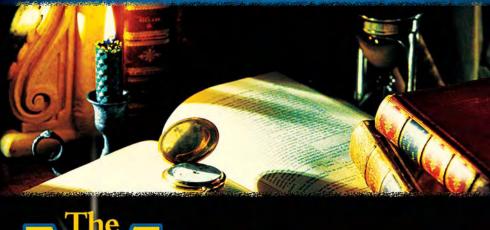
VOLUME ONE



Sinister's ENCYCLOPEDIA

The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; He hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;

To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn;

To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that He might be glorified.

And they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations.

But ye shall be named the Priests of the Lord: men shall call you the Ministers of our God: ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory shall ye boast yourselves.

-Isaiah 61:1-4, 6



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Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are taken from the King James Version of the Bible.

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WHY I WROTE THIS BOOK

God Disguises His Greatest Gifts In The Most Flawed Vessels So Only The Most Passionate Qualify To Receive Them.

If you are reading and studying this Handbook, you are pursuing the Wisdom of God. Then my purpose in writing this book is being accomplished. I want to mentor you so that you can excel in your ministry. Hopefully, from the Wisdom in this book you will be shielded from making some of the mistakes I have made as you gain insight into ways to develop and enlarge your ministry.

You must see yourself as a *Deliverer*. Every day that you wake up and you walk into somebody's life, their future is about to begin. God has put His Word in your mouth. (Read Isaiah 61.)

So many people are hurting. You must reach out and help them...mentor them.

As you study this Handbook, take notes on what is important to you at this particular time. I suggest the Topic and Thought method (described further in the book). What you write and study you will remember.

3 Belief Systems

Establish what you believe. There are three basic belief systems in the world.

1. God Is In Control of Everything. If the will of God was predestined, planned and scheduled why would we need to pray for the will of God to be done?

2. Satan Is In Control of Everything. Satan wanted control of the Heavens, and God kicked him out. Satan wanted control of the earth, and God gave Adam and Eve the right to dominate and take control.

My Decisions Have Created My Circum-3. stances. This third belief system is quite simple and very Scriptural. (See Deuteronomy 28; Leviticus 26; Isaiah 1:17-19.) Isaiah 1:19 says, "If ye are willing and obedient." "If you" is in the Scriptures 331 times. God gives us the choice, the decision to make a better life. At some point you have to embrace..."My decisions have created my circumstances." This is vital. If you do not take responsibility for your personal decisions, bitterness and anger will grow. You will become vindictive and retalitory over the circumstances of your life. But the moment that you say, "My circumstances have been created by my decisions; now I can change my circumstances by changing my decisions." You can change.

The Gospel Has Two Sides

You must also recognize that the Gospel has two sides:

1. The Person of Jesus. The life of God. The King. The experience with God. *The Person of Jesus Prepares You For Eternity. The Presence of Jesus Creates Your Peace.*

2. The Principles of Jesus. The Law of God. The Kingdom. The expertise of God. *The Principles of Jesus Prepare You For Earth. The Principles of Jesus Create Your Prosperity.*

This is the backdrop to help you understand our teaching. Everything is based on your foundation. If

you do not understand the foundation, you will not understand the teaching.

Wisdom is the Law of God. The Bible said Jesus is made unto us the Wisdom of God. Isaiah 11:1-2 calls The Holy Spirit the Spirit of Wisdom, the Spirit of truth, the Spirit of knowledge, the Spirit of understanding and the Spirit of might and counsel. Ephesians 1:27 calls Him the Spirit of Wisdom. Crave Wisdom. That is why you are studying this Handbook... to obtain Wisdom.

7 Ways To Recognize You Are Called Into The Ministry

1. Those Who Are Called Into The Ministry Feel Deep Grief And Pain Over The Spiritual Condition of Others. You are not called if you can be around sinners and never feel their pain. You are not called if you can be around people who are anti-Christ and not feel the boldness erupt inside you. A preacher, a man of God, a deliverer is not a "take it or leave it" kind of guy. Whatever unlocks your compassion identifies if you are called or not. What causes you pain?

2. Those Who Are Called Into The Ministry Often Become Angered Over The Rebellion To God. When you are a man of God, you become very, very upset...even angered over the rebellion to God that there is in the nation. You have to speak out. The Problem That Infuriates You The Most Is The Problem God Has Assigned You To Solve.

3. Those Who Are Called Into The Ministry Are Willing To Do The Illogical And The Unusual. Even when it activates an adversary. There is a calling. You do things that no human would normally do when you are called of God. Things that seem illogical...like flying all over the world rushing from service to service and telethons with very little sleep. There is a calling. That is how you know.

4. Those Who Are Called Into The Ministry Contain An Unusual Obsession To Know The Heart of God. You really want to know God. Pray to know God. Sit in His presence to know Him, because whatever you are, you will reproduce. Study the Bible to know truth...not get a sermon. You will only learn through saturation. Do not go into His presence just to get enough. Three keys on The Holy Spirit...*learn from Him, love Him, lean on Him.* There is no place for you in the ministry if God's presence does not inspire you.

5. Those Who Are Called Into The Ministry Are Willing To Invest Time In Mentorship Instead of Achievement. Those who are called into the ministry are willing to invest time to learn...time in mentorship. You want to be mentored. You want to listen and read books...constantly. You want to sit in the atmosphere where The Holy Spirit can ignite Seeds of Wisdom that are planted in your spirit.

6. Those Who Are Called Into The Ministry Have The Heart of A Servant. What is a servant? He does what is necessary. Serving is saying, "What do you need that I can produce?"

7. Those Who Are Called Into The Ministry Are Unhappy And Dissatisfied With Anything Else. When you are truly called to preach or teach the gospel, you hate being anywhere else but in the center of where God wants you.

7 Secrets Every Young Minister Should Learn

1. Develop A Complete Dependability On The Holy Spirit. He is a Person. He is the Spirit of Knowledge, the Spirit of Wisdom and the Spirit of Truth. He is the only Person capable of being contented with you. He is the only Person in your life capable of being satisfied with you. He is the only Person who will not try to get out of you what is not in you. He is the easiest relationship you will have in your life. He is the only Person to Whom you do not have to explain your behavior. He is the only Person with Whom you do not have to discuss or explain your feelings.

2. Discern And Fully Embrace The Theme And Distinction of Your Assignment. Know how God uses you. Know who responds to you most. Go where you are celebrated. Somebody's future is waiting for your entry into their life. Discern the difference between those seeking you and not your Wisdom.

3. Discern The Mentors Provided By The Holy Spirit For Your Assignment, Correction, Crisis And Success. Your mentor is not your best friend. Your mentor enjoys you for what you are going to become. Your mentor is your coach. A mentor corrects you. Your mentor knows what you do not know. Your mentor has been where you want to go. The goal of your mentor is change, not relationship.

4. Choose or Create Your Personal Information System For Collecting Wisdom, Knowledge And Illustrations. Seek out topics that interest you. Develop a filing system to organize the information you collect on various topics. File the information you research and gather so that you can retrieve it as needed. Develop computer skills that will help you to file and retrieve your topics. Crossfile information that pertains to more than one topic.

5. Respect, Embrace And Pursue An Understanding of The Law of Protocol. Protocol is the acceptable behavior that communicates comfort and importance. *Every Environment Requires A Code of Conduct For Entering or Remaining In It.* Protocol sets the standard of behavior.

6. Identify Accurately The Unspoken Agenda of Those Who Pursue You. Know the reason why people are asking for appointments. Discern the unspoken agenda of those around you. Do not change your schedule for those wanting your counsel. The burden of adaptability is on the pursuer. The portrait of their passion is revealed by their willingness to adapt to your schedule.

7. Develop Excellence In Character, Confidentiality And Communication. Character is doing what God would do in your circumstances. Do not propagate an offense. Do not accept accusations without the presence of the one accused. Use discretion when you communicate. Speak clearly and use private conversation to develop your communication skills. Train and mentor your staff to communicate clearly.

7 Common Mistakes That Can Hurt Your Ministry

1. The Unwillingness To Confront A Problem Swiftly. Confrontation is an attempt to preserve a relationship. *Anything Permitted Increases.* People who overwork your mercy are eventually destroyers of your vision.

2. Not Hiring Professionals To Do The Job. Hire professionals. Strive for excellence.

3. Not Honoring Protocol. Protocol is correct behavior. *Every Environment Has A Code of Conduct For Entering or Staying In It.* Require it from the people around you. Educate your children to do that. The Bible is full of protocol.

4. Not Being Discreet With Confidential Information. If somebody counsels with you, leave it there. Everybody falls into something...anger, depression, a lot of things. It is important for them to just get back up. Cover them. Keep your mouth shut.

5. Allowing Others To Handle Your Finances Unsupervised. Look at the checks. Look at the deposits. Keep enough cash that you can live on for a year if the whole world turns adversarial to you. Nobody is going to handle your money like you.

6. Indebtedness. Debt is a killer. *Debt Is The Proof of Greed.* It means you want something before you have the ability to pay for it. Just learn to wait.

7. Neglecting The Unspoken Needs of Your Family. Have some play time. Family members get tired of seeing people of the church get more attention from you than they receive. Treat your wife like a queen. A primary goal of your life should be to create the happiest childhood for your children. There is not a ministry more important than your family. Give attention to their thoughts and opinions.

7 Mistakes Every Minister Must Avoid

1. Never Make A Major Decision Without Worthy Counsel or Sufficient Research. Buying land...moving to a new church. Change is sometimes very important, but secure the counsel of others. Do not ask the counsel of people who have nothing to lose in it.

2. Keep Sensitive To The Needs of Your Marriage Partner And Children. They have needs, too. They will not always understand your calling, but they have needs. The anointing you feel in the pulpit is not necessarily felt by your spouse. Have a play day for your wife and children. Then schedule another day for your personal needs...take a day for yourself.

3. Never Break Confidentiality. No matter how much you want to...do not break confidentiality. It is so important that people be able to trust you with information, and it not go past you.

4. Keep Adequate Records For Legal Protection. You will make a major mistake if you do not keep legal records. I do everything for two thoughts. Who is the righteous Judge over the earth and who is the legal judge? Dot every i and cross every t.

5. Avoid Controversial Subjects That You Cannot Deal With Effectively And Thoroughly. Do not just hit something in the pulpit and leave it hanging. If you are going to deal with a subject, deal with it thoroughly. Do not talk about subjects you cannot explain.

6. Never Permit Another To Influence or Decide The Direction of Your Church Service. Do not give a microphone to just anybody. You decide the way a service is supposed to go.

7. Failure To Set Clear And Precise Goals And Methods For Evaluating Your Progress Is A Major Mistake. Where do you want your ministry to go? What do you want it to be like? Where do you see God taking it?

7 Things I Would Do Differently If I Could Begin My Ministry Over Again

1. I Would Invest More Time In Preparation. Prepare. Preparation time is more necessary than performance. *Preparation Determines The Quality of Your Performance.*

2. I Would Have Focused On Mastering One Theme In My Ministry. You will only be known for your obsession. Build your library around your obsession. Build your relationships around those who respect it.

3. I Would Have Created A Monthly Newsletter And Never Quit. A Newsletter is information, motivation and participation. *Information Births Confidence*. The more people know about you, the more comfortable they are with you.

4. I Would Have Invested In Technology. Machines do not request time off when their family comes to town. Learn computers. Keep your Palm Pilot with you. Keep a digital recorder. Never write what you can speak.

5. I Would Master The Keys of Raising Financial Support For My Vision. If God gives you an Assignment, it is going to cost you some money. God's way is through partnership. When God calls a man, He raises up a people.

6. I Would Sculpture A Qualified Team. Invest in a knowledgeable, persuaded team about your vision. Create a mentorship library...your persuasions. Money does not keep staff. Vision keeps them.

