

# KEEPING SPIRITUALITY



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# Foreword

Sometimes, you might wonder if the teachings and lessons of the Bible have meaning in your life today. You might also wonder if you have time a better relationship with yourself, others and with God. This is actually the most perfect time for you to consider empowering your spirituality by starting to live a life with God always in your heart and mind. Always consider the kind of relationship that you have with Him and with the people around you.

Never make promises that you cannot keep. You can look honestly at your past, and you can forgive yourself. You can choose to become pitchers or batters. You can also break those vicious cycles, and most importantly, you can make decisions to move into a more meaningful, deeper relationship with God. He will guide you in every step of the way. Just always remember Him, and always think of Him each time you make decisions in your life, and you will see how He can bring significant changes in your life.

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## **Keeping Spirituality**

# Chapter 1:

## *Spiritual Resolutions Basics*

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### Synopsis

With regards to resolutions, particularly failed resolutions, most people get caught up in the past mistakes and failures so much that they spiritually paralyze themselves. You have to keep in mind that you are human and you can always make mistake.

Remember that it is not your mistake that defines you, and those mistakes do not have to define your future, but they can always help you focus your future. To improve your spirituality does not mean being pious; just a few changes in your life can bring significant effects to your life that can help you towards your goal of empowering your spirituality.

The following can help you have an in-depth understanding on how you can enhance your spirituality:



## ***The Basics***

As you ponder every new year, and you think about the changes that you would like to see in your life, it might be best if you get your priorities straight. Consider your priorities this year.

You might want to quit smoking, exercise more or lose weight. You might want to eliminate your unhealthy relationships, or start developing a stronger relationship with your partner, friends or family. Whatever you want, remember that your greatest priority should always be to develop stronger relationships with God.

One of the most important things that you need to remember is to forgive yourself of your past. Loving yourself actually mean having the ability to forgive yourself of the past mistakes that you have committed, and then, by placing your priority on loving ourselves and God, you can start relying on Him for your guidance.

When you start placing your priorities on getting closer to Him, and once you seek first God's kingdom, He will always guide you. Perhaps, it is only the best "resolution" that you should make – to strengthen your relationship with God and seek His kingdom.

This is the best time for you to make a special commitment to spend time thinking about Him and always consider God in every choice that you make and every action that you do. Spend time with God in prayer as well as meditation each day.

Spend some time reading the scriptures and allowing His Words guide you, and through God's guidance, set realistic goals. Moreover, you need to bear in mind that starting a spiritual resolution is not all about reading the scriptures; it is also about considering Him in every decision and choice that you make.

Use your better judgment and your wisdom in choosing. When faced in a decision to do good or the otherwise, always think about how your relationship with God will be affected in every decision that you make.

When you commit mistakes, never allow yourself to get bogged down, especially when you stumble. Always maintain the right attitude. Rather than thinking that you are the worst batter, just think of yourself as you're the best pitcher. You also do not have to do things alone. This is the reason behind your community of faith. You will always have a source of strength to support each other.

# Chapter 2:

## *Be Good To Yourself*

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### Synopsis

*“Be gentle first with yourself if you wish to be gentle with others.”* – Lama Yeshe

Sometimes, people are very cruel and unforgiving to themselves. Imagine you made a huge mistake on a particular project at work, creating another burden for your co-workers and yourself, or you might accidentally said dumb on a first date or an important meeting. How would you really react?

You have to keep in mind that being good to yourself does not need to include a calendar full of spa treatments for yourself. It just means treating yourself the way you treat a good friend.

Many people would react in such situations by chastising themselves for their mistakes. In such case, you are figuratively beating yourself up. In just a small dose, self-criticism can actually be very helpful because it motivates people to take more responsibility of all their actions, and it encourages them to further improve themselves. However, excessive self-criticism can be self-defeating and debilitating.

## **The Road to Self-Compassion**

Self-compassion is really important. It means treating one's self with understanding and kindness once you commit a mistake, or go through a complex situation, just the way you treat others you care about.

This is quite that same with self-esteem in some way, but it is not about the way you are judging yourself, but the way you are treating yourself. Therefore, whether you are thinking that you are a great individual, or a not-so-great one in a certain moment, you can have compassion for yourself. For instance, you might say that it is fine to make a mistake; you will just try harder the next time.

