members make applications that are more specific and commit to a specific plan of action by asking, for example, "How are you going to begin?" An example is to get up 30 minutes earlier each morning, spending 15 minutes reading the Bible and 10 minutes in prayer. Encourage each group member to be accountable to the group for personal progress at the next meeting.
- As the leader your goal is to help bring the group into a stimulating discussion that helps the members recognize their need for personal life change. Ultimately you want them to be willing to commit to change with accountability to the group. Accountability helps us to persevere in our commitments and achieve the blessings of success.

INTRODUCTION

What Kind of year do you want to have in 2012? Do you want to grow in your faith? Have a better marriage? Improve your diet and exercise? Learn more of the Bible and experience more of the power of the Holy Spirit? What kind of year do you want to have?, because you will determine the outcome of 2012 by either implementing the principals of the "Quickstart Guide" or ignoring them. God is for you! He wants you to move forward, have a great marriage, prosper, break free of bad habits and know him more in the coming year! His desire is to work in and through us to fulfill His plan for our lives! Let's bet busy this year and position ourselves for God's best!

MESSAGE

[Phil 1:6]

I am confident of this, that God, who began a good work in you, will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

The reason for a QuickStart Guide is to set you up for success. The Bible is our Quick Start Guide. Let's position ourselves for the completion of the Good Work He has begun in us.

[Phil 3:12-14]

Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. ¹³ Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, ¹⁴ I press toward the goal for the prize of the high call of God in Christ Jesus.

Paul was saying... past accomplishments are not going to deceive me into thinking "I've arrived" and past failures are not going to cause me to give up on what Christ has called me to be!

Forgetting = intentionally choosing to not focus on or give attention to

Reaching = to stretch, to extend oneself in pursuit –

7 Quick Start Principles for a great year:

1. Start the year with a passionate pursuit of God.

A passionate pursuit of God= your **serious**, your intense, there's **focus**, **desire** and **emotion involved** in the pursuit.

Jeremiah 29:11 has to be read with verse 12-14

[Jeremiah 29:12-14]

Call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. ¹³ You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. ¹⁴ I will be found by you," declares the LORD, "and I will

Fasting is one of the main reasons God's blessing has remained on our church (in many tangible ways) is that we have always initiated seasons of pursuing God through fasting and prayer.

2. Set a time of daily prayer and worship! (Increase our current level)

[Psalm 5]

- ¹ Give ear to my words, O LORD,
Consider my meditation.
- ² Give heed to the voice of my cry,
My King and my God,
For to You I will pray.
- ³ My voice You shall hear in the morning, O LORD;
In the morning will I direct my prayer unto you
And I will look up.

3. Read through the Bible this year!

[Psalm 119:9-16]

- ⁹ How can a young person stay on the path of purity?
By living according to your word.
- ¹⁰ I seek you with all my heart;
do not let me stray from your commands.
- ¹¹ I have hidden your word in my heart
that I might not sin against you.
- ¹² Praise be to you, LORD;
teach me your decrees.
- ¹³ With my lips I recount
all the laws that come from your mouth.
- ¹⁴ I rejoice in following your statutes
as one rejoices in great riches.
- ¹⁵ I meditate on your precepts
and consider your ways.
- ¹⁶ **I delight in your decrees;
I will not neglect your word.**

4. Determine to be more generous in 2012

[Proverbs 11:24]

The world of the generous gets larger and larger; the world of the stingy gets smaller and smaller.

5. Mend broken relationships (at least make and attempt by doing your part)

[Matthew 6:14] (*The Message*)

"In prayer there is a connection between what God does and what you do. You can't get forgiveness from God, for instance, without also forgiving others. If you refuse to do your part, you cut yourself off from God's part.

[1 Peter 4:8] (NIV)

Most of all, love one another deeply. Love erases many sins by forgiving them.

6. Re-define your dream and implement a strategy

[Philippians 3:12]

*"I press on, that I may **lay hold of that** for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me.*

"The reason you have been rescued & apprehended is to apprehend God's Dream for your life"

How to bring strategy to God's dream for your life:

- **Clarity** – write it down (Hab 2:2,3)
- **Discipline** – Manage time and habits in order to accomplish
- **Focus** – identify and eliminate the distractions
- **Action** – do something daily/ weekly that moves you toward the dream
- **Partnerships** – no one can accomplish a big vision alone

7. Leave the past behind! *(By grace and forgiveness)*

[1 Corinthians 15:10]

But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect .

No, I worked harder than all of them—yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What were some of your greatest victories in 2011?
2. Discuss how you will participate in the 21 day fast.
3. When it comes to daily prayer and worship are you a morning person or an evening person and how will you increase your personal time with God?
4. Have you ever read all the way through the Bible? Will you be reading through the Bible this year and how do you think it will effect your life in 2012?
5. Discuss ways to be more generous in 2012
6. Pray for any broken relationships that need Gods healing touch.
7. Recall and reclaim the dreams God has given you and pray for a renewal of passion and strength to see the fulfillment of those dreams.