7. I Would Write One Page A Day In A Devotional. Write one page a day of what you believe...and you are beginning the creation of your books. Empty your thoughts. Date it and note where you were.

7 Mistakes I Have Made In My Ministry

1. Not Understanding The Protocol of The House Where I Was Preaching. Understand the rules of the house and cooperate with them. God told us to honor those in authority over us. When you go to preach anywhere else, know what they are against and know what they are for. Be there to bless.

2. Not Listening To Wise Advice. Desire is not proof something is for you. It is possible to want the wrong thing. All it takes is one accusation to lose your reputation and ministry. *You Cannot Prove Your Integrity.*

3. Accepting People In A Circle of My Influence Who Had Not Proven Themselves. Look at people's track record. Where have they been before you got them? What problems did they solve or create for others? What did their pastor say about that person?

4. Hiring People I Like To Do Jobs They Did Not Like. One of my greatest mistakes was to hire staff because I liked them. I wanted them to perform a task they did not enjoy and could not do. It has almost been impossible to find qualified people for specific tasks.

5. Doing Tasks That Someone Else Should Be Doing. Do not attempt something that is not your job or function. Decide what you can do. Decide what you cannot do. Then find someone who is good at what you are not and "staff your weakness."

6. Keeping Someone Too Long In A Wrong

Position On Staff. Unhappy people are contagious. Do not keep people who spread dissension.

7. Not Having An Established Quality Photographer. Take photographs of your ministry. It is a great way to journal your journey. At least carry a camera with you continuously...for photographic moments.

7 Greatest Turning Points of My Ministry And The Secrets I Learned From Them

1. Joy Is The Reward For Discerning The Divine Difference In The Immediate Moment. Every moment is pregnant with a Divine design. A moment is a time gift under God's Assignment into your life. Your life is a collection of millions of moments.

2. The Holy Spirit Visitation-July 13, 1994. Fall in love with The Holy Spirit, your world will change. He is the only Person you have to please your whole lifetime. I would trade every discovery of my lifetime for what I found out about The Holy Spirit.

3. The Wisdom Key: "What You Make Happen For Others, God Will Make Happen For You." Introspection is deadly. It is devastating. You cannot solve problems for everybody, but there is a circle of people for you. If you will start sowing your life into the problems nearest you, the ripple will increase and the blessing will come from God beyond your wildest dreams.

4. Songs And Television. Somebody Is Always Observing You Who Is Capable of Greatly Blessing You. You have no idea who is examining your life. Who is watching to see what you are capable of enduring.

5. When I Went Through A Divorce. God did

not want me to build my life around another person. He wanted me to build it around Him and let the love overflow on them.

6. Airplane: *The Instruction You Follow Determines The Future You Create.* Every Divine instruction will arrive disguised as an idea. When God whispers an instruction to you, it may sound illogical. It may sound ridiculous. Just do it.

7. Sowing: Any Step Toward Self-Sufficiency Is A Step Away From God. The offerings of your people do not control your income. Your offerings control your income. You reap what you sow, not where you sow.

7 Essential Needs of Every New Ministry

1. Know The Distinction of Your Anointing And Assignment. What makes you unlike another? Your difference is where your future is. Sameness creates comfort, but your future is in your difference. Your Significance Is Not In Your Similarity To Another, But In Your Point of Difference From Another.

2. Set Specific Goals And Develop A Plan. What is your goal? What is your desire in this city? Why in this city? What will happen in this church because of you being there?

3. Recognize The Invaluable Gift of Credibility Through Access And Association With Proven Ministers. Through association, you can get in a day what it took someone else twenty years. Who are you linked to? Who do you serve? Who can speak well of you? Who commends you? It is called credibility through association.

4. Develop Your Expertise On Your Focus

To Birth Self-Confidence. Knowledge creates confidence. When you know what you are talking about there is self-confidence. Develop your expertise on your focus. Become an authority on that topic. Build everything around your theme. Build your day around your theme. Build your day around your theme. Build your life around your theme. Build your ministry around your theme.

5. Package Your Vision In Excellence. Excellence is remembered as much as disorder. *What You Respect Will Come Toward You*. Excellence requires time. Do not start something you cannot do at the highest level. Set up your ministry properly, legally. Have people around you—a CPA, lawyers—who can make sure that what you are doing is correct.

6. Invest Whatever Time Is Necessary To Be Trained Properly And Mentored For Your Calling. Who is the most qualified to train you? Who has the desire to train you? The best way to be mentored by somebody is to work for him. If you want to start a church you should be sent out from somebody who believes in you. The book of Acts validates this. I believe Scripturally evangelists should go out of the church...have a home church that believes in you and sponsors your vision. The same thing with missionaries.

7. Sculpture Your Home Base To Create Comfort And Credibility. Build a home base...geographically and physically. A place you can always call home where your reputation is known, where people know you and they know what you are about. You need a home church with a man of God that you can learn from. You need a man of God over your life who believes in your distinction and your anointing enough to invest in it. You need a home church that believes what you believe.

There Are Two Ways To Increase Wisdom: Mistakes And Mentors.

I want you to increase in Wisdom through mentorship. "Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get Wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding," (Proverbs 4:7).

That is why I wrote this book.

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ABUNDANCE

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God Wants You To Prosper.

Many do not really believe that God wants them to prosper financially. Nobody is more misunderstood than God.

Doubters have not fully understood that He is "touched with the feeling of our infirmities." "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin," (Hebrews 4:15).

Yet, He invited us to approach Him boldly for every need in our life. "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need," (Hebrews 4:16). Obviously, you must have the *sensitivity* to know when you need Him, the humility to pursue His mercy, and the *desperation* to come boldly to Him.

Someone once said that twenty percent of what Jesus taught involved finances. He cared.

28 Facts You Should Know About A Prosperous Ministry

1. God Wants You To Have Enough Finances To Provide Everything Your Loved **Ones Need For Their Success.** "But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel," (1 Timothy 5:8).

2. God Wants You To Have Enough Finances To Provide An Uncommon And Wonderful Income For Your Spiritual Leaders And Pastors. "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine. For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward," (1 Timothy 5:17-18).

3. God Wants You To Have Enough Finances To Send Ministers Throughout The World Preaching The Gospel. "And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things," (Romans 10:15).

4. God Wants To Provide Enough Finances For You To Pay Your Taxes And Meet Your Obligations. "They say unto him, Caesar's. Then saith He unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's," (Matthew 22:21).

5. God Wants You To Have Enough Finances To Return The Tithe That Belongs To His House Back To The Work of God. "And all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the Lord's: it is holy unto the Lord," (Leviticus 27:30).

6. God Wants You To Have Enough

Finances To Give Good And Uncommon Gifts To Your Children And Those You Love. "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in Heaven give good things to them that ask Him?" (Matthew 7:11).

7. God Wants You To Have Enough Finances To Help The Poor. "He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord; and that which He hath given will He pay him again," (Proverbs 19:17).

8. God Wants You To Have Enough Money To Solve Any Emergency, Problem or Crisis That Arises. "A feast is made for laughter, and wine maketh merry: but money answereth all things," (Ecclesiastes 10:19).

9. God Wants To Reveal To You Where Your Financial Provisions Are Located. He proved this to Elijah. "Get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan. And it shall be, that thou shalt drink of the brook; and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there," (1 Kings 17:3-4).

10. God Is Concerned Every Time You Have A Financial Crisis And Will Give You Instructions To Turn It Around. He did it for Elijah. "And it came to pass after a while, that the brook dried up, because there had been no rain in the land. And the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, Arise, get thee to Zarephath, which belongeth to Zidon, and dwell there: behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee," (1 Kings 17:7-9).

11. God Will Give People Instructions To Help You During A Financial Crisis. Again, He did it for the prophet Elijah, and He will do it for you! "Arise, get thee to Zarephath, which belongeth to Zidon, and dwell there: behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee," (1 Kings 17:9).

12. God Always Rewards Holy Conduct And Behavior With Financial Provision. "For the Lord God is a sun and shield: the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly," (Psalm 84:11).

13. God Commanded Everything He Created To Multiply And Become More. "In the beginning God created the Heaven and the earth. And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of Heaven. And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth," (Genesis 1:1, 20, 22).

14. God Commanded People To Multiply And Become More. "And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth," (Genesis 1:28).

15. God Even Rewards Productivity With More Increase. Read the incredible story of the talents in Matthew 25. "His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord," (Matthew 25:23).

16. God Punishes Those Who Refuse To Use

Their Gifts And Talents To Become More. "Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents. And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth," (Matthew 25:28, 30).

17. God Always Promises Financial Blessing To Those Obedient To His Instructions, Laws And Principles. "And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and to do all His commandments which I command thee this day, that the Lord thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth: And all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God. Blessed shalt thou be in the city, and blessed shalt thou be in the field. Blessed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy ground, and the fruit of thy cattle, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep. Blessed shall be thy basket and thy store. Blessed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and blessed shalt thou be when thou goest out. The Lord shall cause thine enemies that rise up against thee to be smitten before thy face: they shall come out against thee one way, and flee before thee seven ways. The Lord shall command the blessing upon thee in thy storehouses, and in all that thou settest thine hand unto; and He shall bless thee in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee. The Lord shall establish thee an holy people unto Himself, as He hath sworn unto thee, if thou shalt keep the commandments of the Lord thy God, and walk in His ways. And all people of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of the Lord; and they shall be afraid of thee. And the Lord shall

make thee plenteous in goods, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy ground, in the land which the Lord sware unto thy fathers to give thee. The Lord shall open unto thee His good treasure, the Heaven to give the rain unto thy land in His season, and to bless all the work of thine hand: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, and thou shalt not borrow," (Deuteronomy 28:1-12).

18. God Will Teach You To Profit Through Mentors, The Holy Spirit And His Word. "Thus saith the Lord, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; I am the Lord thy God which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldest go," (Isaiah 48:17).

Get excited about your financial future! God cares. He has created a magnificent Financial Plan that cannot *fail* when you understand His heart.

You matter to Him.

Your needs matter to Him.

Every desire throbbing in *your heart* right this moment is vital and important to His heart. Your total prosperity is on His mind at all times.

19. God Experiences Great Pleasure When You Prosper Financially. "Let them shout for joy, and be glad, that favour My righteous cause: yea, let them say continually, Let the Lord be magnified, which hath pleasure in the prosperity of His servant," (Psalm 35:27).

What is abundance? It is far deeper than nice automobiles, beautiful diamonds and more money in the bank. It is much greater than signing your signature on a huge loan that eventually drains your family's finances. Abundance Is Having Enough Provision To Complete A Divine Assignment.

20. God Wants Your Journey Through Life To Have Sufficient Energy, Health And Provision For Your Entire Journey. "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth," (3 John 1:2).

21. God Wants You To Depend On Him As Your Total Source For Every Need In Your Life. "But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God: for it is He that giveth thee power to get wealth, that He may establish His covenant which He sware unto thy fathers, as it is this day," (Deuteronomy 8:18).

22. God Is Not Poor. "The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine, saith the Lord of hosts," (Haggai 2:8).

"For every beast of the forest is Mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills," (Psalm 50:10).

When God saw a confused nation, He provided a Moses. "Now therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel is come unto Me: and I have also seen the oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them. Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth My people the children of Israel out of Egypt," (Exodus 3:9-10).

When Jesus saw fear on the countenance of His disciples, He rebuked the wind. "And He arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm," (Mark 4:39).

When Jesus saw the hunger of the multitudes, He multiplied the fish and loaves. "And He commanded the multitude to sit down on the grass, and took the five loaves, and the two fishes, and looking up to Heaven, He blessed, and brake, and gave the loaves to His disciples, and the disciples to the multitude," (Matthew 14:19).

23. Jesus Himself Cursed The Life of An Unproductive Fig Tree. "And Jesus answered and said unto it, 'No man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever.' And His disciples heard it. And in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots," (Mark 11:14, 20).

