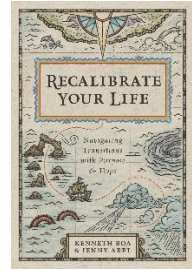


TOOL 5

Online Supplement to
Recalibrate Your Life: Navigating Transitions with Purpose and Hope



Principles & Values to Live By

Following is a list of 36 personal principles and values to live by.¹ They provide the basis for a powerful, godly legacy. We recommend you choose one principle or value per category (three total) to focus on a time (e.g., monthly). The goal is to help you integrate your life in Christ with your life in the world.

Tips:

- Try to review your selected principles at the beginning of each day. Then, find creative ways to remind yourself of them—for example, by taping a note on your bathroom mirror or car dashboard, or by setting periodic reminders on your laptop or other device.
- For further edification, read and meditate on the passages provided with each principle.

Two Important Cautions:

- Do not try to focus on all or even many of these principles/values at once (that would be overwhelming).
- Do not use these principles as a whip or club to beat yourself up when you fall short (as we all do). No one can fully attain these ideals; they are intended as an inspirational target to aim for.

Pursue God

1. **Grow in faith.** Biblical faith is radical trust in the sovereignty and goodness of God. It means “being fully assured that what God [has] promised, He [will] perform” (Romans 4:21); it means remembering that God is in control and has your best interests at heart. (Romans 4:20–21; Hebrews 11:1)
2. **Hold fast to hope.** Anchored in the promises of God, our hope rests in the person and work of Jesus Christ and in the promise of eternal life for those who believe in Him. Hope is more than wishful thinking; it’s “sure and steadfast” (Hebrews 6:19), rooted in reality and truth. (Romans 8:24–25; Ephesians 1:18; Hebrews 6:18–19; 10:23)
3. **Deepen your love for God.** We’re to love the Lord with all our being (mind, emotions, will, and actions). This is known as the Great Commandment. We grow in our love for and intimacy with Him by spending time with Him. Knowledge of God and love for Him are interrelated—with the one leading to the other. (Matthew 22:36–38; 1 John 4:19)

¹ This list is adapted from a longer list in Kenneth Boa, *Conformed to His Image: Biblical, Practical Approaches to Spiritual Formation, Rev. ed.* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2020), 259–261. All quotations from Scripture are from the NASB95 unless otherwise noted.

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4. **Value the eternal over the temporal.** Treat the temporal as temporal and the eternal as eternal, esteeming the invisible over the visible. (Luke 16:15; 2 Corinthians 4:17–18; James 4:14; 1 John 2:15–17)
5. **Grow in grace.** We aren't just saved by grace; we also grow by grace. One mark of a disciple of Jesus is an increasing awareness of our profound need for His grace in all things. (Galatians 2:20–21; 3:3; 2 Timothy 1:9; 2 Peter 3:18)
6. **Commit to the centrality of Christ.** We cannot be faithful followers of Jesus while compartmentalizing our faith, treating some areas as being under Christ's lordship but not other areas. If He is to be Lord of our lives, He must be Lord of every component. (John 14:6; Romans 11:36; Colossians 1:15–18)
7. **Remember your deepest needs are met in Christ.** Our security and significance are found in Christ alone. We can trust Him to know and supply exactly what we need. When we recognize this, we will be free to serve others without manipulating our relationships to meet our own needs. (2 Corinthians 9:8; Philippians 4:19; Colossians 3:3; 2 Peter 1:3)
8. **Practice God's presence.** When we see the world as a sanctuary, we can live our lives before Him, doing everything to His glory. Activities that we usually regard as "spiritual" are as honoring to God as the mundane tasks that we do "as for the Lord." (1 Corinthians 10:31; Colossians 3:23)
9. **Seek "fresh bread"**—don't live on yesterday's faith. Every day, ask God to speak to you anew through His Word and prayer. As you hear from Him, be prepared to obey His voice and to take greater risks based on His unchanging character and promises. Know that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him diligently. (Exodus 16:4, 19–21; Isaiah 55:1–6; Hebrews 11:1, 6)
10. **Cultivate a seeing eye.** Look for the glory of God in the natural world around you. Maintain an ongoing sense of childlike wonder and awe at the beauty of the created order. (Psalm 8; Psalm 102:25; Proverbs 3:19; Romans 1:20)
11. **Invite the friendship and nearness of God.** Long for God's companionship as one longs for the presence of a close friend. Talk and walk with Him daily. As with any true friendship on earth, be ready to accept from Him both "wounds" (suffering, discipline, rebuke, correction) and the healing that is sure to follow when we remain faithful to Him. (Proverbs 27:6; John 15:15; James 2:23; 4:8)
12. **Abide in the Son.** You'll manifest the fruit of God's Spirit only when you stay close to Jesus, just as a branch stays connected to a vine. (John 15:4–8; 1 John 2:28)

