



Is it Finally Time to Change?
Ready! Fire! Aim!...Oops!



Proverbs 21:5: (NASB) *The plans of the diligent lead surely to advantage, but everyone who is hasty comes surely to poverty.*



Time for a Christian Questions Pop Quiz! Who here in our listening audience is so satisfied with their Christian life that they see no need to focus on further change or development? As you look at your life and imagine yourself before Jesus, would he say to you, wow your character is so fully developed, your prayer life is so complete and your sacrifice of your will is so overwhelmingly perfected that you can stop trying? Just relax for you are the perfect example of my disciple! No? Well, then what are you doing about it? Are you resolving to change, but more importantly, are you keeping your resolve?

Babylonian history, *The History of New Year's Resolutions, geobeats*

- New Years Resolutions: one of those ideas that seemed to have existed forever but it did have a beginning a long time ago. The New Year's holiday was first celebrated approximately 4,000 years ago in Babylon. However, the Babylonians did not have an official written calendar so they observed the holiday in March during the early beginnings of spring. During this time the Babylonians would make promises to their gods, usually entailing paying their debts. Shedding a few pounds didn't seem to be on top of their minds.*

Part 1: READY!

This part of the process is the least glamorous of the three steps and is also probably the most overlooked as well. "Ready" represents the prep work before the event. It is akin to all of the practice that a professional must put in before an event. No one cares about those hours, the technique, the discipline and the focus all done ahead of time. Observers only care about the performance. They only see the result. The athlete knows differently.

*"I didn't lose my will to win; I lost my will to prepare."
--Joe Montana upon retiring from the NFL*

"READY" EQUALS



LISTEN/LOOK



& THINK





"New Year's Resolutions Song," (Verse 1) Rhett and Link



Working out, losing weight
maybe using tanning spray
becoming more attractive in general
reading more, watching less
learning all the rules for chess
becoming somewhat smarter in general
eating fish, not fingernails
volunteer to save the whales
becoming a better guy in general
saving more, spending less
yes I will wax my chest
dating more girls in general

To be **READY** we must



LISTEN/LOOK

Habakkuk 2:2-4: (NRSV) ²Then the LORD answered me and said: Write the vision; make it plain on tablets, so that a runner may read it. ³For there is still a vision for the appointed time; it speaks of the end, and does not lie. If it seems to tarry, wait for it; it will surely come, it will not delay. ⁴Look at the proud! Their spirit is not right in them, but the righteous live by their faith.

1. Have a clearly defined goal - *Write the vision*
2. Write it out in great detail - *make it plain on tablets*
3. Review it daily - *so that a runner may read it*
4. Take action - *do those things necessary to make progress - For there is still a vision for the appointed time; it speaks of the end, and does not lie*
5. Realize that failures are only stepping-stones - *If it seems to tarry, wait for it; it will surely come, it will not delay*
6. Never, never, never give up. - *The righteous live by their faith*



"New Year's Resolutions Song," (Verse 1b) Rhett and Link



But not this year. No, this year is different!
As different as a gazelle. Yes, a gazelle from a deer.
After all these failed resolutions.
My future is clear, the future is near!





Do we really have to think about change - can't we just do it?

))) Roman history, *The History of New Year's Resolutions, geobeats*

- *Then in Roman times as different emperors took the throne, the calendar began to change. In 153 BC the Roman senate ruled that the New Year would officially begin on January first. The Romans would make vows to their god, Janus, after whom the month of January was named. They would commonly ask for forgiveness and exchange gifts. In 46 BC Julius Caesar altered the months yet again, and he made the year last for 445 days. It was during the reign of Caesar that resolutions became more recognized with people making promises such as showing kindness to others. Still no sign of Weight Watchers.*

More on our being **READY**:

Isaiah 30:20-21: (NASB) ²⁰Although the Lord has given you bread of privation and water of oppression, He, your Teacher will no longer hide Himself, but your eyes will behold your Teacher. ²¹Your ears will hear a word behind you, this is the way, walk in it, whenever you turn to the right or to the left.