24. Jesus Came To Unlock A New Level of Provision And Abundance In Our Life. "The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly," (John 10:10).

25. Jesus Wants You To Know That The Father Understands Every Single Need You Are Experiencing. "Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your Heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things," (Matthew 6:31-32).

26. Jesus Taught That Pursuit of Righteousness, Peace And Joy In The Holy Spirit Would Be Rewarded By Financial Blessing. "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you," (Matthew 6:33). "For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost," (Romans 14:17).

27. Jesus Gave Peter Instructions That Produced Finances To Pay Their Taxes. "Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money: that take, and give unto them for Me and thee," (Matthew 17:27).

28. Jesus Taught That Attentiveness To Details Would Increase And Multiply Your Rewards. "His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord," (Matthew 25:23).

Millions have not learned the alphabet. Yet, millions of others are reading and succeeding with their life.

Many have never traveled and met those of other nations, but those other nations go right on succeeding and doing business.

You may not have understood this quality in the heart of God before, but you do understand now. You cannot complain, gripe and blame others for your ignorance of the Principles of Prosperity from the heart of God. The Word of God is filled with examples of financial leaders such as Abraham, David and Solomon. Their pursuit of God was rewarded in every part of their life.

Now it is your turn for a financial turnaround and breakthrough.

Nobody else can do it for you.

Nobody else is responsible for it but you.

You are not serving an uncaring, unfeeling God.

Your God truly cares about everything you need, especially the financial burden you are carrying today. If you are not receiving a financial Harvest, evaluate again your understanding of your Heavenly Father. Are you truly *discussing* your finances *with Him?* Did you discuss the *purchasing of your house?* Did you feel the *inner confirmation* of The Holy Spirit that the timing was accurate?

If you never *discuss* with God your major purchases or the problems you face on your job and fail to bring the Holy Seed back to Him for multiplying, I doubt that you truly believe He is interested in the finances of your life.

You can change this today. Begin now.

Our Prayer Together...

"Heavenly Father, forgive us for not understanding Your heart when You have made it so

plain and clear to us in Your Word. As we read the Scriptures it is so evident to us that Your heart is full of concern. You desire to impart Wisdom to us. Now, in the name of Jesus we receive Your truth that sets us free forever. Show us where our Assignment is, because that is the *only place provision is guaranteed for us.* Connect us to the people that can minister to us and bless us financially. They are the chosen channels You are anointing in our life. Bring us back into a place of provision, the place of obedience. In Jesus' name. Amen."

You will begin to live abundantly when you start believing that abundance is the desire and will of God for you.

Recommended Investments:

31 Reasons People Do Not Receive Their Financial Harvest (Book/B-82/252 pg) 7 Keys To 1000 Times More (Book/B-104/128 pg) Secrets of The Richest Man Who Ever Lived (CD/CDS-25)



ACHIEVEMENT

3-0-6

God Is An Achiever.

He has plans, goals and dreams. He does not sit on His throne looking, feeling and hoping. He is definitely a Doer.

In fact, the first thing God did to Adam was to place him in a garden, with a job description. He was to take care of the garden. "And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it," (Genesis 2:15).

Champions Make Decisions That Will Create The Future They Desire.

Achievement is one of the most fascinating subjects on earth. It is also one of the most distorted, perverted and misunderstood topics.

In fact, many people continuously criticize unusual achievers. This criticism may be due to jealousy, envy or conviction. I do not really know, but it is sad and unfortunate to hear the barrage of destructive words labeling these producers..."workaholics."

Some ministers even take their scalpel and slice through the heart of those who are obsessed with *producing something significant in their daily routine*. TV Talk shows are filled with sneering comments about those obsessed with a *mission*, an Assignment, a consuming focus for their lives. It is quite obvious that the masses of average people consider those who are energized, enthusiastic and focused to be flawed. They are thought to work *too* hard, achieve *too* much and are considered quite unbalanced.

Rarely is the *truth* carefully considered. It is the workaholic who normally signs the paychecks of others, sets the goals and establishes the pace while seeing productivity as an *asset* in life.

Certainly, there are abuses and imbalances that must be considered. But it is interesting how God first described Himself to humans.

It happens in the *first* book of the Bible. The *first* chapter. The *first* verse. He did not establish Himself as relationship oriented, believe it or not! In His words, "In the beginning God created the Heaven and the earth," (Genesis 1:1).

He did not discuss His feelings.

He did not discuss His dreams, aspirations and goals.

He discussed His work...His productivity...His accomplishments.

He said, "I am an *achiever*. I *do* things. I *create*. I *produce*. I set in motion. I am energized. I am not a donothing kind of God." This is why the subject of achievement is worthy of our focus.

The Holy Spirit is an *achiever*.

He reveals, imparts and completes.

He is an *enabler*.

It is true that some people become so involved in their work that their family life is forgotten, neglected and deteriorates.

It is also true that many people sit in their homes

and deteriorate with their family rotting and dying around them.

Just a brief word concerning achieving the will of God. When your obsession is to follow the leading of The Holy Spirit, there may be losses. Personal losses. You may lose friends whose love and caring you believed would last forever. Your own family may refuse to follow you into the Harvest field to achieve and complete the Assignment God has burned into your heart.

Some are teaching that the most important thing in life is your family. This is absurd. *The most important thing is to achieve the will of God*, with or without those you love.

I asked my father a few days ago, "Daddy, how do you feel when one of your children rebels against your teaching of serving the Lord?"

"One day I was quite torn apart inside," he replied slowly. As he named one of the children, he continued, "She was really away from the Lord, and I was crying out to Him while on my face, 'Oh, what have I done wrong? Lord, I do not really know my feelings.""

He said, "The Lord spoke quite a statement to my heart. 'Son, I have lost some of My own children, though I have done everything within My power to reach them."

Do whatever God has called you to do.

When Jesus discussed the various people, one who had one talent, several talents and another who had ten talents, He taught us the way to achievement. He looked at the man who produced nothing with his Godgiven skills and ability, and He pronounced a curse on that man. "And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth," (Matthew 25:30).

God despises laziness. "How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? when will thou arise out of thy sleep?" (Proverbs 6:9).

He hates a sluggard. "The soul of the sluggard desireth, and hath nothing: but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat," (Proverbs 13:4).

He hates slowness; He wants to move forward.

He loves achievers so much that He will even get involved with a rebel so long as He is attempting to accomplish something. That is how Saul became Paul. Though he was doing the wrong thing, at least he was doing something! God responded to this desire to achieve. "And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles," (Acts 8:1).

Read Daniel 11:32, "But the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits." Paul wrote, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me," (Philippians 4:13).

7 Ingredients For Becoming An Uncommon Achiever

1. Planning.

Your desire may be to build your own home. This involves planning. When you desire your own personal business, it necessitates planning. When you write a book, it is necessary to plan.

God is a planner. (He is the only person I know

who schedules supper 6,000 years in advance. Now, that is planning!) Jesus used an interesting illustration comparing a wise man to a fool. The wise man built his house on a rock. The foolish man built his house on sand.

"Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of Mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock," (Matthew 7:24-25).

Creativity can *birth*.

Planning determines longevity.

Your energy begins a project.

Your *structure* decides its lifetime.

Jesus taught, "For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish," (Luke 14:28-30).

Leaders *plan*.

Successful leaders plan thoroughly.

Jesus explained, "Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace," (Luke 14:31-32).

Even ants plan. They are commended for it. "Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be

wise: Which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, Provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest," (Proverbs 6:6-8).

The Bible is God's personal plan book. He discusses the plans of *past* events, His *present* plans and His *future* plans.

So, do not feel guilty because you are driven and energized to achieve great goals and dreams. Be thankful. Be appreciative that the God Who created you has planted photographs of your future in the soil of your mind. Seize the moments that He energizes you to write those dreams down, and even share them with your closest friends.

You were created to solve problems for others.

Just a side thought. It is incredibly sad to be in the presence of someone who has quit dreaming, planning and imagining a future. Sorrow comes when you have lost sight of a goal. "Hope deferred maketh the heart sick: but when the desire cometh, it is a tree of life," (Proverbs 13:12).

I read an interesting statistic several years ago that stated the unbelievably high percentage of retirees who die within two years of retirement—unless they find something in which to empty their energy, talents and passion.

You were created for movement.

You were created for *accomplishment*.

You were created for a Divine *function* and purpose.

You contain an *invisible* Assignment—the problem God created *you* to solve.

The ship was not made for the harbor—it was made to *sail*.

The hammer was not made for the tool chest—it was made for *building*.

Your car was not made for the garage—it was made for *driving*.

5 Reasons To Plan

It is very important for you to have a plan for your life.

1. Planning Helps You Manage Your Time.

2. Planning Enables You To Set Deadlines.

3. Planning Helps You To Qualify People For Appointments.

4. Planning Enables You To Avoid Distractions, Protecting Your Focus.

5. Planning Helps You To Eliminate The Unnecessary And Delete The Trivia From Your Daily Life.

Solomon *planned* the temple. Noah *planned* the ark. Success requires more than a command from God. It requires an accurate, thorough *plan* for its accomplishment.

It takes a moment to get a *command*. It takes your lifetime to get the *plan*.

Note Joshua, the great military leader of the Israelites. He lost his first battle at Ai. "And the men of Ai smote of them about thirty and six men: for they chased them from before the gate even unto Shebarim, and smote them in the going down: wherefore the hearts of the people melted, and became as water," (Joshua 7:5). He had plunged into the battle without a specific plan. He had not really heard from the Lord. He was in a flow, a momentum of winning. He became momentarily self-sufficient. He used previous victories as inspiration for his present conflict.

Every battle will require a *different* plan.

Every Assignment has a *variation* in its plan.

Joshua lost the battle. The tragedy cost him many men that he loved. He screamed in anguish, hurt and agony before God. In despair, he ripped his clothes off. "And Joshua rent his clothes, and fell to the earth upon his face before the ark of the Lord until the eventide, he and the elders of Israel, and put dust upon their heads," (Joshua 7:6).

Any unplanned day has the possibility of ending in tragedy.

Successes are the *only* things planned.

Failures are never planned.

God instructed Joshua to quit praying. Get up. Make things right. Achan had sinned. After Joshua took care of the problem through stoning Achan and his family, it left him incredibly sensitive to the *necessity of a plan.* "And the Lord said unto Joshua, Get thee up; wherefore liest thou thus upon thy face? Israel hath sinned, and they have also transgressed my covenant which I commanded them: for they have even taken of the accursed thing, and have also stolen, and dissembled also, and they have put it even among their own stuff," (Joshua 7:10-11).

"Up, sanctify the people, and say, Sanctify yourselves against to morrow: for thus saith the Lord God of Israel, There is an accursed thing in the midst of thee, O Israel: thou canst not stand before thine enemies, until ye take away the accursed thing from among you," (Joshua 7:13).

"And Joshua, and all Israel with him, took Achan the son of Zerah, and the silver, and the garment, and the wedge of gold, and his sons, and his daughters, and his oxen, and his asses, and his sheep, and his tent, and all that he had: and they brought them unto the valley of Achor. And Joshua said, Why hast thou troubled us? the Lord shall trouble thee this day. And all Israel stoned him with stones, and burned them with fire, after they had stoned them with stones," (Joshua 7:24-25).

"And the Lord said unto Joshua, Fear not, neither be thou dismayed: take all the people of war with thee, and arise, go up to Ai: see, I have given into thy hand the king of Ai, and his people, and his city, and his land: And thou shalt do to Ai and her king as thou didst unto Jericho and her king: only the spoil thereof, and the cattle thereof, shall ye take for a prey unto yourselves: lay thee an ambush for the city behind it," (Joshua 8:1-2).

