

End of Year Reflections and A Focus on What's Next:

Perspective:

- Be honest. You can't surprise God as He knows you intimately (Ps. 139) and loves you no matter what (Rom. 8: 31-37)!
- Don't be afraid to go deep. Emotions are welcomed by God. The Bible is full of laments and praise.
- Don't second guess your response to the questions. Write what comes to mind, even if the "answer" surprises you. It is likely that taking time to reflect will allow your mind to listen more closely to your heart. Just because you are unaware of something doesn't mean it isn't important. You may stumble onto new insights that will set you free from burdens you have been carrying.
- Go slow. Perhaps, if you are new to this kind of reflecting, you might want to take a question a day.
- Pray and let God guide your process. He is gracious and kind; He longs to spend time with you.

Reflection for 2020

1. What are the most important events that have happened to me, or in me, this past year?
2. What are the most important events that have happened to my family and community this past year?
3. What are the greatest breakthroughs in any category of my life this past year (physically, emotionally, relationally, vocationally, spiritually, etc.)?
4. What has been the greatest struggle in my life this past year? Or what has consumed my thinking and attention?

5. What has been the greatest, and deepest, loss this past year?

6. In the past twelve months, where have I experienced the greatest sense of peace, contentment, shalom (overall well-being), beauty, etc.?

7. Where have I most experienced the presence of God this past year and how did I respond?

8. What scriptures have I claimed, prayed, or memorized that have been meaningful to me this year?

9. What is ONE word that would begin to sum up this past year?

Beginning 2021

1. Based on your reflection of 2020, is there an invitation from God to trust Him for change in an area of your life (physically, emotionally, relationally, vocationally, spiritually, etc.)?
 - If so, is there someone that you could talk with about the change that you seek?

 - What resources do you need to see change in this area?

2. What passages from the Word will you keep in the forefront this year?
3. What are my specific prayer requests related to the above reflection?
4. Is there anything that would hold me back from a complete surrender to God's leading of me through the Holy Spirit? If not, pray the Prayer of Abandonment below.

Prayer of Abandonment by Charles de Foucauld

*“Father,
I abandon myself into your hands; do with me what you will.
Whatever you may do, I thank you:
I am ready for all, I accept all.
Let only your will be done in me, and in all your creatures.
I wish no more than this, O Lord.

Into your hands I commend my soul;
I offer it to you
with all the love of my heart,
for I love you, Lord,
and so need to give myself,
to surrender myself into your hands,
without reserve,
and with boundless confidence,
for you are my Father.”*

Adapted from The Great Annual Examen by Stephen W. Smith
<https://www.pottersinn.com/articles/ze2mmwjthj54t86slz2tcrrhfz49ty>