

Christian Goals Guide

An old business adage says, “You get what you measure.” In other words, we tend to work toward the things we think about and focus upon. This concept applies to more than just business, though. The practice of goal making and evaluating is one way to “measure” parts of our lives and help steer us toward results we’d like to see.

Our lives are based on love. This love can exist in many ways, and our actions and reactions regarding love vary from person to person and instance to instance. Love can take the form of sinful infatuation with self or caring and sacrificial love for others. There are also many different motivations for love. Some love because it creates a feeling of self-fulfillment, while others love as a response to love received.

Love can be a complicated thing. To find the truth about love, we need to look beyond ourselves. We need to look to the “source and ground of goodness and life.” The God of the universe showed us true love by sending His Son into the flesh to pay the penalty for our rebellion from God. Because of this once-and-for-all sacrifice, Jesus the Christ, we have freedom. This freedom is eternal - we know that we are saved from eternal damnation by faith in the work of Jesus. This freedom also applies in this temporary world. By the death and resurrection of Jesus, we are offered forgiveness of sins. This means that we are freed from the chains of sin. We are freed from trying to be “good enough” on our own. And, by the power of the Holy Spirit of God, we are freed to “love because He first loved us.” This is the Good News. This is the Gospel.

Scriptural Basis

“One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, ‘Of all the commandments, which is the most important?’

‘The most important one,’ answered Jesus, ‘is this: “Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.” The second is this: “Love your neighbor as yourself.” There is no commandment greater than these.’”

Mark 12:28-31

Three Forms of Love

1. Love the Lord (referred to in this guide as “devotion”)
2. Love neighbor (referred to in this guide as “service”)
3. Love self (referred to in this guide as “health”)

Four Vehicles for Love

1. Heart
2. Soul
3. Mind
4. Strength

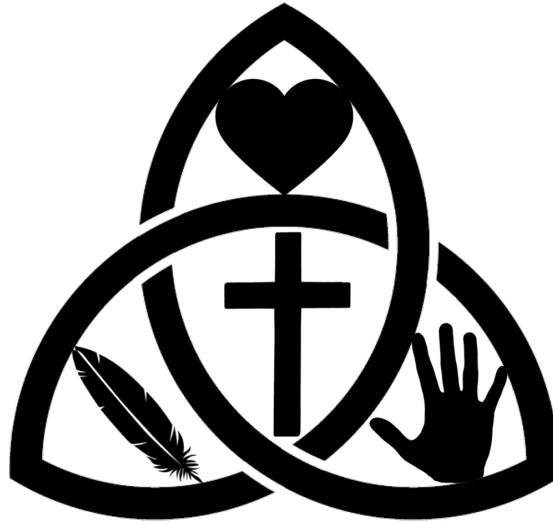
Purpose

The goal of this guide is not self-righteousness. Rather, it aims to help a person reflect upon his or her living and loving in specific areas. The goal is love -- love in the three forms above, enacted through the four vehicles above, called for by these two commandments of Christ. This love is a response to the Gospel.

“But you may say: Oh, it is utterly impossible for a person to keep these two commandments. Yes, it is impossible for you to keep or perform them. You cannot do it; God must do it in you, for him it is possible.”

Martin Luther (AE 51:104)

Symbol and Explanation



HEART, symbolized by the traditional heart shape, represents emotional devotion, service, and health. The heart lies at the top of the symbol to reflect the primacy of the heart in the words of Jesus and the focus on love throughout all of God’s commands. “Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for he who loves his fellowman has fulfilled the law. The commandments, ‘Do not commit adultery,’ ‘Do not murder,’ ‘Do not steal,’ ‘Do not covet, and whatever other commandment there may be, are summed up in this one rule: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ Love does no harm to its neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law” (Romans 13:8-10).

Examples: Time with family and friends, other social events, creating or enjoying art

SOUL, symbolized by the cross of Christ, represents spiritual devotion, service, and health. The cross stands in the center of the symbol to reflect both the truth that “Christ is all, and is in all” (Colossians 3:11) and the centrality of the Gospel in a person’s life.

Examples: Worship, Scripture study, prayer, Christian fellowship, personal witnessing

MIND, symbolized by the quill, represents mental devotion, service, and health. The quill reflects the truth that “the wise lay up knowledge” (Proverbs 10:14), true knowledge is given to a person by the LORD (Proverbs 2:6), and “the fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight” (Proverbs 9:10).

Examples: Academic work, reading, mental exercises (games, puzzles)

STRENGTH, symbolized by the open hand, represents physical devotion, service, and health. The hand reflects the truth that the “body is a temple of the Holy Spirit” (1 Corinthians 6:19), “bodily training is of some value” (1 Timothy 4:8), and the call to “serve one another in love” (Galatians 5:13). “Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body” (1 Corinthians 6:19-20).

Examples: Exercise, healthy diet, proper sleep, physical service, financial health

These four symbols are within the triquetra, a symbol historically used to represent the Triune God (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit). All of a person’s life exists within a relationship to the Trinity and nothing is done outside of that relationship. In this symbol, the intertwined lines of the triquetra illustrate the often complex interrelatedness of heart, soul, mind, and strength.

Personal Goals

Use pages 1 and 2 to help determine goals. When denoting type and vehicle for goals, ask the following questions. (A goal may fall under more than one type and/or vehicle, but try to select only those which apply best.)

“Does this goal cause me to...
 ...love the Lord (circle D for devotion),
 ...love neighbor (circle S for service),
 ...love self (circle H for health)?”

“Does this goal focus on...
 ...the emotional (circle heart),
 ...the spiritual (circle cross),
 ...the mental (circle quill),
 ...the physical (circle hand)?”



As goals are added, keep tallies of each type and vehicle in the Totals area. Consider the balances. Are some being stressed more than others? Are some being neglected?

Date: _____

Goal: _____	D	S	H	♥	✝	☞	✋	Met? _____
Goal: _____	D	S	H	♥	✝	☞	✋	Met? _____
Goal: _____	D	S	H	♥	✝	☞	✋	Met? _____
Goal: _____	D	S	H	♥	✝	☞	✋	Met? _____
Goal: _____	D	S	H	♥	✝	☞	✋	Met? _____
Goal: _____	D	S	H	♥	✝	☞	✋	Met? _____
Goal: _____	D	S	H	♥	✝	☞	✋	Met? _____
Goal: _____	D	S	H	♥	✝	☞	✋	Met? _____
Goal: _____	D	S	H	♥	✝	☞	✋	Met? _____
Goal: _____	D	S	H	♥	✝	☞	✋	Met? _____
Goal: _____	D	S	H	♥	✝	☞	✋	Met? _____
Goal: _____	D	S	H	♥	✝	☞	✋	Met? _____
Goal: _____	D	S	H	♥	✝	☞	✋	Met? _____
Goal: _____	D	S	H	♥	✝	☞	✋	Met? _____
Goal: _____	D	S	H	♥	✝	☞	✋	Met? _____

Totals (use tally marks): _____|_____