He stayed in the presence of God long enough to get the plan. He ambushed his enemy, and succeeded *after* treasuring the plan of God. *God uses plans.* Someone has said that only three people out of a hundred plan a single day.

If you cannot plan 24 hours, you cannot plan 24 years.

If you cannot make one day productive, you cannot make your life productive. Tomorrow is not yet here. It is in the *womb*. Yesterday is over. It is in the *tomb*. *Life is today*.

Several years ago, I carefully analyzed the ingredients of my happiest and most exciting days. I noticed seven elements were in every day that I was unusually happy. These factors made me energized, enthusiastic, motivated, satisfied and incredibly fulfilled.

Please consider them.

I noticed when I took the time to meticulously and carefully *write out a detailed written plan and follow it as closely as possible,* I felt good about my day. "Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it. For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry," (Habakkuk 2:2-3).

When I scheduled *two specific hours in the presence of God* for absorbing Scriptures, discussing my plans and meditating on Him, I was satisfied in an un-explainable way. "The law of Thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver," (Psalm 119:72). "How sweet are Thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!" (Psalm 119:103).

Planning is not fun for me. I find planning laborious. It is hard. Sometimes I think to myself, "I could be getting things done instead of writing out my to-do list." We get so busy mopping up the water that we do not have time to turn off the faucet!

Your Assignment will only be accomplished when you take the time to discern God's plan daily. His *daily* plan for your life.

One of our most famous lawyers in America invests the first hour every day meticulously planning what the other 23 hours will produce. Think of it! He said because he had spent so much time, one complete hour, deciding carefully the value of each task of the day, when he arrived at that specific hour, he was strengthened and motivated to *complete his plan*.

2. People.

God included people in everything He did. Smart

people. Common people. Patient people. Aggressive people. Caring people. Mentors. Protégés. Friendships. Business connections. Yes, even Jesus was connected to people. He allowed them to participate in His goals and Assignment. *People were His Assignment*.

One of my closest and most treasured friends is an extraordinary pastor in Sarasota, Florida. He once told me, "Mike, listen to happy voices for *encouragement*. Listen to unhappy voices for ideas."

People contain answers.

Unhappy customers reveal weaknesses to every company. Greatly successful companies often change significantly through listening to interesting and useful complaints from unhappy employees. Unhappy voices birth ideas, solutions for changes. One complaining customer says, "My order took 4 weeks to arrive." So the employer says, "Find and negotiate for the fastest shipping transportation possible."

Happy people are wonderful for relationships.

 $Unhappy \ {\rm people} \ {\rm are} \ {\rm marvelous} \ {\rm resources} \ {\rm for} \ {\rm ideas}.$

Every person in your life has their place. It is vital that you recognize their unique and specific contribution. Why did God bring this person to you? True, some are not easy to get along with. Some are not fun. But, God has a reason for them being in your life.

Carefully observe the wife of Potiphar. She lied about Joseph. She accused him of raping her. "That she called unto the men of her house, and spake unto them, saying, See, he hath brought in an Hebrew unto us to mock us; he came in unto me to lie with me, and I cried with a loud voice," (Genesis 39:14).

That is a horrible and terrifying false accusation.

It placed him in the dungeon, in the pit, in the prison. "And Joseph's master took him, and put him into the prison, a place where the king's prisoners were bound: and he was there in the prison," (Genesis 39:20).

But God used the attack on his character to *link him to his next season.* He met the butler who introduced him to Pharaoh. "And Pharaoh was wroth against two of his officers, against the chief of the butlers, and against the chief of the bakers. And he put them in ward in the house of the captain of the guard, into the prison, the place where Joseph was bound," (Genesis 40:2-3). "And there was there with us a young man, an Hebrew, servant to the captain of the guard; and we told him, and he interpreted to us our dreams; to each man according to his dream he did interpret," (Genesis 41:12). Joseph found favor in the most unlikely of circumstances.

There is another side of the picture. Not every person around you is placed there by God. *When Satan Wants To Destroy You, He Puts A Person In Your Life.* Delilah was not sent by the Father to destroy the life of Samson. Samson went to the wrong *place*, where he met the wrong *person* who influenced him in the wrong *direction.* (Read Judges 16:1-21.)

God is careful about the people He sends to you. He sends you people who *protect your focus...*who guard your Assignment. It is important to honor and treasure the people who are like walls around your life to keep you harnessed and focused on the dreams and goals God has established for your life.

Mentors are gifts from God. When I needed additional information and Wisdom regarding raising my son, I asked my mother. She raised 7 children. You

will need financial mentors, spiritual mentors and relationship mentors. Some will nurture the greatness of God in you.

You will need protégés. These are those who learn from you, sit at your feet and extract what God has placed on your table. Your protégés will force you to think your *highest* thoughts. They watch your life. They *study* your reactions. Your attitudes are examined and evaluated. Your opinions are *tested*. You need protégés because they force you to *correct your course continually*. Whether it is a child, a friend or a son-inlaw, *someone needs to be receiving from you*.

You need friends. Friends do not make attempts to change you. They attempt to *understand* you. They permit you to move any direction you desire. Sometimes they motivate you. Sometimes they do not. It is important that you have a variety of friends.

Some friends will be your *coach—advising* you.

Some friends will be your *cheerleaders—inspiring* you.

Picture a great football team. Those football players need coaches *correcting* them. They need cheer-leaders *coaxing* them. They need fans—to *pay* them!

Every person has a *different* role in your life. Never force your cheerleaders to develop the mentality of a coach. Never force your coaches to lighten up and become your cheerleader.

Years ago, I made a major mistake. A young lady I really loved worked for me. She was fun. Delightful. But she was so messy and unorganized in her filing system, it was horrifying. She took bank statements and stuffed them in envelopes. She coded them wrong, and I felt obligated to fire her. After she was gone, I walked into the office and could not believe the atmosphere of death that prevailed in the staff. Her presence brought such joy, energy and excitement that I had overlooked how lifeless the others were without her present. She was literally the energy of the entire office. She was the catalyst for movement among the staff. I just had her in the *wrong position*.

Husbands often want their wives to be something they cannot be. Wives sometimes want their husbands to be different. Each of us has a different function, a different role and a different contribution.

Your eye does not get angry at the ear for not seeing. It does not say, "Well, if I had been on that side of your face, I would have seen the baseball coming!" Your legs do not get angry at your hands for not walking. Your hands do not get angry at your legs for not reaching.

They have *different* functions.

Your relationships require *repair*, *correction*, *restoration*. Nurture them. Feed them. Fuel them. Understand them.

3. Pain.

Pain is an important and necessary factor in achievement. Opposition is normal. Crisis is normal to a productive person. *Your Pain Decides Your Goals.*

Sometimes we wish we were God. I have heard people say, "I wish I were God. I would not hurt." Yet, nobody hurts more than God. God knows pain.

Even Jesus knew pain. "Who in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save Him from death, and was heard in that He feared; Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered," (Hebrews 5:7-8).

Pain is part of the life process. Great prophets wept. Some even wanted to commit suicide. Jeremiah cried, "Oh that I had in the wilderness a lodging place of wayfaring men; that I might leave my people, and go from them," (Jeremiah 9:2). He would rather run a motel in Arizona than stay in the ministry!

Pain can make you lose confidence in the people to whom you are assigned. Micah cried, "The best of them is as a brier: the most upright is sharper than a thorn hedge:...Trust ye not in a friend," (Micah 7:4-5).

Elijah could outrun horses. He ate miracle meals flown in by birds. He called down fire on water-soaked sacrifices. Yet, he once became so despondent he asked God to kill him! "But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree: and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers," (1 Kings 19:4).

Jonah, famous graduate of "Whale University," had 120,000 converts in a single crusade. Yet, later he cried out to God to take his life: "Take, I beseech Thee, my life from me; for it is better for me to die than to live," (Jonah 4:3).

The wealthy hurt. Rich and wise King Solomon confessed that he came to an emotional crisis so devastating that he "hated life." "Therefore I hated life; because the work that is wrought under the sun is grievous unto me: for all is vanity and vexation of spirit," (Ecclesiastes 2:17). Dreams require seasons...seasons of insignificance, incubation and isolation. Regardless of how much you love God, you will know pain.

Any lifestyle that contains progress produces pain.

Fortunately, pain is seasonal. "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning," (Psalm 30:5). "And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not," (Galatians 6:9).

3 Ways To Successfully Handle Pain

1. Honestly Examine The True Cause of The Pain. Is the reason for your pain an unwise decision you made? An *untrustworthy person* in whom you placed confidence? A situation you created through *ignorance*?

2. Is It Really Your Problem or Someone Else's Problem You Have Adopted As Your Own? Mothers do this frequently when they borrow pain from their children. This does not help the child. The children are weakened and are unable to progress on their own. This is unfortunate, but it happens frequently.

3. Concentrate On The Conclusion of Your **Problem, The Solution.** Pain is *not* an ending. *It is a beginning.* It is a birthing of something *significant.*

Jesus cried out in the garden of Gethsemane. It appears that His mind was in torment. He did not really want to die that way, the way of the Cross. But, for the joy set before Him, He endured the Cross. He pictured the *conclusion*. "Looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of our faith; Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God," (Hebrews 12:2).

Sometimes it is tempting to say to yourself, "If I pray enough, there will be no more pain. If I raise my children exactly right, there will be no more pain. If I do everything perfectly on my job, there will not be pain." Wrong. *The most perfect person on earth knew the greatest pain*, Jesus of Nazareth.

But, He recognized that *pain is a way of passage*.

You must do the same. Pain Is Discomfort Created By Disorder. Pain is the proof that something is wrong, that corrections must be made. Pain is not your enemy. It is merely the proof that you have an enemy. Permit pain to educate you. Pain exposes the weaknesses of others. Pain reveals the closeness of God to your life. Pain motivates you to reach—for the only One Who can perfect you, your Heavenly Father. Pain is not your destination—merely the price for arriving at your destination. Keep your focus on the conclusion...pain is a small price for a great miracle about to be experienced.

4. Problem-Solving.

Everything God Made Was Created To Solve A Specific Problem. Mechanics solve car problems. Dentists solve teeth problems. Mothers solve emotional problems. Your eyes see. Your ears hear. Your feet take you places. Your hands grasp. Your mouth speaks. Your nose smells. *You are a collection of solutions.*

It is important that you find the problem God specifically created you to solve while on earth. You may not be good with numbers, or talkative. But, you may be a good listener. You may be great in electronics. There is something you are equipped and skilled to do—*find it*.

What you love to think about, study and discuss is a clue to your Assignment. *What You Hate Reveals Something You Were Created To Correct*. What grieves and saddens you is a clue to something you were created to heal.

Your *patience* will solve a problem for somebody. Your *information* will solve a problem for another. Your *listening* solves a problem for someone else.

5 Powerful Questions

You must find the person who has the problem you were created to solve. When you have a dream to achieve a specific goal, ask yourself these questions:

1. What Problem Will This Really Solve?

2. Is Anybody Else Already Solving This Kind of Problem?

3. What Can I Possibly Do That Has Not Been Done By Someone Else?

4. Am I The Only Person In My Area Who Can Solve This Problem?

5. Is There Someone Elsewhere Who Is Capable of Solving This Specific Problem?

Always remember that your income is determined by the problems you solve. Money is merely a reward for solving a problem. When you see someone who has great wealth, they have done something that solved a problem for other people.

5. Patience.

Patience Is A Seed. It is a Seed of Time that you plant to grow a particular Harvest. Any great achievement involves time. It took God hundreds of years to produce what He wanted in a family. He is patient with millions of rebellious and disobedient

people every day. He is patient with egotistical atheists, glib-tongued philosophers, religious Pharisees and know-it-all teenagers. Yet, His Seeds of patience are not wasted. You have reached for Him because of His patience.