In our Christian preparation, we can access the will of God. We can see His will and hear it IF we are attune to it!

Matthew 13:9-13: (NASB) ⁹He who has ears, let him hear. ¹⁰And the disciples came and said to him, why do you speak to them in parables? ¹¹Jesus answered them, to you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been granted. ¹²For whoever has, to him more shall be given, and he will have an abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has shall be taken away from him. ¹³Therefore I speak to them in parables; because while seeing they do not see, and while hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand.

The looking and listening elements are a key **beginning place** for true readiness. Look for and listen for what changes ought to be made according to God's will and plan. Getting ready takes a lot of effort.



"A calloused palm and dirty fingernails precede a green thumb."
--Michael Garofalo

))) Too high goals, *Ask the Expert, New Year's Resolution, Dr. Lisa Wilson*
citypsychology.com

- *We start by setting too high expectations. We set unrealistic goals in time frames that are unachievable. What then starts to happen is we start to become self-critical as we falter. So, as we become less successful in our attempts, we start to beat ourselves up. We might find ourselves saying things like: "Who am I kidding? Why can I do this? I can never do this." So, we begin to believe those thoughts and as we begin to believe those thoughts, we begin to believe that it is not possible. That's when we start to give up those things we set out in the first place. So, setting too high expectations and unrealistic goals actually end up being self-defeating.*





To be **READY** we must



Looking and listening are one level of engagement but having to *think* about it is another. Thinking takes an effort that most people just won't make.

Proverbs 23:7: (ASV) *For as he thinketh within himself, so is he....*

2 Corinthians 10:4-5: (NRSV) *⁴for the weapons of our warfare are not merely human, but they have divine power to destroy strongholds. We destroy arguments⁵and every proud obstacle raised up against the knowledge of God, and we take every thought captive to obey Christ.*

Here is where the true engagement *really* begins. To take thoughts captive is to reset our perspective **ON PURPOSE!**

Accepting Jesus as our Savior is the starting point...now the real work starts! Our profession in life is to change ourselves to become more and more Christ-like.

 **Reflective learner, Ask the Expert, New Year's Resolutions, Dr. Mike Evans, citypsychology.com**

- It is difficult to say what it is precisely about New Years, but I think a lot of what we do is about culture. I think New Years creates a pocket to stop and think, to be mindful, to reflect. You go public with a change and to support others that are changing as well. This ability to reflect is the key educational skill I want my students and residents to have - to be what we call a "reflective learner;" to see our personal strength and weaknesses, to have clarity about priorities, to balance optimism with realism, to have flexibility. We all have the capacity for this type of learning but our busyness and I think our habits often get in the way.*

Once we take our thoughts captive, we must keep them captive:

Philippians 4:8: (KJV) *Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.*

So, to be **READY** is to **LOOK, LISTEN and THINK** - all based on the perspective of God's will in us. It is God's will and not mine, so let me change step-by-step.



Part 2. AIM! (The act of committing oneself)

This part of the process is the gathering up of the previous preparation work and focusing it on a forward direction. When you aim, what do you do?

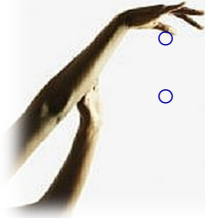




Let's use the example of taking a foul shot in basketball.

To aim is to:

- Focus on the target
- Shut out distractions
- Relax for the sake of your best shot
- Become committed to this action above all others



James 1:8: (KJV) *A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.*

Matthew 6:24: (KJV) *No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.*

Simple statements, yet so thoroughly overlooked by so many! We are only to be about the work of God through Christ in self-sacrifice. We sometimes think we can have the best of this world and the best of Christianity. Who are we really trying to be?



"A man who chases two rabbits catches none."

