

GEARING UP FOR 2020

2 Timothy 2:1-7

New Year's Resolutions

The grace of fresh starts and the statistics of failure

The hard work of life "under the curse"

The analogy of life as a downward moving escalator

The Christian Life does require work!

Grace is not opposed to effort but to earning: Dallas Willard

Thinking about Spiritual Practices in 2020

An overview today, a Sunday School Class in January

Successful progress in any field is a combination of saying yes and no

The Soldier, the Athlete, the Farmer

The Soldier: The Disciplined Practices of Saying No

The image of the soldier not getting entangled in civilian affairs to please the boss

The muscle of foregoing, delaying gratification, resisting temptation

Scott Peck's quote on delayed gratification as the ground of mental health

Fasting, Solitude, Silence, Sabbath, Chastity, Giving:

The Athlete: The Disciplined Practices of Saying Yes

The image of the athlete competing according to the rules

To be able to qualify one must meet minimum requirements, weight, etc.

Skills are acquired by intentional repetition, perseverance, practice

Scripture Reading, Memorization, Prayer, Worship, Community, Service

The Farmer: The Rhythm of Saying Yes and No

Our lives are like the seasons of the year

To be able to eat of the fruit requires a sequence: plant, grow, harvest, rest

The No seasons of winter hibernation and the painful pruning

The Yes season of spring and summer/fall harvest

Turning our daily, weekly, monthly, and annual practices into rhythms of yes and no

The Goal: Hearts that Handle What God Wants to Put In Us

God wants and waits to pour "molten steel" into us

We participate in the work of our changing our cardboard hearts into graphite crucibles