Patience is the willingness to assign Time to work on a solution. In your life. In the life of others close to you.

Patience produces exceptional friendships.

Patience produces great marriages.

Patience will produce what money cannot produce.

Patience has turned around weak and unhealthy people through exercise and focus, producing powerful, strong bodies.

"The Lord is good unto them that wait for Him, to the soul that seeketh Him. It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord," (Lamentations 3:25-26). "Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord," (Psalm 27:14).

Wait for seasons to end. "For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry," (Habakkuk 2:3).

3 Rewards of Waiting

- ► Waiting reveals the weaknesses of impatient enemies.
- Waiting provides God time to interrupt any attack on your life with a miraculous deliverance.
- ► Waiting gives time for others to become what Wisdom is producing within them.

6. Power.

Power Is The Ability To Accomplish An Objective.

Jesus promised power, capability and enablement. "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you," (Acts 1:8).

The Holy Spirit empowers you. "That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man," (Ephesians 3:16).

You must permit that power to work within you. "Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us," (Ephesians 3:20).

Do not trust your own strength. "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths. Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the Lord, and depart from evil. It shall be health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones," (Proverbs 3:5-8).

Consistently Consult The Holy Spirit. He walks beside you. He loves you. He nurtures you. He knows exactly what you need. Ask Him, "Walk with me. Give me the enablement. Lord, how do I handle this particular problem today?" Ask His advice. Consult Him on every single decision of your life. Consult Him in discerning the motives, true intentions and character of those around you.

The Holy Spirit will give you *pictures* for the gallery of your mind to *meditate* upon. Abraham had a *picture* of his future generations. "That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the Heaven, and as the sand which

is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies," (Genesis 22:17).

Joseph had a picture of himself in the palace. "And he dreamed yet another dream, and told it his brethren, and said, Behold, I have dreamed a dream more; and, behold, the sun and the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance to me," (Genesis 37:9).

Jesus had a *photograph* of Himself going through the Cross and to the resurrection. "For He taught His disciples, and said unto them, The Son of man is delivered into the hands of men, and they shall kill Him; and after that He is killed, He shall rise the third day," (Mark 9:31).

What you look at the longest becomes the strongest in your mind. Get a picture of Jesus. "Looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of our faith; Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God," (Hebrews 12:2).

7. Prosperity.

Prosperity Is Having Enough of God's Provision To Complete His Assignment For Your Life. It is not a luxury. It is a necessity. Some think it is nice cars and a large home. Prosperity is provision sufficient to complete a command from The Holy Spirit.

It is the will of God for you to prosper. "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth," (3 John 1:2).

God wants you to have good things. "No good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly," (Psalm 84:11).

Provisions come as the product of obedience. "And all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God," (Deuteronomy 28:2).

Disobedience will birth losses and tragedies. "If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land: But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it," (Isaiah 1:19-20).

When you solve problems, you will be rewarded financially. It is the plan of God. Money should never be your goal, merely your weapon. It is a tool. Money is not a destination, but a vehicle to help you arrive at a destination. It is an instrument for the achiever. Again, money is not the goal of a true achiever, but a tool to create the dream God has placed within you.

3 Keys To Prosperity

- ▶ Spending money wisely is an important key.
- ► Saving money habitually is a major key.
- Sowing money expectantly is the master key to multiplication.

When you give to men, it comes back. "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again," (Luke 6:38).

When you give to God, it comes back one hundred times. "Verily I say unto you, there is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for My sake, and the gospel's, But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life," (Mark 10:29-30). Sow obediently. Sow consistently. Sow generously. Sow expectantly. What you respect will always come toward you.

These are the seven ingredients in becoming the achiever God created you to be.

Our Pre "Preciou

Our Prayer Together...

"Precious Holy Spirit, thank You today for my special friends reading this specific segment to

unlock the greatness resident within their hearts and lives. Thank You for enabling us to *complete* our Assignment on earth and do *great exploits for You*. We shall begin today with total abandonment to Your commands for our life. In the precious name of Jesus. Amen."

Recommended Investments:

1 Minute Pocket Bible for Achievers (Book/B-50/124 pg) The Leadership Secrets of Jesus (Book/B-91/196 pg) 31 Scriptures Every Achiever Should Memorize (Book/B-183/32 pg) How to Stay Motivated to Achieve Your Dream (CD/CDS-14) Solomon's 17 Secrets for Achievement-Video (VHS/VI-02) Adversity Is The Opposition You Experience In The Pursuit of Your Assignment.

-MIKE MURDOCK



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Adversity

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Pain Talks.

Pain Is Not Your Enemy—Merely The Proof That You Have One.

The Holy Spirit is our Teacher. He teaches us all things. I want to offer you some things that He has caused me to recognize regarding an *exciting* subject—adversity.

When I talk about adversity, I am not talking about not paying your income tax, getting caught and you having to pay the penalty.

Adversity is not getting a ticket on the way to church because you were driving too fast.

That has nothing to do with adversity. That is paying the penalty for rebelling against the laws of God. Often what we define as adversity can really be traced to something that we have done in open defiance or rebellion against the known will of God.

Adversity is not that you cannot make a payment on something that you should not have borrowed money for in the first place.

By the term "adversity" I am not talking about those things.

I want to share information concerning *true adversity*, adversity in areas of your heart such as:

 When your friends have turned their backs on you.

- ▶ When you have lost at love.
- ▶ When a relationship has deteriorated.
- ► When your husband walks out on you and leaves you for a younger woman.
- ▶ When your wife gets involved with a man on her job, and it is ripping your heart out.
- ▶ When you lose your job, when you get fired, and you cannot find work; when your back is against the wall.
- When you have to sell your house, and it will not sell, and you are stuck with it. You do not know where to go, or what to do.
- When you go to a healing line at a crusade, and you stand there for two hours, and everybody gets healed except you.
- ▶ When it seems satan has targeted you, just like he did Job.

When I talk about adversity, I am talking about the times when you become the obvious target of a satanic strategy, a plot to destroy you—to obliterate your faith and to wipe out your hope. As Jesus said, "The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy," (John 10:10).

It is true that satan *schedules his attacks*. It is true that he does not attack everyone the same way at the same time for the same reason.

I want to talk particularly about your adversity. I could tell you about my own trials. I could tell you about all of my difficulties and trials, because I have come through so many of them. I have made the statement many times, "I have a Ph.D. in pain." You probably feel the same way.

Adversity is when things go opposite of the way

that you wanted them to go, opposite of the way that God *told* you they would go.

Adversity is circumstances against you having something that The Word of God *promised you would* have.

Adversity is satan doing everything within his power to stop the will of God from being accomplished and completed in your life. That is adversity.

Adversity Is The Opposition You Experience In The Pursuit of Your Assignment.

Though we are often blind to it, what we think of as adversity is really a vehicle that God will use to bring ultimate *promotion* to our lives.

I had a problem with my health one night after teaching one of my Schools of Wisdom. I had unbearable pain all night long in a hospital emergency room in Sacramento, California. I was just staring at the ceiling, and the pain was so unbearable I did not know what to do.

Nothing was working. *Nothing*. I thought I was going to die. I was lying there, pleading for God's help. I was using my faith and positive confession in every possible way: "I am not sick. I do not hurt. Hallelujah. I am well. I am healed by the power of God." But nothing seemed to change.

Yet, God used this painful event to dramatically *change my eating habits*. God brought promotion to me that painful night by revealing to me the best secret I have ever learned in developing a higher level of good health. (No, He is not the author of sickness, but He turned it for good!)

There are times when everything seems to go wrong. There have been times when my ministry has

been the object of distortions, false accusations, losses and financial setbacks. I remember meeting with people to discuss with them whether I should declare bankruptcy.

I know what it means to be wiped out *financially* to not even have a chair to sit on in a little apartment. I lived for a year in a one bedroom apartment with no sofa and no chair, without even a kitchen table. Then I lived in the corner of a friend's house in a 9 x 12 room for another year. *I know adversity*.

I have been there, sitting on the platform in a crusade with my heart about to burst because my marriage was coming apart. I did not know what to say, what to do or who to turn to. I even fasted 21 days on 3 different occasions in an effort to turn my life around and get it together! I know pain. I know *the total elimination of hope*.

I know what it means to stand on the balcony of a hotel room many floors off the ground contemplating suicide, but just being too scared to jump.

I know what it means to be on an airplane and beg God to let it crash. I did not want to walk through family and home problems. I know that place of mental torment.

I want to give you several Scriptures that have helped me. Then I want to share some powerful Wisdom Keys. The purpose of this chapter is to give you Wisdom Keys to strengthen you, to focus you and to keep you focused. *The Only Reason Men Fail Is Broken Focus*. If satan can distract you from your Assignment and from The Holy Spirit Who walks beside you, you will fail.

Look at this explosive Scripture passage: "But

now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and He that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not," (Isaiah 43:1).

Fear not.

If God can keep you from fearing—fearing the faces of men, fearing loss, fearing failure—you will not know failure.

"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind," (2 Timothy 1:7). I urge you, whatever you do, do not let fear get inside you. *Resist it passionately*.

Now, you may say, "What am I going to do? How am I going to handle this? I do not know what to do." There is only *one* way, and that is the *perfect love that casteth out fear*—your love for God, the love of God within you. "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love," (1 John 4:18).

Embrace His love and permit His presence to saturate you in The Secret Place, in your private prayer room, when your heart is broken before God. *His presence is where faith is born.*

"Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art Mine," (Isaiah 43:1).

I wrote a song many years ago that said:

Made with mercy, Formed by grace, Clothed with favor. I have found my place. He will not let me forget That He made me to sit in high places. I was made with mercy, Formed by grace. He saw me in my mother's womb. Before I saw His light. He drew the plans He had for me Before I had my sight. When by love I was conceived, He gave me a special faith to believe. And He loved me with the love Somehow I had to receive.

I was made with mercy. Formed by grace. Clothed with favor. I have found my place. He will not let me forget That He has made me to sit in high places. I was made with mercy And formed by grace.[©] (Copyright ©1996 Win-Song Productions, Inc.)

The Scripture says, "But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles," (Isaiah 40:31).

One of the things that has kept me strong during times of adversity is this: He said, "Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art Mine," (Isaiah 43:1).

You see, there is a major difference between the *Jesus Christ* system and the *anti-Christ* system. Jesus has a *name* system, but the anti-Christ system is a *number* system.

What does that mean? What is the difference? Just this: a *name* means you are connected. Know this, you are *connected*.

Someone was here before you Who is connected to you. Someone will be here after you Who will still be connected to you.

You have a *relationship*.

You have a *genealogy*.

The anti-Christ system is a number system. A number has no relationship. A name means, "I have a purpose. I have a future." He says, "Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art Mine," (Isaiah 43:1).

In times of adversity it is vital, it is powerful, it is absolutely essential for you to remember that Someone owns you. You have been bought with a price.

The Apostle Paul wrote, "For ye are bought with a price," (1 Corinthians 6:20). And he said, "But Christ being come an High Priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, Who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" (Hebrews 9:11-14).

We have been purchased. We have been paid for. We are not our own. Our bodies are not our own.

That means God is going to take care of His own. Be sure of it. He says to you, "Do not worry. I am going to take care of what is Mine."

Now sometimes you probably do not feel that He

will do that. You might feel like saying, "God, You do not take care of Your property very well."

But you are His. You are His. You are His. Whether you *feel* it or not. Whether you *know* it or not. Whether *anybody else* knows it or not. Whether anybody else admits it or sees it or values it or even believes it—you belong to Somebody. You belong to Somebody—but not to a weakling. Not to someone who does not see your future.

Not to someone who is deaf to your cry.

Not to someone who is immune to your pain.

You belong to Somebody Who says He will watch over His Word to perform it, "Then said the Lord unto me, Thou hast well seen: for I will hasten My word to perform it," (Jeremiah 1:12); Who said, "Behold, He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep," (Psalm 121:4). That is why He said, "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning," (Psalm 30:5).