--A Roman proverb



 **Small goals - timeframe - emotions, *New Year's Resolution*, Dr. Lisa Wilson, citypsychology.com**

- *Make sure that you set specific, small goals on the way to this bigger goal that you want to achieve. Make sure that you set some timeframes on those things because otherwise they're going to be really difficult to be able know whether or not you actually succeeded. The other thing that's going to be really important is to think about your emotions. How are you going to cope with your emotions during this time when you are trying to change something? Quite often the things that we try to change are the things that we previously used to cope with emotions. So whether that be food or whether that be exercise, whatever that might be, we are suddenly going to try and change some of these things. So what are you going to do when some of these emotions come up for you? Find some alternative ways of coping.*

*"Aim small, miss small..."
Mel Gibson in the movie "The Patriot"*

Shut out distractions - often easier said than done!

Galatians 5:13-17: (KJV) *¹³For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another...¹⁵But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another. ¹⁶This I say then, walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. ¹⁷For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.*



Relax and exhale for the sake of your best shot...

To relax is to have confidence in your direction!

Joshua 24:14-15: (NRSV) ¹⁴*Now therefore revere the LORD, and serve Him in sincerity and in faithfulness; put away the gods that your ancestors served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD. ¹⁵Now if you are unwilling to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served in the region beyond the River or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD.*



"New Year's Resolutions Song," (Verse 2) Rhett and Link

Just forget those resolutions you
know that you are never gonna do
and adopt a more realistical view
by committing to things that come easily to you
like eat at least one value meal a week
or put the correct shoes on the correct feet
just raise the bar to walk effortlessly underneath!

"If you focus on results, you will never change.
If you focus on change, you will get results." --Jack Dixon

Become committed to this action above all others:

Philippians 3:13-14: (ASV) ¹³*Brethren, I count not myself yet to have laid hold: but one thing I do, forgetting the things which are behind, and stretching forward to the things which are before, ¹⁴I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.*

Once committed, we can prepare to **FIRE!**

READY! - look/listen and think

AIM! - The act of committing oneself

recap
recap

To **AIM** is to:

- Focus on the target
- Shut out distractions
- Relax for the sake of your best shot
- Become committed to this action above all others



With commitment always come doubts and challenges:

 **Self-critical thoughts are spam, *New Year's Resolutions*, Dr. Lisa Wilson, citypsychology.com**

- *The other thing that you want to do is think of ways of tackling some of those self-critical thoughts. Self-critical thoughts will come up. Expect them. When they do come up perhaps imagine that they are junk email, the junk email that comes through. And rather than reading every email and treating every thought as if it was a fact, file it away. Carry on with what you were doing.*





Satan will present thoughts to us that will try to distract us from our goals.

Commitment stands on a unique footing in our lives: First the offering:

Romans 12:1-2: (NASB) ¹*Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.*

...then the transformation:

²*And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.*

We have to be transformed from what we were to what God would have us to be. We are to be a willing living sacrifice. True transformation requires planning and foresight. This is not just lip service, but instead it is life service.

 **Smaller popcorn bucket, *New Year's Resolutions*, Dr. Mike Evans, citypsychology.com**



- *I see success linked with small goals and small wins. I see more facilitation than motivation, more self-monitoring than self-control. Willpower isn't static; it kind of comes and goes and instead of fighting off one urge after another, these people set up their lives to minimize temptations. Science tells us if you have a bigger bucket of popcorn you'll eat it. Good changers know this and they play offense not defense. They schedule weekly activities or games, throw out the ashtray, they put out their running shoes. They use their high willpower moments to prepare for their low willpower moments. They cut fruits and veggies and put them at the front of the fridge. They call and make an appointment with the trainer.*

*"Nothing is as fatiguing as the eternal hanging on of an uncompleted task."
--William James*



To **AIM** - to commit oneself also requires broad and clear perspective of what we are committed to.

To AIM is to decide to base our life in humility:

Romans 12:3-15: (NASB) ³*For through the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith. ⁴For just as we have many members in one body and all the members do not have the same function, ⁵so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.*

To AIM is to grasp what we are to do and what we are to support:

⁶*Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, each of us is to exercise them accordingly: if prophecy, according to the proportion of his faith; ⁷if service, in his serving; or he who teaches, in his teaching; ⁸or he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.*

To AIM is to decide to love without reservation:

⁹*Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil; cling to what is good. ¹⁰Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor; ¹¹not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; ¹²rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer, ¹³contributing to the needs of the saints, practicing hospitality. ¹⁴Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. ¹⁵Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep.*





How much we miss when we rush through the process and decide NOT to **AIM!**

OK, we are ready, we have aimed...so what does it mean to FIRE?



