

# VIM PLAN WORKSHEET

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## A plan to change

In the 15th Century the Priest Thomas a Kempis said, “If every year we uprooted a single fault, we should soon become perfect.” Have you ever spent a whole year learning one thing from Jesus?

Most of us fail in our efforts to change and become like Jesus because we try hard for awhile and then give up. We try, but we don’t train. We don’t keep our focus long enough and we don’t go deep enough; we don’t develop a plan for how we can work with God’s grace to change to become like Jesus on the inside in that one area.

We suffer from the “gopher hole syndrome”: every time we close up one hole another one pops up! Of course, the holes are just symptoms—our real problem is the gopher. We need to dig down deep and keep digging till we find that critter and then we can remove him from our yard! When the gopher is gone then the holes will go away.

To change your character you start by dealing with one problem, digging underneath it to deal with your heart in that area over time. Jesus and the authors of Scripture continually direct us to give our “heart” (will) to love God and to share that love with others.

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## What is a VIM plan?

Dallas Willard developed a simple process to help identify and work intentional towards a specific desired change. He called the process V-I-M, which stands for **Vision**, **Intention**, and **Means**.

Vision: What change do you want to make and why do you want to make it?

Intention: What obstacles will stand in your way and what choices will you face in making this change

Means: What will you do to make this change?

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## CUSTOMIZE YOUR VIM PLAN

The VIM Plan worksheet will guide you in developing and implementing a VIM Plan to become the kind of person who relies on the Holy Spirit to obey one of Jesus’ teachings from your heart. (Or you can focus on another personal growth area that the Lord leads you to do.)

**Vision:** What is one example of how God is inviting you be more like Jesus? This is like Jesus saying to you, “Re-think how you’re living your life in light of your opportunity to start living with me today in the Kingdom of the Heavens” (Matthew 4:17, par). Your invitation to Christlikeness with God’s help might be a Bible teaching to learn to obey from your heart or a personal struggle to overcome.

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**Intention:** Assess what makes this change difficult for you. What part of you resists making this vision? To “grow in grace” in this area what attitude would you need to overcome?

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**Means:** Select some spiritual disciplines to use in your training with Jesus to become more like him in this specific area. Practice these activities in a Rule of Life with Jesus for six months or more.

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**Here is the basic structure of a possible rhythm for you:**

- Write a short prayer, naming the sin/struggle you need to overcome and the virtue God wants to develop in you by his grace. Then pray this while anticipating future temptations.
- Key Scripture passage (related to your personal challenge) to meditate on or memorize.
- Self-denial exercise (e.g., silence, solitude, fasting, submission, frugality, Statio).
- Soul Friend to talk with regularly for confession of sins and struggles, prayer, and encouragement.
- Other disciplines God is leading you to use.