"When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee," (Isaiah 43:2). He did not say, "if." He said, "When thou passest through the waters..."

You are *going to* pass through the waters.

The servant is not above his lord. If Jesus suffered, then you will pay a price. If He carried a cross, then you will carry a cross.

Now that is not popular preaching—not in these days of prosperity consciousness; not in these days of faith teaching; not in these days of victory teaching. But *there is a cross to bear*.

I am not talking about the burden that is light and the yoke that is easy. I am not talking about that. Paul said, "If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him," (2 Timothy 2:12).

So adversity produces a product. Adversity is part of the package.

Adversity, Conflict And Struggle Are Proofs of An Enemy.

Struggle is proof that there is an enemy. It is proof that somebody does not want you going where you are going.

There is a *reason* for warfare. There is a reason for it, and there is a *season* for it.

When *not* if "thou passest through the waters," (Isaiah 43:2). Why do we think that Jesus would have to pay a price, but we would not? Why do we think that Joseph was the only person to have to go through the pit and the prison? "And they took him, and cast him into a pit: and the pit was empty, there was no water in it," (Genesis 37:24). "And Joseph's master took him, and put him into the prison, a place where the king's prisoners were bound: and he was there in the prison," (Genesis 39:20).

Why do we think that Daniel was the only one falsely accused? "Then the presidents and princes sought to find occasion against Daniel concerning the kingdom; but they could find none occasion nor fault; forasmuch as he was faithful, neither was there any error or fault found in him. Then said these men, We shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of his God," (Daniel 6:4-5).

Why do we think that all of these stories in the

Bible are only for people 2,000 years ago? Were they ignorant people? Oh, you may say, "These were people who lived before The Holy Spirit came."

Let's look at the Apostle Paul. What makes us think Paul lacked something that we have? Paul endured stoning and was left for dead. Why do we think that our lives will be *unlike* that? Do we think we have become *skilled*? Do we think we have become clever or shrewd, or *more spiritual*, or more aware?

As Hebrews says, "Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise," (Hebrews 11:33-39).

Why do we look at men of God who are walking through the fire in our day and view them as being out of the will of God? Yet, we may have to walk through the fire in our own lives.

Conflict Is Not Proof That You Have Missed The Will of God. It Is Probably Proof That You Are In The

Center of His Will.

Adversity is not merely a delay. It is something God uses as a vehicle to get you to the palace.

"When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee," (Isaiah 43:2).

He was there. He is here. He is with me. He is with you. *Right now*.

"If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall Thy hand lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from Thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to Thee," (Psalm 139:9-12). When your back is against the wall, when everything is going crazy, when your mind is whirling, He is with you. You have got to believe that.

"Through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee," (Isaiah 43:2). *When...not if.* Circle that in your Bible. "When thou walkest through the fire," (Isaiah 43:2).

Notice you are not *standing* in the fire.

You are not *living* in the fire.

You are not *sitting* in the fire.

You are not *lying* in the fire.

You are *walking* through the fire.

You are moving.

You are making progress.

Change is happening.

He did not say you will *remain* in this season. He did not say you would *stay* in adversity. Joseph did get out of the pit, "Then there passed by Midianites merchantmen; and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ishmeelites for twenty

pieces of silver: and they brought Joseph into Egypt," (Genesis 37:28); and he did get out of the prison. "Then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they brought him hastily out of the dungeon: and he shaved himself, and changed his raiment, and came in unto Pharaoh," (Genesis 41:14).

Daniel only stayed a few hours in the lion's den. "Then was the king exceedingly glad for him, and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, because he believed in his God," (Daniel 6:23). The fiery furnace did not last for days. "Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the mouth of the burning fiery furnace, and spake, and said, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, ye servants of the most high God, come forth, and come hither. Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, came forth of the midst of the fire," (Daniel 3:26).

You will pass *through*.

You will walk through the fire.

This is a season. Can you see it? It could change in 7 days. It may change *tomorrow night*. It could change 60 days from now. You are walking *through* the fire.

"Thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee," (Isaiah 43:2). Why? "I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour," (Isaiah 43:3).

Now, look at Romans. "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? Who shall separate us from the love of Christ," (Romans 8:31, 35).

Understand this. In the worst trials of your life, He is *there*. He is with you. "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For Thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us," (Romans 8:35-37).

Say it aloud, "More than conquerors." *Shout* it again, "More than conquerors."

Apply it to your life: "I am more than a conqueror through Him that loves me..."

This is Paul who writes. This is not someone sitting on the bleachers, just watching. This is a man who endured stoning for his faith. This is a man who was cursed at and thrown in prison. "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord," (Romans 8:38-39).

Speak faith aloud to yourself:

- "Nothing is going to disconnect me from His love."
- *"Nothing* is going to break my relationship."
- ▶ *"Nothing* is going to break my focus."
- *"Nothing* is going to break my bond with God, my connection with the Spirit of God and with Jesus."

Get this in your spirit. Become obsessed with this revelation.

"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful," (1 Corinthians 10:13). Do not get arrogant. Do not get the idea that you know it all. In 1 Corinthians 10:12, Paul says it this way, "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

But, "God is faithful, Who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it," (verse 13).

When I was 18 years old and in college, I was going through some rough waters. My mother shared an illustration that helped me. We have seen the ads in the paper or in the store, the ads that say, "If you buy this toothpaste, you will get a free toothbrush."

Marketing people package things. Why? They do it to motivate you, the customer, to give you an *incentive* to buy their product. Many people buy \$40,000 cars just to get a \$200 microwave oven!

Well, my mother said this, and I will never forget it: "Son, always remember that when God lets you get into the room of temptation, *in that room is a door for you to escape* if you will *look* for it. *Look for the door.*" Look for the door *out*.

Maybe this is what Paul, the apostle, meant when he said that we are going to be tempted.

That is what Joseph did. He looked at the butler and said, "When you get back to the palace, tell them about me." "But think on me when it shall be well with thee, and shew kindness, I pray thee, unto me, and make mention of me unto Pharaoh, and bring me out of this house," (Genesis 40:14). It took 24 months, but Joseph sowed the Seed, he saw the door open, and he moved. *He moved*.

"Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for

when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him," (James 1:12).

James is saying that there is something on the *other side* of this season. This adversity will change. God has promised a *graduation*.

There is an *incentive program* working. Why? To give us something to look forward to in our lives, to help us *hope*.

Peter put it this way: "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part He is evil spoken of, but on your part He is glorified. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters. Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed," (1 Peter 4:12-16). Do not be ashamed.

These are *explosive* Scriptures that you need to embrace, grip and bring close to you.

Read Ephesians 6:10-18. These are encouraging Scriptures.

You may say, "Well, I believe God is not going to let me get attacked." But, He told you to put on the whole armor. Why? "That ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil," (verse 11). The Greek word for wiles there means "methods," the methods the devil has used to break your focus.

"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but

against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places," (Ephesians 6:12).

Somebody said that when a Scripture says "wherefore," you need to see what it is there for. "Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith," (verses 13-16).

Now, "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God," (Romans 10:17).

I encourage you during times of adversity to *let His Word fill you up.* Let it *saturate* you. *Increase* the number of Scriptures you speak and read. *Listen to them on audio every day.* "Wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit," (Ephesians 6:16-17); the sword of The Holy Spirit, the One Who walks beside you.

What is His sword? "Which is the word of God," (verse 17).

When you want to know how to conquer, read the Scriptures. When you quote Scripture, you are quoting things The Holy Spirit spoke to men.

"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit," (Ephesians 6:18). Praying always. Praying always.

Your Assignment Will Attract Attack.

It happened to Daniel.

It happened to Joseph.

It will happen to you.

Remember, it is important for you to distinguish the difference between true adversity, and trouble which comes through ignorance or acts of rebellion—if you do not pay taxes, and you get caught; if you get a ticket for speeding; or if you eat the wrong kind of food late at night. That is not adversity. That is foolishness, and you can pay a price for it.

There are examples of adversity in the Bible, and when you go through adversity I urge you to look at them.

Study the life of Abraham.

Study the life of Isaac.

Study the life of Jacob.

Study the life of Daniel.

Study the life of Job.

Study the life of Joseph.

Study the life of Jesus of Nazareth.

When you do, their Wisdom Keys will be used by The Holy Spirit to unlock the door of *your* prison too!

There are some important things to do during adversity.

Keep your attitude deliberately connected to the Lord. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee: because he trusteth in Thee," (Isaiah 26:3).

If you blame people, then your focus will be on them. But if you say, "God is going to bring me through. God is going to reveal Himself and prove Himself mighty," then your focus will be on the way out of your adversity.

Keep an attitude of action, of victory in the battle. "(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds)," (2 Corinthians 10:4).

4 Weapons You Must Use During Adversity

1. **Praise.** "His praise shall continually be in my mouth," (Psalm 34:1). Praise Him in your adversity. Say, "Lord, thank You that You are bringing me *through* this fire. Thank You for what You are *revealing*. Lord, thank You for the friends who are *staying loyal* to me. I am getting *new friends* through this adversity. People who feel my pain are *reaching for me*. People who sense my burden are *calling my name* in prayer. Lord, thank You for new friends, thank You for removing *the wrong friends*, the fair-weather friends, and the relationships that last for only a season. Thank You, Lord. Thank You for *eliminating* wrong relationships. I praise You."

2. Reach Out To Others. The Bible says that when Job prayed for his friends, his own captivity was ended! I believe that is one of the most important keys in adversity. "And the Lord turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: also the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before," (Job 42:10).

"Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free," (Ephesians 6:8).

When things are going crazy for you, focus on *helping others* get through their troubles, and the Wisdom you need will emerge to help you with your own crisis.

When you walk through the fire, when everything is going crazy in your mind, and your money is lost and your health is down, find somebody else to help with a problem. God will turn on the light in your nighttime. "And if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noon day: And the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not," (Isaiah 58:10-11).

3. It Is Important To Sing. Songs of worship please The Holy Spirit. David said that we should "come before His presence with singing," (Psalm 100:2).

Sing. Learn to sing. Learn to minister in song! Worship through singing. Build your day around singing in The Spirit.

Sing The Word of God aloud.

Let His Word *cleanse* you as you sing it. "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to Thy word," (Psalm 119:9). Again, increase the Scriptures that you listen to every day on cassettes or compact discs.

Let His Word *wash* you. "That He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word," (Ephesians 5:26).

Let His Word purge you. "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against Thee," (Psalm 119:11).

And, keep your spirit of love flowing through love songs to The Holy Spirit. "Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it: if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be contemned," (Song of Solomon 8:7).

4. Use Your Memory To Replay Past Victories, And Then Use Your Imagination To Preplay The Faith Victory That You Are Walking **Toward.** Remember: Your memory can be a great weapon. David said to Saul, "There came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock: And I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth: and when he arose against me, I caught him by his beard, and smote him, and slew him," (1 Samuel 17:34-35).

Then David activated his imagination and said, "This day will the Lord deliver thee into mine hand; and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee," (1 Samuel 17:46).

Remember past triumphs. Your memory is for *replaying* past victories.

Use your imagination to *preplay* the Faith victory that you are walking toward.

Is your vision in danger? Satan wants to sabotage your dream, but you are close to your future. You can anticipate this attack because that is when satan attacks you. When you start moving toward the completion of your destiny—your Assignment—hell reacts against you.

Remember, *Struggle Is Proof That You Have Not Yet Been Conquered.*

Satan always attacks those who are next in line for a promotion, who are in seasons of change.

Crisis Always Occur At The Curve of Change.

An important thing to keep your focus during adversity is *get into The Secret Place*. Hear His voice.

Another key is sowing a Seed of faith toward God. Bring a Seed to God.