"New Year's Resolutions Song," (Verse 3) Rhett and Link

Just face the fact you've always thought
those resolutions don't mean squat
and settle into a comfortable spot
embrace all the things you know you are not.
Hit the snooze, roll over, then repeat
Make large purchases, then lose the receipts
just raise the bar to walk effortlessly underneath!

If we do not do *our* part, then we are limiting *God's* part. If we want to change to become a better Christian *without* doing the work - *present your bodies a living sacrifice* - God can't transform us. He will not step over our will to get to us. He will work *through* our will to get to us. If we don't bend our will towards Him, we are not giving Him an open door.

Part 3. FIRE!

For the Christian, this is not just a quick shot at some target; rather it is to be a lifetime event. This represents the carrying out of what we have looked for, listened for and thought out, and brought to the forefront through commitment. This is the ACTION part of the equation and the actions needed to build a life of true change are manifest in a variety of ways, such as:



Following - Leading - Speaking Out - Thankfulness - Giving - Receiving

Please see Bonus Material at the end of this Rewind for more on these!

"When the will is ready the feet are light."

--Proverb

Prepare yourself and **FIRE** into a life of following. Following is a hard task. A great example of this is Simon Peter, who needed a three-step process over several months to actually follow Jesus. **(More in the Bonus Material!)**



Simon's first encounter with Jesus: Perhaps the **READY** stage?

This account takes place shortly after Jesus came back from his 40 days of fasting and praying:

John 1:40-42: (NASB) ⁴⁰One of the two who heard John speak and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. ⁴¹He found first his own brother Simon and said to him, we have found the Messiah (which translated means Christ). ⁴²He brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, you are Simon the son of John; you shall be called Cephas (which is translated Peter).





Jesus' message to Simon: I know who you are and who you can become. Jesus did not yet invite Simon to follow him, he simply piqued his curiosity.

 **When you want to give up, *New Year's Resolutions*, Dr. Lisa Wilson, citypsychology.com**

- *Before you give up, think about why this was important to you in the first place. Write it down. Will it still be important to you in ten, twenty, or thirty years' time? Is it really still important in this moment? When you made this resolution what was the underlying reason for it? If you decided that what you wanted to do was lose weight, why did you want to lose weight? Was it because you wanted to be healthier? Was it because you wanted to have more energy? Make sure that you are really clear. This helps you to identify what your values are and this will help you to keep going with your resolution a long way.*

 Simon's second recorded interchange with Jesus: Perhaps the **AIM** stage?

This account is estimated at six months to a year after Jesus' baptism.

Matthew 4:18-22: (NASB) ¹⁸Now as Jesus was walking by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon who was called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen.¹⁹And he said to them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.²⁰Immediately they left their nets and followed him. ²¹Going on from there he saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and he called them. ²²Immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed him.

Jesus' message to Simon: I know you; now follow me for true satisfaction. Simon followed but then went back to his fishing business. Good thing Jesus is patient!

What makes us actually **FIRE?**
What makes us actually live the commitment?

 **Tools of change, *Doctor Mike Evans, New Year's Resolutions***

- *When I think of successful changers I actually don't think of the CEO laying out a large agenda or goals. I think more of the plumber or carpenter. These people come prepared with tools. They know they need to reframe and adapt older structures but they also know they can build what needs to be built. Better habits. One room at a time. "January" was named by the Romans to honor Janus, the god of beginnings and transitions. He faces both the future and the past, and I think that is what is special about New Years - learning from the past but pointing to a new you saying, "That's where I want to go."*

 Simon's third recorded interchange with Jesus: Perhaps the **FIRE!** stage?

