

**December 31, 2018**  
**By Robert J. Tamasy**

## *Pondering And Preparing Proper Plans*

What are your plans for 2019? Are you wanting to grow your business? Do you desire a promotion, or to find a new, more rewarding job? Maybe you want to make a complete career change? Or perhaps your greatest aspiration is to become an improved version of you?

As another calendar year reaches its conclusion, it is time for many of us to again engage in two traditional activities: reviewing the past year, and planning for the new one. Planning has one advantage over reviewing. We cannot change the past, we can only assess it. In planning, however, we can start fresh, determining what we want to do, when, how, where, and even why.

One common element of planning is the setting of goals. From a business standpoint, in light of what has transpired over the past year, as well as expectations for the future, we can formulate plans for achieving certain levels of profit, productivity and growth. Plans are also useful, of course, on an individual level. We can establish goals for personal and professional growth and advancement, assessing where we are and where we would like to be at some point in the future.

We might wish to build on accomplishments over the last 12 months, or pursue important changes for the attainment of goals that have remained beyond our reach. The adage says, "You're either getting better or getting worse," so we strategize about how to get better in future days, months and years.

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Countless articles and books have been written about effective goal-setting and planning, but they rarely take into account teachings and guidelines presented in the Bible. These can be especially helpful for understanding the "why" of our goals and plans. So to assist as we engage in this annual process, here are just some examples to consider:

**Wealth.** For many people, affluence is a major goal, the ability to attain a desired lifestyle. The Scriptures advise keeping a proper, realistic perspective. *"Do not wear yourself out to get rich; have the wisdom to show restraint. Cast but a glance at riches, and they are gone, for they will surely sprout wings and fly off to the sky like an eagle" (Proverbs 23:4-5).*

**Excellence.** We should continually strive to do the best work we possibly can, not for our own benefit, but also in recognition of who we represent and ultimately serve. *"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do" (Ephesians 2:10). "Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve"(Colossians 3:23-24).*

**Correct focus.** How can we be confident that our goals are well-conceived? How can we be certain the plans we formulate are coming from the right motivations? *"But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you as well" (Matthew 6:33).*

**Humility.** In setting goals, we rarely consider virtues, such as humility. However, in many cases this is a quality that ensures enduring success. *"Humility and the fear of the Lord bring wealth and honor and life" (Proverbs 22:4).*

© 2018. Robert J. Tamasy has written *Business at Its Best: Timeless Wisdom from Proverbs for Today's Workplace; Tufting Legacies*; coauthored with David A. Stoddard, *The Heart of Mentoring*, and edited numerous other books, including *Advancing Through Adversity* by Mike Landry. Bob's biweekly blog is: [www.bobtamasy.blogspot.com](http://www.bobtamasy.blogspot.com).

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## Reflection/Discussion Question

1. Are planning and goal-setting important activities for you at the end of one year and the beginning of a new one? What kind of process do you use for making long-term plans and establishing goals?
2. If you have progressed in your planning for the next year, what are some of the goals you intend to pursue?
3. What are your thoughts about using principles from the Bible as guidelines for goal-setting and planning? Have you ever considered doing that? Explain your answer.
4. How can biblical teachings be factored into planning and the setting of goals? How do you think they might actually interfere with the planning process?

## NOTE:

If you have a Bible and would like to read more about this subject, consider the following passages:

*Psalm 37:4-5,7; Proverbs 3:5-6, 4:18-19, 16:1-4,9, 19:21, 20:24, 21:30, 27:1*

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