When David saw 70,000 die in 72 hours, he brought a Seed to God. He *sowed* his way out of trouble. "And David built there an altar unto the Lord, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. So the Lord was intreated for the land, and the plague was stayed from Israel," (2 Samuel 24:25).

David focused his Seed! He brought his Seed to God and *wrapped his faith around it*. His Seed became his bridge out of adversity.

Sow a Seed in some work of God today and *watch the tide of battle change*. Malachi 3:11 puts it this way: "And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground."

Start getting excited!

Put some pictures of the miracles you desire on the walls of your prayer room!

You are going to see the hand of God in a mighty, mighty way.

I know God is going to bless you. When you plant your Seed this week, focus it for your Harvest.

Our Prayer Together...

"Holy Spirit, I thank You for Your Word. Thank You for turning our adversity into *promotion*

beginning today. Satan, I bind your activity in every work of hell that has come against my friends, my partners. In the name of Jesus, I set you free, dear friend; I take the load off of you and I release you to *run toward your future*. In Jesus' name. Amen." The 3 Rewards In The Jesus Experience Are *Forgiveness,* A *Friend* And A *Future*.

-MIKE MURDOCK



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ALTAR CALL

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Always Give One.

One of the biggest mistakes I have made in my life is assuming. Always give an Altar Call. It does not have to be long. It does not have to be exhaustive. Still, every service you are in, there needs to be an opportunity to walk into the door of the body of Christ and the kingdom of God. Let me give you the background of where my passion for the Altar Call came from and my thoughts about it.

During my first 15 years of evangelism I was pretty well-known for Altar Calls. That was my strong point, I got a lot of people saved. Every service, at the close, I would go down the row and ask every person face-to-face, one-by-one if they were ready to meet the Lord asking, "Are you right with God?" By the time I got to about the tenth or twentieth person, people were running from all over the building to the Altar.

When God began to change my ministry and I began to move into more teaching, there did not seem to be a place at the end of the service for the Altar Call. I would finish on a certain note and it was almost impossible to move back in that direction. So many, many nights I never gave an Altar Call of any kind.

God had clearly moved me in a little bit different direction.

I had a horrifying experience several years ago. Yet, it became a glorious experience, because it changed my ministry.

My entire calling has been to help people achieve their dreams and goals. So, subconsciously, I somewhat lost my thrust to "win the lost."

I was in Southern Florida and had just finished a youth conference, when a young girl, 12 years old, rushed out of the building to cross the street to a restaurant. A truck was coming down the freeway. It smashed into her little body, and threw her on the side of the road. I knelt beside her, as the ambulance and paramedics arrived, and tried to revive her. They could not, and she died. It dawned on me that I was the last preacher she heard. I was her last opportunity to get into the family of God. My mind clawed back through the memory of that service to recall giving an explanation of the Gospel, or offering to pray a prayer of commitment to Christ. I could not remember that entire evening ever explaining what the Gospel was all about, nor praying a prayer of commitment to Christ with anyone.

I went on a 12 day fast. At the end of 12 days, I made a promise to the Lord that every time I walked to the pulpit I would give people a chance to change, an *opportunity* to change.

As I said earlier, my teaching ministry did not focus on the salvation decision. Yet, it was something I needed to do so I could abandon myself to my message. To come back at the end of a service would change the flow and the timing. So, the Lord gave me the inspiration to give the Altar Call when I first walk to the pulpit. As you can see, this accomplishes several things. It gives people the chance to hear the rest of the service from the position of a believer instead of a nonbeliever. With faith, instead of doubt.

One of the greatest things that has happened in my ministry is the discovery of *pattern*. You will function more freely with a pattern. It does not mean that God cannot change it. It does not mean that God cannot redirect it. It does not mean that you cannot move another way...that there is not a creative time.

I believe God uses patterns. Jesus had a pattern for prayer. Benny Hinn has a pattern for his services. Billy Graham had a pattern for his services. You will want to develop a pattern, too.

God gave me a pattern for introducing the salvation message when I would first get into the pulpit. I would say, "I just want to explain the Gospel...what the Gospel is." I then walk them through what is usually called the Roman road. Then I go to John 3:16...which to me is one of the greatest Scriptures in all The Word of God.

1. Everybody Has Sinned. I continue, "The Gospel means Good News, you can change; your sins can be forgiven; your guilt can be dissolved; God loves you. He truly does, and He wants to be the difference in your life." "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God," (Romans 3:23).

2. "The Wages of Sin Is Death, But The Gift of God Is Eternal Life." "The wages of sin is death," (Romans 6:23). "Mike, what does that mean?" This means that all unconfessed, unforgiven, unforsaken sin will be judged and penalized, but that is not the end of the story. The second part of verse 23 says, "but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." What does this mean? It means that between the wrath and judgment of God upon my sin, Jesus Christ the Son of God stepped in and absorbed my judgment and paid my penalty for me. God says if I recognize and respect Him and His worth as the Son of God, judgment will be withheld, and I will receive a pardon... forgiveness of all my mistakes.

3. What Do I Have To Do? "If I believe in my heart that Jesus is the Son of God and that God raised Him from the dead on the third day, and confess with my mouth, confession is made unto salvation, then I would be saved," (see Romans 10:9-10). What does the word "saved" mean? The word saved means safe, removed from danger. It simply means if I respect, and recognize the worth of Jesus Christ, God will take me out of the danger zone and receive me as a child of the Most High God.

4. What Is His Gift That I Am To Receive? *His Son.* "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life," (John 3:16). How do I accept His Son? *Accept His mercy.* How do I reject my sins? *Confess* them and *turn away* from them. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness," (1 John 1:9). That is the Gospel.

Perhaps these are old thoughts to us, but remember, What You Keep Hearing You Eventually Understand.

Repetition: The law of repetition is extremely important to a teacher. "Mike, do you ever get tired of saying the same thing?" Never. Never. It is too

powerful. It is too real. It is too wonderful. It is too glorious, and too many people do not use the law of repetition. Jesus said, *"Again* I say unto you," (see Matthew 18:19 as one example).

Oral Roberts said something that radically affected me. He said, "When you get sick and tired of saying something, you are just then beginning to get it yourself." He said, "When your staff gets sick and tired of hearing you say something, they are just then beginning to get it. And when your people get sick and tired of hearing you say something, your people are just then beginning to get it."

After leading them through Romans 3:23, 6:23, and 10:9-10, I pause, and I make this statement: "You will never again be able to blame anybody if you die and go to hell tonight, because you have just heard the Gospel, the Good News that you can be ready to meet the Lord. In just a moment, I am going to pray for every person who has respect for God and wants to make the changes necessary to honor God with your life. I will simply ask you two questions. 1) Do you know without a shadow of a doubt that you are born again, saved and ready to stand before God should you die this moment? 2) Second, I want to ask you if you are uncertain, and if your mind is in turmoil or torment? If you do not have that peace and you want to pray that prayer of commitment to Christ, you want to create a relationship with Jesus from this night forward, then I will ask you to give me the privilege of praying this prayer with you. I am simply going to pray for you from where I am standing and you may stay where you are seated now. Please bow your head."

Then I pray this brief prayer.

"Father, I told You that every man who ever sat in one of my services, as a preacher of the Gospel, would hear the Gospel at least once from my lips. I promised to pray a prayer which could change his life. Now, Lord do not let one man, woman, boy, or girl, die and go to hell today. I ask You, in the Name of Jesus, to allow The Holy Spirit to draw men and women all across this congregation into Your presence now. Lord, there are men and women who are hurting; they sense the distance between You and them. They do not want it to be that way. That is why they came tonight. They want someone to pray this prayer. Lord, I respect that. I ask You to honor their presence and their reaching tonight in Jesus' Name."

"Now as heads are bowed and eyes are closed, I will ask you these questions. How many know without a doubt that you have committed your life to Christ and are born again? If you died this very second, do you know you are ready to stand before God? Do you have peace about your soul? Please lift your hand as a testimony. Thank you."

Then at this point I will say, "I noticed that some of you could not lift your hand, and I want you to know I respect that very much. I respect your integrity in this. You could have easily hidden in the crowd. You could have lifted your hand and acted like something you were not, but you did not. Thank you for not being a hypocrite, a phony, or a counterfeit. God is looking for people like you who have integrity to recognize when something is wrong. But you cannot stay there. You must get up and move on toward God. The fact that you have honesty in your heart says you respect God and are ready to move forward. "Yes, I respect the fact that you did not lift your hand, that you did not act like something you are not. God honors this. But let's take one more step. I am not going to single you out. I am not going to make a 'circus' out of this moment, but I want to pray this prayer right where you sit. It is not the position of your body that God is worried about. It is the position of your *heart*.

Let us pray. I want every man, every lady across this building to say with me, 'Mike, I am not a hypocrite, I am not a phony. I am not going to act like something I am not. I am not right with God. I am not comfortable about my spiritual condition. Something is wrong. I have made mistakes. I do not have assurance that if I died, I would make Heaven my home tonight. I want to change. I want to make Jesus my Lord, my Savior. Mike, I want to make a total, one hundred percent commitment of my life to Christ tonight. This very moment I need to be born again. I need to be changed. I need a miracle in my life. I need Jesus Christ to come and sit on the throne of my future.' If you want me to pray this prayer and you want to receive Jesus Christ as your personal Savior, you want to be born again. You want to be changed. You want your nature changed. You want a new future. Lift your hand high if you want to pray this prayer with me now. Lift your hand high. All across this audience. Yes, thank you, sir. Thank you, sir, thank you, ma'am, yes." (I wait a few moments, then, so that the people will have a moment for that truth to settle in. Then I come back the second time.) "Is there anyone else who has not vet lifted a hand? You want me to include you in this prayer, and you are saving, 'Mike, do not leave me out of this prayer, please. I do respect God. I do respect Calvary, I do believe in

Jesus Christ. I do. I am not stubborn toward God. I want to make changes. Please, do not leave me out of this prayer.' Would you lift your hand? Anyone? Anyone? Thank you. Thank you. Let us pray."

"Heavenly Father, I thank You for the Gospel. It is Good News to me, because I have sinned. I have made mistakes, Lord. I know that I am a sinner, but I want to change. I believe Jesus is Your Son. I believe He was crucified and rose again. I believe You love me. In the Name of Jesus I receive Your mercy; I receive Your love; I receive Your forgiveness. You are always welcome in my life. I give You my heart, my future and my ambitions. I receive Your Holy Spirit as my companion. From this night forward, give me Your assurance and Your peace that I am born again. In Jesus' Name. Amen. Amen."

So, I started giving this form of Altar Call. Let me share an important example. A close minister friend told me more people had been saved in one of my services in their church than that of other guest ministers in the history of their church. When I preach there on Sunday morning, I am usually given about 22 minutes. He is very, very precise about timing. He does not allow a minute off schedule because that is his pattern, and I adapt to it when ministering to their congregation.

I got up one morning and was informed that I had approximately 18 minutes because they had multiple services to conduct. Eighteen minutes in which to do everything. Now to an evangelist, that is horrifying because you have to come before a people that do not know you and perhaps convince them to change positions they have held for 40 years. I believe that is why there is a special grace on an evangelist, a special anointing, because you have to reverse thought patterns, etc., within moments. A pastor can prove himself over a period of weeks and months, through caring and compassion, being there at funeral homes or by making hospital visits.

These are two different kinds of ministries...180 degrees different.

That morning I came so close to saying, "No, I am not going to do the Altar Call. I do not have enough time. I have too much teaching to do."

The Holy Spirit reminded me, "But you made Me a promise that you would always give people a chance to make a change."

I am sharing this to show you the power of the Altar Call. It does not have to be a profound Altar Call. People are just looking for a *door* into the kingdom of God. All you have to do is put a door in the building. It does not have to be a huge door. It does not have to be a fancy door. However, they do have to know how to get in.