Jesus' teaching using Peter's boat as his platform:

Luke 5:4-11: (NRSV) ⁴When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch. ⁵Simon answered, Master, we have worked all night long but have caught nothing. Yet if you say so, I will let down the nets. ⁶When they had done this, they caught so many fish that their nets were beginning to break...⁸But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Go away from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man!...Then Jesus said to Simon, Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching people. ¹¹When they had brought their boats to shore, they left everything and followed him.



Jesus' message to Simon: I know you; I know you are willing to follow. Now as you follow me your own sin seems overwhelming and unconquerable, but I say to you as you follow me and trust in me, you can now do it without fear, for with my strength you will become fearless fishers of men.

Simon Peter was now ready to **FIRE!**

"If you have made mistakes, even serious ones, there is always another chance for you. What we call failure is not the falling down, but the staying down."

--Mary Pickford

 **Medieval- grapes- doors, *The History of New Year's Resolutions, geobeats***

- *In Medieval times knights reaffirmed their commitment to chivalry as a yearly tradition. To this day the traditions of New Year's resolutions and getting rid of past year's bad luck continues. Various countries have differing approaches. At the stroke of midnight in Wales a back door is open and then shut to release the luck of the past year. Spain residents eat twelve grapes at midnight to bring good luck in the coming months. What's your New Year's resolution?*

Prepare yourself and FIRE! into a life of righteousness:

2 Timothy 2:15-19: (ASV) ¹⁵Give diligence to present thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, handling aright the word of truth. ¹⁶But shun profane babblings: for they will proceed further in ungodliness, ¹⁷and their word will eat as doth a gangrene: ¹⁹Howbeit the firm foundation of God standeth, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his: and, Let everyone that nameth the name of the Lord depart from unrighteousness.

Focus on godliness first. The greatest source of godliness is in the word of God.

 **Think of this as a journey, *New Year's Resolution, Dr. Lisa Wilson, citypsychology.com***

- *Start to think about this as a journey. Quite often when we set ourselves up for New Year's resolutions we're looking to get to the end point. Well, when we're going on a journey, the journey is part of the whole experience. Consider this: you can either spend this journey checking your watch, finding how long it's going to take you to get there or you can enjoy the experience and really notice things along the way. See your pitfalls, see your hurdles as just part of the journey and part of the experience of getting there.*

Prepare yourself and FIRE! into a life of giving:

1 Peter 4:7-8: (NRSV) ⁷The end of all things is near; therefore be serious and discipline yourselves for the sake of your prayers. ⁸Above all, maintain constant love for one another, for love covers a multitude of sins.

Galatians 6:8-10: (ASV) ⁸For he that soweth unto his own flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth unto the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap eternal life. ⁹And let us not be weary in well-doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. ¹⁰So then, as we have opportunity, let us work that which is good toward all men, and especially toward them that are of the household of the faith.

We have great opportunity for great change in our lives! Realize what is important to change. *Change is a process:* **READY** yourself, **AIM** yourself and then **FIRE!** yourself at Christ-likeness!





*So, is it finally time to change?
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions,
Think about it...!*

*And now even more to think about
only in the **Full Edition** of CQ Rewind!*



*The three steps in the drawing of Simon Peter to Jesus. Simon's life in many ways exemplifies the experiences of our lives and this drawing process shows how we must continually **READY** ourselves and **AIM** ourselves to the point of **FIRE!***



Simon's first encounter with Jesus: Perhaps the **READY** stage?

This account takes place shortly after Jesus came back from his 40 days of fasting and praying:

John 1:35-42: (KJV) ³⁵Again the next day after John stood, and two of his disciples; ³⁶And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God! ³⁷And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. ³⁸Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye? They said unto him, Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted, Master,) where dwellest thou? ³⁹He saith unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day: for it was about the tenth hour. ⁴⁰One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. ⁴¹He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. ⁴²And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, a stone.

Jesus' message to Simon: I know who you are and who you can become.

Jesus did not here invite Simon to follow him, he simply piqued his curiosity.



Simon's second recorded interchange with Jesus: Perhaps the **AIM** stage?