There are lots of different approaches towards building self-compassion, and one of which is being able to shift your perspective. Indeed, it is quite easier for us to give compassion to others than it is for us to give it to ourselves. In such case, it might be better if we start treating yourself better.

You can pretend that a person you care about is in your shoes. Think about the things that you would say to them. You might actually say something kinder and better than what you would be saying to yourself. Variations of these exercises involve adopting a new perspective.

You also need to remember that one of the most important prerequisites for self-compassion is having the belief that you, just like any other human beings, always deserve to be treated with love and compassion. Building

self-compassion can also help you protect yourself from those destructive individuals.

Perhaps, one of the primary keys for you to be constantly good to yourself is to always believe in yourself and have more faith in your capabilities. Do not be too hard in yourself and learn to acknowledge your achievements. Through this, you will see the significant changes that will happen in your life.

# Chapter 3:

## *Keep Up With Prayer*

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### Synopsis

God provides us with a lot of tools to survive, but none can really compare to the ability of communicating with Him in prayer. Prayer is actually not just your most valuable tools; it can likewise be your most exceptional asset.

In this life of trials and difficulties, it is quite hard for people to remain unshakeable. Things are becoming tougher, and without a particular source of strength, you may not be able to survive in this life. Because God loves all His children, He equips people with a valuable tool that they can use to become stronger individuals – Prayer.

Prayer is one of key ways for you to communicate with Him and approach Him. It is an important vehicle for a daily conversation with God. The significance of daily communication with God through prayer can't be overestimated. Now, for you to fully understand its value, you have to take a closer look at its real essence, and the importance of keeping up with prayer.

## **The Importance of Keeping Up with Prayer**

Prayer provides people with the opportunity to share all aspects in life with the Heavenly Father. Life's circumstances always change on a daily basis, and the future is yet to unfold. As a matter of fact, things can always go from good to worse in just a very short period of time. God wants people to bring their problems and concerns to Him, and He wants them to become closer to Him all the time.

With every blessing that you receive in this life, prayer provides you with an opportunity to express your gratitude for all the things in this life that He gives. Of course, you must constantly give thanks to God for everything He provides. You pray to acknowledge all the blessings and abundance that you have because of Him.

All people commit mistake each day, and they all sin every day, whether they are aware of it or not. You are not perfect but God wants you to recognize your sins and repent, and you can only achieve this through prayer. This offers the platform for you to confess your sins and repent. Through prayer, you give yourself a perfect chance to unleash the burden that you carry in your hearts.

Prayer is also an act of obedience and worship. In Thessalonians 5:16-18, you can identify the importance of praying on a daily basis. "Be joyful always and pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus." It is the will of the Lord for all His children to give thanks and pray to Him. This is an act of obedience and worship that

brings great joy to God. He loves to see all His children following His commandments.

A lot of people know that there is a supreme being who is in control of things and of their lives, and through prayer, they acknowledge this reality. God is supreme and nothing really happens without Him knowing about it. Every day, you need to learn to acknowledge His right place in your life. Praying is actually something that all people should want to do every day. Through prayer, you also express your love towards Him.

If you want to achieve something, prayer is also one of the best tools that you can use to achieve what your heart's desires. However, people sometimes feel that God doesn't answer all their prayers. You need to keep in mind that God knows everything, and He knows what you want even before you ask for it. All He wants you to do is to be faithful in Him.

If you have been asking the same thing, and it seems that God is not answering your prayers or not granting what you want, He wants you to learn something. God actually answers your prayers in three ways – Yes, No and Wait.

He would answer “Yes” if He knows that it is appropriate for you, “No” if it will bring no good for you and “Wait” because there is right time for everything. He also wants you to establish your faith in Him. You also need to be patient. He loves all His children and He knows exactly what they want even before they ask it. God knows what is best for us; all you have to do is to have faith in Him.



# Chapter 4:

*Set Aside Time Every Week To Study Teachings*

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## Synopsis

Oftentimes, people feel that things are becoming even worse and more complicated. They pray daily but it seems that God is not answering their prayers. In such case, it is important for you to assess your life. What is lacking? What are the things that you need to change and do?

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