

One Word That Will Change Your Life :

1. The Power of One Word

Set

New Year's Resolutions don't work!

50% of resolution-makers fail by the end of January and 9 out of 10 quit by March! So instead of resolutions, get One Word for the year...but be careful! It might just change you.

If you have the "get-it-done" mindset like we do, you've done your fair share of goal-setting at the start of each New Year. However, as time goes by, we felt frustration as we fell short on our ambitious plans. We tried to do too much and as a result, we didn't do anything very well.

In 1999, we started the simple discipline of developing a One Word theme for the upcoming year. That's right—One Word. Not a phrase or a statement, just a single word. By focusing on just One Word we have experienced incredible life-change year after year. When you discover your One Word for the year, it gives you more clarity, passion and purpose for life.

The One Word exercise brings simplicity and focus. It cuts through the distractions and keeps us focused on what really matters. It has stretched us in all areas: spiritually, physically, mentally, emotionally, relationally and financially. God has transformed us through this exercise; God delights in life change.

There is a reason why we say, "Get One Word for the year...but be careful." As soon as you discover your word, the battle will begin. It will initiate a process of teaching, developing, refining, and moulding. God will use your word as a light and a mirror – illuminating your path and revealing things that need to change. It facilitates a great journey of highs and lows all designed to make you into the person you are created to be.

It has been our experience that God quickly reveals His plans for the year regarding your One Word. That word (be it a discipline, fruit of the Spirit, character trait, or attribute of God) will brand you for the year! So discover your One Word for the year and share it with others! It might just change your life!

Go

1. What is God saying to you this past year?
2. What area does God want to take hold of in your life and use for His glory?
3. How does God want to position you for the upcoming year?

Workout

Psalm 27:1-14; Luke 18:22; Mark 10:21

Overtime

"Dear Lord, I ask that you will make it a life-changing year. Reveal Yourself to me as You show me what my One Word theme will be. Fill me with Your Holy Spirit. I realize that it is a journey of learning not a task to accomplish. Strengthen me as I live out my One Word every day. In Jesus' name, amen."

2. Just One Word

Set

It's hard to simplify life. Narrowing the focus seems impossible. Over this past year, you may have been asked hundreds of times, "How is it going?" Your response was probably something like, "I have been SO busy!" You never hear anyone say, "I've had so much time on my hands and I'm looking for something new to do." That person doesn't exist.

You have tons of responsibilities, and your schedule is crazy. You feel like you're sprinting in life. That's why we need to be intentional about clarifying and simplifying life. We have been sharing with many people the simple discipline of developing just one word as a theme for the upcoming year. We decided to stop listing the resolutions and start living One Word. Even though the Bible does not have the phrase "One Word theme," it is interesting to note that the phrase "one thing" appears five times in the Bible: once in Philippians and four times in the Gospels.

In Philippians 3:13-14, Paul uses the phrase "one thing" to bring focus and clarity to his calling. In Luke 10:42, Jesus says to Martha, "only one thing is needed." Both Luke 18:22 and Mark 10:21 include His words to the rich man and express a lack of "one thing." John 9:25 also includes this phrase as the blind man tells the Pharisees, "One thing I do know. I was blind but now I see!" In the same way that Scripture uses these words, we also can put it to use by asking God to reveal a One Word theme for us for the year.

When we first started this process, half of the fun was choosing the word for the year, but we have learned that it is not necessarily us who chooses the word, but rather God who reveals it to us. God can indeed drop an anointed, specific word into your soul. In our first few years, we admit that it was mostly just us picking a word and very little receiving the word from God. Even so, God still used it! But as we became more experienced in the process, we learned to really listen and watch for God's leading in selecting the word. By listening for God's voice, you will discover a God-word, not just a good-word.

Enjoy the process and remember: just One Word. Not a phrase. Not even two words. Narrow the focus for life change. Just One Word!

Go

1. Why is it so hard to simplify life? Why is this life so complex?
2. Why do you think we try to impress people with more rather than less?
3. What is God saying to you now about your One Word theme for the year? Commit some serious time to praying and asking God to speak to you.

Workout

Luke 10:42; Luke 18:22; Mark 10:21

Overtime

"Dear Heavenly Father, I am asking for just One Word. I want a word from You. Please reveal Yourself to me. I am ready to receive the word meant for me. In Jesus' name, amen."

3. The One Word Process

Set

Despite all of the hype, we still love the fact that the New Year can be an opportunity to wipe the slate clean and start over. We are free to finally lose that 10 pounds, commit to daily devotions, win more games, train harder, pray more faithfully, spend more time with family, pay off bills, raise grades or even share Jesus Christ with more teammates and friends. But the reality is that those long lists of resolutions rarely become a reality.