Estimated at six months to a year after Jesus' baptism:

Matthew 4:12-22: (NRSV) ¹²Now when Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew to Galilee. ¹³He left Nazareth and made his home in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, ¹⁴so that what had been spoken through the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled: ¹⁵Land of Zebulun, land of Naphtali, on the road by the sea, across the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles, ¹⁶the people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death light has dawned. ¹⁷From that time Jesus began to proclaim, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near. ¹⁸As he walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea—for they were fishermen. ¹⁹And he said to them, Follow me, and I will make you fish for people. ²⁰Immediately they left their nets and followed him. ²¹As he went from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John, in the boat with their father Zebedee, mending their nets, and he called them. ²²Immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed him.

Jesus' message to Simon: I know you, follow me for true satisfaction.





Simon's third recorded interchange with Jesus: Perhaps the **FIRE!** stage?

(Source: Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Bible Commentary) Not their first call, however, recorded in John 1:35-42; nor their second, recorded in Matthew 4:18-22; but their third and last before their appointment to the apostleship. That these calls were all distinct and progressive seems quite plain. (Similar stages are observable in other eminent servants of Christ.)

Luke 5:1-11: (NRSV) ¹Once while Jesus was standing beside the lake of Gennesaret, and the crowd was pressing in on him to hear the word of God, ²he saw two boats there at the shore of the lake; the fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets. ³He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little way from the shore. Then he sat down and taught the crowds from the boat. ⁴When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch. ⁵Simon answered, Master, we have worked all night long but have caught nothing. Yet if you say so, I will let down the nets. ⁶When they had done this, they caught so many fish that their nets were beginning to break. ⁷So they signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both boats, so that they began to sink. ⁸But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, go away from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man! ⁹For he and all who were with him were amazed at the catch of fish that they had taken; ¹⁰and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. Then Jesus said to Simon, do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching people. ¹¹When they had brought their boats to shore, they left everything and followed him.

Jesus' message to Simon: I know you, you are willing to follow, and you have seen many miraculous events occur from the healing of the sick to the casting out of demonic influence. Now, as you follow me your own sin seems overwhelming and unconquerable but I say to you, as you follow me and trust in me, you can now do it without fear, for with my strength you will become fearless fishers of men.

Prepare yourself and FIRE! into a life of speaking out for truth:

1 Peter 4:11: (NRSV) *Whoever speaks must do so as one speaking the very words of God; whoever serves must do so with the strength that God supplies, so that God may be glorified in all things through Jesus Christ. To Him belong the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen.*

Ephesians 4:29-32: (KJV) ²⁹Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. ³⁰And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. ³¹Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: ³²And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

Prepare yourself and FIRE! into a life of thankfulness - you cannot be truly thankful and anxious at the same time!

1 Peter 4:12-14: (NRSV) ¹²Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that is taking place among you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. ¹³But rejoice insofar as you are sharing Christ's sufferings so that you may also be glad and shout for joy when his glory is revealed. ¹⁴If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the spirit of glory, which is the Spirit of God, is resting on you.

Psalms 28:7: *The LORD is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in Him, and I am helped: therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise Him.*

Psalms 30:4: *Sing unto the LORD, O ye saints of His, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness.*





Prepare yourself and FIRE! into a life of receiving:

Matthew 7:7-11: (ASV) ⁷Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: ⁸for every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. ⁹Or what man is there of you, who, if his son shall ask him for a loaf, will give him a stone; ¹⁰or if he shall ask for a fish, will give him a serpent? ¹¹If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father who is in heaven give good things to them that ask Him?

Philippians 4:15-19: (ASV) ¹⁵And ye yourselves also know, ye Philippians, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church had fellowship with me in the matter of giving and receiving but ye only; ¹⁶for even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my need. ¹⁷Not that I seek for the gift; but I seek for the fruit that increaseth to your account. ¹⁸But I have all things, and abound: I am filled, having received from Epaphroditus the things that came from you, an odor of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God. ¹⁹And my God shall supply every need of yours according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.

1 Corinthians 10:13: (ASV) *There hath no temptation taken you but such as man can bear: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation make also the way of escape, that ye may be able to endure it.*

