

Start Here 2: Burned Out on Resolutions? Small Steps, Lasting Change

Chris Fluitt

January 11, 2026

Key Scriptures: Matthew 6:33-34; Matthew 13:31-32; Matthew 25:14-23 (key verse 25:21); Zechariah 4:10; Psalm 37:23; Psalm 90:12

Big Idea: Jesus gives us a big vision to live for and a daily plan to live by. God builds lasting change through small, faithful steps.

Tagline: Dream in years, plan in months, focus on weeks, live in days.

Start Here Bumper Vid

****HANDOUTS****

Welcome to Redemption Church in Plano Tx. My name is Chris Fluitt and I am thankful for everyone in the room and everyone online.

January starts with big plans.

This is the year I'm going to be consistent.
This is the year I'm going to get healthy.
This is the year I'm going to get my finances together.
This is the year my faith is going to grow.
And then real life shows up.
The calendar fills up.
The pressure comes back.
You miss a day. Then two.
Then that old feeling hits: I'm behind. I'm failing. I knew I couldn't do it.

Most fail because the plan was too big to live on an ordinary day.

We talked about the plans that are too big last week... today let's talk about the ordinary day.

Here is how the Bible talks about ordinary days.

Psalm 37:23 The Lord makes firm the steps
of the one who delights in him.

Not the leaps. The steps.

Psalm 90:12 Teach us to number our days,
that we may gain a heart of wisdom.

God cares about your days.

God cares about your steps.

Do we care about our steps and days?

Or do we just want the end result... and we
want it now!

We have the desire

We struggle with follow-through.

We are tired already... discouraged
already... We are all or nothing...

We want it all right now... or nothing.

All or Nothing Stats

- Only 31% of Americans say they will make a New Year's resolution or set a goal for 2026.
- 57% of Americans say they feel more pessimistic about the world in 2026.
- U.S. obesity is 40.3%, divorce around 50%, and the average household is about \$136,000 in debt.

Fewer goals...

More pessimism...

Growing problems...

If you've felt stuck, tired, discouraged, or like you tried before and it didn't work, you're not crazy.

You're living in the real world.

BUT Jesus has something to say about how real change actually happens.

Jesus teaches us how to hold two things together that we usually separate: big vision and daily focus.

Matthew 6:33 - Big vision

“seek first God’s kingdom and His righteousness”

Jesus says, seek first God’s kingdom.

That is not a small target.

That’s the biggest vision possible.

So what is the Kingdom of God?

In simple terms, the Kingdom is God’s rule and reign.

God’s ways. God’s will. God’s priorities.

Lived out in real life.

So Jesus raises the aim.

Your goal can be more than, I just want to be better.

Don’t you want to be part of something bigger than you?

Don't you want your life to matter in God's story?

That is big vision.

Seek first the Kingdom.

Matthew 6:34 - Daily focus

"do not worry about tomorrow..."

Let's say it clearly.

Jesus does not say, don't worry about today.

He says, don't worry about tomorrow.

Tomorrow will bring tomorrow's concerns.

Today has enough already.

Today has a calling.

Today has a next step.

So Jesus gives us the balance:

Big vision - the Kingdom.

Daily focus - today.

We need a big vision and a daily plan.

But here is a problem...

Here is where we often get stuck.

We despise small daily things.

We do not say it out loud, but we treat small progress like it doesn't count.

- You lose five pounds, but you won't mention it because you're still thirty away, so five feels small.
- You read your Bible three days this week, but you wanted seven, so you call it failure.
- You started something new and get ten followers, but you compare it to a million-follower account, and you feel silly for being excited.
- You pay off one bill, but the bigger debt problem is still there, so you downplay the progress.

When you despise small beginnings, you stop building.

That's why God says this...

Do not despise these small beginnings, for the Lord rejoices to see the work begin.

(Zechariah 4:10 NLT)

In context, God's people had returned from exile and started rebuilding the temple.

The people were down... God was excited!

We're not rebuilding a temple, but we are rebuilding lives.

We are building something we want to last.

Faith. Health. Marriage. Peace. Discipline.

Purpose.

God is excited about what you are starting!

God does not despise small beginnings, and neither should you.

Jesus backs this up in Matthew 13.

“The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field.

³² Though it is the smallest of all seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds come and perch in its branches.” (Matthew 13:31-32 NIV)

He says God’s Kingdom... the BIG VISION... is like a tiny mustard seed.

Small at the start, but it grows into something that becomes a blessing.

Small prayers.

Small choices.

Small habits.

Small acts of obedience.

Small steps taken consistently.

Then Jesus lands this lesson in Matthew 25..

“Well done, good and faithful servant... you have been faithful with a few things.”

(Matthew 25:21)

So let it land:

What if one of your biggest accomplishments this year was that you became faithful with a few things?

Not hype. Not talk. Not a perfect streak. Faithful with a few things.

And that's the bridge into the practical.