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Pursue Godly Character

1. **Cultivate a spirit of humility and teachability.** We demonstrate this spirit through willing accountability to godly people—along with humble responsiveness to exhortation and rebuke. Without this attitude, we easily become enmeshed in self-deception. Teachability also leads to the pursuit of godly mentors who are further along in the spiritual journey (these may be dead or living, ranging from authors we've never met to people in our own household). (Psalm 25:9; Proverbs 13:1; 17:10; Matthew 23:12; James 4:10)
2. **Live with a stewardship mindset.** God owns all things; we own nothing. We are the managers of His possessions (stewards) and we're to be about *His* business (as ambassadors), not our own. This mindset leads to being content rather than greedy grabbers. (1 Chronicles 29:14; Luke 16:10–12; 1 Corinthians 4:1–2, 7; 1 Peter 4:10)
3. **Commit to the ongoing exercise and renewal of spirit, soul, and body.** Those who are in Christ are temples (dwelling places) of the Holy Spirit and called to honor God with our bodies and with all the rest of ourselves, including the nonphysical aspects. We are not our own but His, bought at a price, the price of His Son's life. (1 Corinthians 6:19–20; 2 Corinthians 6:16)
4. **Seek personal integrity**—i.e., congruence between the inside and the outside. As believers, we should seek, by the power of the Spirit, to become more and more in practice who He has made us in position: children of the Most High God, seated with Him in the heavenly places. (Colossians 3:1–10; James 1:22–25; 1 John 1:6–10; 2:3)
5. **Stand firm in spiritual warfare.** First, submit to God, and then He will give you the power to resist the lures of the world, the flesh, and the devil. (Ephesians 6:10–18; James 4:7)
6. **Obey God to avoid living with regret.** Disobedience to God is always detrimental to our souls, whereas obedience is always for our ultimate good. We should seek to “trust and obey” Him with humility, knowing He has our best interests at heart even when we do not understand His ways. (Deuteronomy 10:12–13; Proverbs 1:32–33; 13:13; 16:18)
7. **Choose gratitude and joy.** We're called to rejoice *always* (not sometimes or when we feel like it) and to give thanks in *all* (not some) circumstances. Godly joy and thanksgiving transcend life situation. We can cling to God's character amidst life's pains and pleasures. (1 Corinthians 4:7; Philippians 4:4; Colossians 3:15; 1 Thessalonians 5:16–18)
8. **Live as a pilgrim.** On this planet, we are merely sojourners, strangers, and aliens passing through as we wait expectantly to be taken to our true and final home with the Father in heaven. When we remember this identity, we'll cling to the things of this world more loosely. We should not be surprised if the world hates us (as it did Jesus) and eyes us with bewilderment at how we choose to live, just as we may look upon the customs and

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ways of a “foreigner” visiting our country as strange. (Philippians 3:20; Hebrews 11:13, 16, 36–38)

9. **Be aware that good and evil both increase at compound interest.** Do not give the devil a foothold by cherishing sin in your heart, but ask God to replace sin promptly with obedience and love for Him. Live in light of the parable of the unrighteous steward, seeking to be faithful even in the little matters, so that God will eventually entrust to you the “true riches” of His kingdom. (Luke 16:1–13; Ephesians 4:25–31)
10. **Be shaped by the Word, not the world.** We all give our lives in exchange for something. Seek to spend time on the things God declares to be important, defining success by the standard of the Word of God and not by the standards of the world. Any dead fish can float downstream, but we’re called to swim against the current rather than allow ourselves to be seduced by the culture. In part, this means we’ll treasure and prioritize relationships (with God and other people) over earthly possessions and status. (Matthew 16:26; Romans 6:1–14; 8:5; 1 John 2:15–17)
11. **Develop habits of holiness.** Unholy habits are sustained by default. We never eliminate sinful habits by extinction but by replacement (putting better habits in their place). Commit to a life of discipline and dependence on God that sinful patterns might be supplanted by godly ones. (Romans 6:6, 14, 17–19; 8:13; 1 Corinthians 9:24; 2 Corinthians 7:1)
12. **Live with two days on the calendar: today and *that* Day** (when we meet Jesus). We’ll be fully alive to the present, not living in the past or the future, if we live as though each day were our last. Knowing tomorrow may be the day we meet Him face to face prompts us to seek Him today and to not defer until later what we can and should do today (e.g., extending or asking forgiveness). (Proverbs 27:1; Luke 12:19–20; 2 Corinthians 6:2; James 4:13–15)

Pursue the Highest Good of Others

1. **Commit to the second Great Commandment.** The second greatest commandment—to love others (made in God’s image) as we love ourselves—flows out of the first (to love God with all our being). These twin commands can be compared to a bow and an arrow: the bow is the first command, which allows us to apply the vector of love (the arrow) to the outside world through evangelism and edification. (Leviticus 19:18; Matthew 5:43–45; Matthew 22:36–40)
2. **Live with a radical commitment to the Great Commission.** In some of His last recorded words before ascending into heaven, Jesus gave His marching orders to His followers: “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded

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you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” This commission applies to us today and won’t expire until the end of human history. ([Matthew 28:18–20](#))

- 3. Rely on the Holy Spirit.** In ministry and relationships, it can be easy to rely on our strengths and forget that the Holy Spirit often works through our weaknesses and deficiencies. We are to walk in His power, putting no confidence in the flesh. We should still cultivate our God-given talents, but we should do so while depending on the Holy Spirit to accomplish His work. ([Zechariah 4:6](#); [John 14:26](#); [Romans 8:4–6, 11–14, 26](#); [2 Corinthians 11:30; 12:9](#); [Galatians 5:16, 25](#))
- 4. Treat people better than they deserve.** While mercy refers to *not giving* others what they *do* deserve, grace means *giving* others what they *don’t* deserve. This is the pattern Jesus modeled for us, and it leads us to see dignity and possibility in others, rather than belittling them or writing them off. ([Luke 6:36](#); [John 1:16](#); [Ephesians 4:29](#); [1 Peter 4:10; 5:5](#))
- 5. Cultivate compassion for the least, the last, and the lost.** Jesus took time for anybody, including those overlooked, avoided, or looked down upon by others. We follow His example when we do the same, thus pleasing the heart of the Father. ([1 Samuel 16:7](#); [Matthew 6:4; 25:40](#); [Romans 12:3, 16](#); [2 Corinthians 5:16](#); [Philippians 2:3](#))
- 6. Be quick to forgive.** Our forgiveness of others is based on Christ’s forgiveness of us. Forgiveness doesn’t mean forgetting, nor does it mean pretending that a wrong done to us doesn’t matter (we aren’t necessarily obligated to trust that person again, especially right away). Rather, forgiveness is a decision to treat another with mercy and grace. It releases us from the bitterness that grows over time when we harbor hatred, resentment, and anger. ([Leviticus 19:18](#); [Matthew 6:14–15; 18:21–35](#); [Luke 6:36](#); [Ephesians 4:32](#); [Colossians 3:13](#))
- 7. Commit to openness and honesty in relationships.** In true friendship, there is no need for pretense—we can be ourselves, open about our strengths and struggles. This is equally important within families (especially between parents and children), as it enables us to model repentance and humility, and to encourage our children not to hide their sin but to confess it and deal with it expediently. Note that, at the same time, we must balance openness with discernment (regarding how, when, and to whom we open up). ([Proverbs 12:22](#); [Ephesians 4:25](#); [Colossians 3:9–10](#); [James 5:16](#))
- 8. Let your intimacy with Christ animate your activity.** The Christian life is not conformity to a set of standards but a dynamic, step-by-step process of responding to God as we follow Christ in all that we do. When our *doing* flows out of our *being* (who we are in Him), we will be more genuine and less tempted to try to manipulate certain outcomes in our life and relationships. We will be more focused on faithfulness in the present (“doing the next thing,” as Elisabeth Elliot put it) and less on the future. ([Romans 12:1–2](#); [Philippians 2:12–13; 3:12–14](#))

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9. **Leave results to God.** We must be faithful to the process of evangelism and discipleship while letting go of ownership of the product or results. God does not need us, and yet He chooses to use us to draw others to Himself. We prepare the soil, sow the seed, water the ground, and harvest the fruit when it comes time, but it is God who gives the growth and brings forth the fruit. (Isaiah 55:11; 1 Corinthians 3:6–7)
10. **Resist comparison,** which is the enemy of contentment. We're to let Christ determine the content of our lives, rather than trying to control it ourselves. Comparison is especially harmful to ministry; we should always remember that the success of any ministry cannot be measured by humans. (Philippians 4:11–13; 1 Timothy 6:6–8; Hebrews 13:5)
11. **Look for *kairos* moments.** Seek a growing responsiveness and sensitivity to God's loving initiatives, remembering that the most important thing you do in any day may not be on your calendar. Resist the temptation to see interruptions as annoyances and instead look for how God may be at work in every encounter you have with another person who bears His image. (Romans 13:11–12; Ephesians 5:15–17; Philippians 2:14–15)
12. **Encourage, exhort, and edify other believers.** We're to live in harmony with our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ, and to act and speak in ways that build them up rather than tear them down. This is the purpose of God-given spiritual gifts (or "gifts of grace"), and He expects us to use them accordingly (rather than abuse them, e.g., to promote ourselves). (Romans 1:12; 12:4–8; 1 Corinthians 14:3–5, 12; Ephesians 4:29; 1 Thessalonians 5:11; Hebrews 3:13)