One solution is to strip it all away and boil it down to one key word for the upcoming year, making it basic and simple.

So, let's get to the practical side of the One Word theme concept. Here are steps to help you discover your One Word theme. Keep in mind that the process takes time, but it is worth it. Whether you are an athlete, coach, parent or business leader, this process can facilitate breakthrough for you in every area of your life.

The One Word process has three simple steps – Look In, Look Up, and Look Out.

Step 1 – Prepare Your Heart (Look In) – This is where you take action to unplug from the hectic pace, noise and clutter. Finding solitude and silence can be a difficult task, but to hear from God is essential. As we let God examine our heart, He will give us clarity.

Step 2 – Discover Your Word (Look Up) – This step helps us plug in and listen to God. Taking time for prayer—that simple conversation with God—is the place to start. Ask Him this question: What do you want to do in me and through me this year? This question will help you discover the word meant for you. Don't pick a good word; receive a God-word.

Step 3 – Live Your Word (Look Out) – Once you discover the word that is meant for you, it's time to live it out. Your word will have impact in all areas of your life: physical, mental, spiritual, emotional, relational and even financial. Keep your one word front and centre. Tell your accountability partners and your family your word for the year. Write it in your journal. Post it on your refrigerator. Talk about it with your family at the dinner table. Do whatever it takes to keep it in focus and keep it fresh.

We pray that this year is a breakthrough year for you as the Lord takes you to the next level and uses your One Word to bring Him glory!

Go

1. What is God saying to you now about your One Word theme?
2. Commit some serious time to praying and asking God to speak to you.
3. Go through the three steps and let God reveal the word meant for you.

Workout

Psalm 27:4; Psalm 84

Overtime

"Lord, I pray for a breakthrough year. Use this One Word theme to bring You glory. Stretch me through this process. Reveal to me truth and revelation. Please make it plain to me. Speak, Lord, Your servant is listening. In Jesus' name, amen."

4. Live Your Word

Set

When your One Word comes to you, it may come in the form of a character trait, a discipline, a person, a spiritual focus, an attribute or a value. The following examples of possible words are not meant to be a particular list from which to choose, but rather a starting point of ideas: love, joy, patience, kindness, rest, prayer, health, train, flexible, devotion, intimacy, discipline, commitment, bold, positive, green, inspire, finish, purity, integrity and strong.

Living out your word will keep you focused and prevent you from being distracted. We see the impact of Nehemiah being focused when he was building the wall. In Nehemiah 6:3, he did not come down from his work, because he was doing the one thing he committed to do—build the wall! And he was doing a great work. Remember, when you live your word, you are doing a great work.

Step outside your comfort zone.

The process is exhilarating, but it will also prove to be challenging. You'll face obstacles you didn't anticipate. You will be stretched—we promise. But we often learn the most when we step out of our comfort zone, so stay the course.

It's essential to remember and focus on your word throughout the year. If your word is not at the top of your mind, it will be forgotten.

Keep your One Word front and centre.

Through years of trial and error, we've discovered simple and powerful ways to keep your One Word front and centre throughout the year.

First, post your word in prominent places so you see it on a regular basis. What gets your attention gets your focus; what gets your focus gets done. Creating reminders is important. Write it down and post it in prominent places, such as your school locker, in your car, on your desk or in your locker room.

Second, share your word with your Stretch Team—that inner circle of friends, teammates and family most important to you and whom you trust without hesitation. We call it your Stretch Team, because it consists of the people who stretch you and help you grow. Give them permission to ask you about your word.

When you do these two simple things—post your word prominently and share it with others—you ensure your growth. You will experience highs and lows, but they are all part of the process. As you live out your word, let God use the simplicity of your One Word theme to revolutionize your everyday life.

Go

1. What is one thing you can do to remember your One Word?
2. List three people in your inner circle who you will share your word with.
3. How can you live your One Word as a family, business, team?

Workout

Nehemiah 6

Overtime

"Lord, I pray that you will help me live my word to its fullest this year. Just like Nehemiah, keep me focused on living it and prevent the distractions. And if they do come, give me the courage to stay focused on what You have called me to do. In Jesus' name, amen."

HANDOUT #1

Go

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Workout

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HANDOUT #2 - LIVE YOUR WORD

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When your One Word comes to you, it may come in the form of a character trait, a discipline, a person, a spiritual focus, an attribute or a value. The following examples of possible words are not meant to be a particular list from which to choose, but rather a starting point of ideas: love, joy, patience, kindness, rest, prayer, health, train, flexible, devotion, intimacy, discipline, commitment, bold, positive, green, inspire, finish, purity, integrity and strong.

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