RESEARCH AND REAL LIFE

And what's interesting is that research has caught up to what Jesus is teaching.

1) Daily action plans beat motivation

Researchers: when people make a specific plan for the moment, goal achievement improves by about 65%.

They call it an if-then plan. It's simple.

If this happens, then I do this.

It gives a 65% increase over motivation based plans.

Motivation-based: It's 6 a.m. Do I feel like working out?

Daily action: It's 6 a.m. I work out.

That's what Jesus is teaching in Matthew 6. Big vision, yes. But you live it TODAY. Don't worry about tomorrow. Stay faithful today.

2) Real change takes longer than you want

One major study found it takes about 66 days on average for a new behavior to start feeling more automatic.

So if you're on day 11 and it still feels hard, it doesn't mean you're failing. It means you're forming.

And that connects to Jesus again. Jesus is saying: stop borrowing tomorrow's pressure. Each day has enough trouble of its

own. Take today's next step. Stay in today long enough for faithfulness to take root.

research agrees with Jesus: big vision, daily plan, small steps, over time.

Now let's take the next step together.

Motivation is like a sugar rush. It feels amazing, and then it crashes. Because motivation makes you want to do all the things. New diet. New budget. New workout. New Bible plan. New everything.

But we don't need a hundred new things. We need a simple system we can repeat.

I want to show you the most motivating, unrealistic, impossible plan for life I've ever seen. Ron Swanson calls it the Pyramid of Greatness.

[Swanson Pyramid of Greatness video](#)

[Swanson Pyramid of Greatness jpg](#)

Alright. Just take a second and look at that.

That is an impossible goal. No amount of motivation can push us to achieve this “Pyramid of Greatness.”

And that’s why January burns people out. We start with a sugar rush of motivation and we try to do all the things.

So we’re going to do something different. We’re going to build a Jesus-centered system that’s actually livable.

We have...

The big vision: seek first the Kingdom.

The daily plan: don’t worry about tomorrow.

You live in today, but you’re walking toward tomorrow. This is the system.

James Clear talks about this system in his book – Atomic Habits. He calls this system - vision stacking.

Vision Stacking

Vision stacking is how you take a big, God-honoring vision and turn it into a daily plan you can actually live.

Because here's the truth:

You can't obey God for the whole year today.

You can obey God today.

So let's take an ambiguous goal and make it real.

A lot of people say, "this year I want to grow spiritually."

That's a great desire, but it's too vague to live.

What does grow spiritually mean on a Tuesday morning?

So we vision stack it.

Year vision

By the end of this year, I want to be a person who seeks God daily and trusts Jesus more than my worry.

90 Day Accomplishment

In 90 days, I will read all four Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John).

60-day next steps

In the next 60 days, I want to be actively walking in faith with other believers, not just watching faith from a distance.

That means I take a next step. I join a Connect Group. I commit to serving. I let somebody know, I want to grow.

30-day win

I want to have read the Gospel of Mark. Not because it's a magic number, but

because I'm building a habit that feeds my soul.

This week

I'm going to read Mark five days.

Not seven. Not perfect. Faithful.

Today

Before I touch my phone, I touch my Bible.

Before I scroll, I seek.

Before I take in the world, I take in the Word.

Then I open Mark and read one section.

And I write one sentence: Here's what Jesus is teaching me.

You can make it an if-then plan:

If I wake up, **then** I reach for God before I reach for my phone.

If I sit down with coffee, **then** I open Mark.

If it's 9pm, **then** I write one sentence and I pray one honest prayer.

That is vision stacking.

You live in today, but you're walking toward tomorrow.

Today is where it becomes real.

James Clear says it like this:

“You do not rise to the level of your goals.
You fall to the level of your systems.”

Follow-up: “So the question isn't just what do you want. It's what's your system. What's your if-then plan.”

And I want you to hear this: this works for everything.

Relationships. Health. Finances. Career.
Peace.

The point is not to do everything at once.
The point is to take the next faithful step.

[Biblical picture of vision stacking: Moses had a calling, but the weight was crushing him. In Exodus 18, Jethro tells him to build structure, layers, and shared leadership so the work can last. Big calling, wise steps, sustainable life.]

Vision Stacking

Now imagine a whole church that lived like this.

Not a church of New Year hype and February guilt.

A church of steady faithfulness.

A church that celebrates small beginnings.

A church that does not despise day one.

A church that keeps taking the next step.

That kind of church becomes a shelter.

That kind of church becomes a place where lives actually change.

Stack This Vision

1) Choose one area for growth

Just one.

Faith, relationships, health, finances...

2) Write your stack

Write it down:

Year vision.

90 days

60 days.

30 days.

This week.

Today.

3) IF: I have Heard God's Word

THEN: I will respond in prayer & worship

This is the moment to take a step.

This is the perfect time to ask for God's help.

So as we worship, here's what I want you to do:

Ask God to give you a Kingdom vision.

Ask God for grace to be faithful today.

Ask God to help you take the next step.