Samuel Shoemaker, the Episcopalian who started Alcoholic Anonymous wrote a book called, *I Stand By The Door*. He said the kingdom of God is like a gorgeous palace. When you go through the door, people find themselves intrigued and mesmerized by the beauty of discoveries about the things of God, angels, healing and The Holy Spirit life. Shoemaker says, so many people get into the kingdom of God and become so intrigued, so fascinated they forget that outside the *door* are millions who cannot find the doorknob and do not know how to get in the door.

Shoemaker made this statement, "While others

invest a lifetime of enjoying the pleasures of the kingdom, *I will just stand by the door.*"

Well, that morning I went fast, and shared 3 things. I said, "There are 3 reasons I accepted Christ. I needed *forgiveness*. I needed a *friend*, and I needed a *future*."

The 3 Point Salvation Presentation Every Minister Should Know

1. I Need Forgiveness Because I Am The Offspring of A Perfect God. At some point in your life, you will want to be clean. You will hate dirt; you will crave purity. It is a built-in desire toward God, and you will have to address that appetite for cleanliness before God at some point in your life.

2. I Need A Friend Who Would Not Change. Someone may be saying, "But, do you not have friends?" Yes, but I have never had a friend like Jesus. Nobody can handle the information about my life as well as He can. He is the most consistent relationship I have ever known. Human friends vacillate in their reaction to me, depending on my mood or theirs. Jesus Christ has never changed His opinion of me. Nobody can tell Him anything which will change His mind about me. That is one of the reasons I accepted His relationship. I cannot enjoy His world without His companionship.

3. I Need A Future...Because If In This Life Only We Have Hope, We Are of All Men Most Miserable. All men have a built-in need for immortality, a craving for eternity. God placed it within us. D.L. Moody once made a statement, "One of these days you are going to hear that I am dead and gone. When you do, do not believe a word of it. I will be more alive then, than any other time in my life." Each of us wonders about eternity. What is death like? What happens when I die? Is there a hell? A Heaven? A God? A devil? What happens? Every man wants to be around tomorrow. The only guarantee you will ever have of a future is to have the Eternal One on the inside of you. *He Is Jesus Christ The Son of God*.

Then I briefly ministered some thoughts about the Bible. Three reasons I believe the Bible is infallible. Because *everything* depends on your belief in the Bible, *everything*. I shared the 3 reasons I believe the Bible is infallible.

3 Powerful Truths About The Word of God

1. No Human Would Have Written A Standard This High. Think of the best person you know. You must admit they would have left certain Scriptures out had they written your Bible. The Bible projects an inhuman standard and way of life. It has to be inspired by God, because no man you know would have ever written a standard that high.

2. There Is An Aura, A Climate, A Charisma, A Presence The Bible Generates Which No Other Book In The World Creates. Lay an encyclopedia on your table at the restaurant...nobody will look at you twice. However, when you lay your Bible on the table, they will stare at you, watch you chew your food and even read your license plate when you get in your car. Why? The Bible creates the presence of God and forces a reaction in the hearts of men.

3. The Third Reason I Believe The Bible Is The Inspired And Infallible Word of God Is Because of What Happens In Me When I **Personally Read His Book.** I change. Peace enters into my spirit. Joy wells up within my life. I like what I become when I read God's Word. I accepted Christ, because this Bible says Jesus Christ is the Son of God and that all men have sinned and that the wages of my sin will bring death; and the only forgiveness that I can find is through Jesus, the Son of God.

Over 200 people stood that morning to receive Christ as Savior. It was the highest number of salvation decisions they have ever had in the history of the church.

A few weeks later I received a letter in the mail from a couple whose mother, 70 years old, had decided to come to church with them that morning. She had never been saved. They said, "We wanted you to know that mother stood that morning for the first time and gave her life to Christ. We saw Jesus change her life. Thirty nights later she went into a coma during her sleep and never came out." They continued, "We want to thank you for being the man of God who gave my mother a *door* into the kingdom of God at 70 years old, 30 days before she went to be with Jesus." Fantastic isn't it?

Never have a service that you do not spend at least 60 seconds helping someone pray to receive Christ into their heart. I do it at minister's conferences and people are saved, believe it or not, in a minister's conference.

The fact that people show up for a Christian meeting demonstrates to you they were not really rebels. I mention that to them. Rebels do not willingly enter the presence of God. Rebels hate the presence of God. They do not love the presence of God. So, the fact that somebody is in church tells you loads about them. They are teachable. They are respectful of God.

Make every possible effort to keep them from feeling stupid, or idiotic, or rebellious, because they are not. Remember: they are present. They may be discouraged. They may be a disappointed person. They may have met a Christian that did not represent Christ to them. But, they are there. Honor that fact.

An Altar Call does not have to be long. It does not take but two or three minutes. It does not have to be dramatic or exhaustive because The Holy Spirit is already talking to them before you got there. You do not have to bring them to God. He is already bringing them to Him. Your role is to literally make the acquaintance by linking them together.

By issuing an Altar Call you are creating a door for people to enter into a relationship with God. Most people do not know how to pray, so you are helping them pray. Pray the prayer deliberately. Billy Graham is a great source of understanding on this topic when he says he has labored to let The Holy Spirit do the convicting. Relax, The Holy Spirit is already working for you.

I do not like to embarrass people. I do not like to make a show of people. I differ from a lot of people who say that they need to come forward and be seen publicly, and make everybody aware of the fact this person received Christ. I have a little different feeling about that. I feel like *what happens in the heart* is more important than what happens outwardly. Some people, when they are in a strange building, with strange people, faces they do not know, are hindered by a call to them to come forward. This pressure actually discourages them from wanting to make a decision at all.

Social scientists report there are 172,000 known types of fear in the world. A person is born with two.

The fear of speaking publicly exceeds the fear of death among human beings. So, I work with the laws I know to exist. My focus is not on them doing something uncomfortable in a public setting. My focus is upon getting them to Christ so He can move them from there. Sometimes I will have them to stand where they are and make their public confession before Christ. On other occasions, I will leave them where they are, but I always have them to lift a hand so the ushers can find them.

I always give out a book to everybody present. In the back of each of my books, (you will want to do so in the back of your book, too), I have a decision page. People are saved every day of my life through these decision pages. It is a *door*. Put a decision page in the back of your book. Put it there for them to be able to write you. You do not know who is going to pick up your book and one soul is worth it all, isn't it?

So, that is my approach on the Altar Call. It is very, very important that you do the Altar Call at every single service. Again, every single service must include an Altar Call. I do not care how few people are there. I do a lot of minister's conferences, and you would think, "Well, a minister's conference, you do not need an Altar Call here." No, everybody needs to hear it. Even if everybody there is saved, they need to hear the pattern again and be reminded of what God has done for them.

If there are 10 people there, walk them through it so they will hear how to present the Gospel. The average person does not even know how to present the Gospel.

Never, never, never preach or have any type of service without explaining what the Gospel of Jesus Christ is all about, and offering to pray a prayer of commitment to Christ with anyone who wants to change.

Just open the *door*.

Remember These 5 Important Facts

1. This Is Not The First Time God Has Dealt With Them. So, you do not have to bring them from the beginning. God has dealt with them. They would not even be in His presence if God had not already talked to them. Recognize that The Holy Spirit has already started a work in their life or they would not be there.

2. You Do Not Have To Start A Personal Mentorship Course The Moment They Have Accepted Christ. God is going to deal with them afterwards. They have others in their life who will speak God's truth into them. Show interest, but give them a moment to breathe.

3. Get Their Name And Address. Why? Mark 16:15, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Get their name and address for follow up. *Get their name and address!* Do not give birth to a baby you are not going to feed. Have something for them to make certain their success.

4. Do Not Make A Spectacle Out of Them. The focus is not the new believer. The focus is Jesus. So, do not make a spectacle out of them. Do not make them feel uncomfortable.

5. Give Them A Reason To Return. I always

tell new converts and people who accept Christ, I am going to give you a book or give you a collection of books. Why? An extra incentive for filling out the decision page. They do not want to hear, "How many want to be on my mailing list?" Talk to them about the mentorship program or the discipleship program that you are going to offer to them.

Our Prayer Together...

"Heavenly Father, forgive us for placing our own desires above Your desires. Give us an *uncommon recognition* of the *importance* of showing people *the door* to enter Your kingdom. I pray for my Minister friend reading this chapter that You will reveal the pattern You have designed for their services. We make a commitment before You now, to *show* people the door, and *open* the door of opportunity for the decision that determines their eternal destiny. In Jesus' name. Amen."



APPEARANCE

Appearance Matters.

People See What You Are Before They Hear What You Are.

First impressions may become lasting impressions. Your clothing and personal appearance affect others' attitudes toward you.

I learned this many years ago. Sometimes, when I would first awaken, I would not be in the "mood" to dress nicely. So, I would put on some old casual clothes that had been left laying across the chair. Throughout the day, I *would continue to feel* the identical way I had felt when I first woke up—rather sloppy. The clothes I had put on *reinforced my early morning mood and attitude*.

Someone once said we are "Walking Message Systems." Our personal appearance is one of the most important things in our lives. Over 90 percent of all communication is visual, not verbal. That is why there are now such studies as body language, etc. Joseph and the women in Proverbs are interesting. Joseph dressed for Pharaoh's Court to create a climate of acceptance. The harlot in Proverbs 7, dressed to create a climate of attraction. The virtuous woman in Proverbs 31, dressed to create a climate of respect.

When I first began in the work of God, I thought

about the only things necessary for a good ministry were a good prayer life, knowledge of my preaching subject and a compassion for people. Yet, over the years I have met many preachers with these qualifications who failed miserably. They failed because they did not understand the importance of people relationships. They failed because they did not understand the importance of packaging themselves for acceptance, approval and even respect.

This time worn phrase is so true: "You only get one chance to make a first good impression." Someone said, "You never get a second chance to make a first impression." Remember, People See What You Are Before They Hear What You Are.

Our society is programmed to respond visually. Cereal boxes are packaged with color. We are taught to react to uniforms—the police officer, the priest, the military commander, the mechanic—and we react accordingly. You would have little confidence in an automobile mechanic dressed in a three-piece suit. For some reason, you want him to be oily and a bit soiled, as if he has actually been experiencing his work. Neither would you respond to the authority of a man standing in an intersection with coveralls on! You want to see him in a police officer's uniform.

It intrigues me that Joseph wanted the approval of Pharaoh. In Genesis 41:14 we read that he shaved his beard because the Egyptians did not favor beards. He changed his raiment. In others words, he adapted. His flexibility created favor, even in the palace of a king.

We express our moods through our dress. We express our philosophy through our appearance. Whether we want to be casual or formal, we are telling everyone around us what our energy level is. We express what is on our mind through the way we dress.

14 Tips Regarding Your Personal Appearance

It might amaze you to see how few ministers have really been trained or taught in basic grooming habits. On the other hand you may read this and feel like it is a little too simplistic and elementary to read. However, I must include it. I have spent too many years inhaling the bad breath of young men with brilliant minds, with a great potential for ministry; except nobody ever took the time to teach them personal grooming.

Some things are basic.

1. At Least One Bath or Shower Every Day.

2. Brush Your Teeth After Every Meal, Include Mouthwash.

3. Use Dental Floss.

4. Shampoo Your Hair At Least Every Other Day.

5. Select And Use A Good Deodorant Daily.

6. Find A Cologne Compatible With Your Own Body Chemistry. Cologne smells differently on different people. Remember, you can rarely smell yourself anyway.

7. Keep Your Fingernails Clean. I wish I had learned about manicures and pedicures for men years ago. Nobody told me the importance of it. It may cost you a few dollars to go in once a month or whatever, but do it. Once I asked a beautiful and vivacious minister's wife what she noticed most about men when she met them. She said, "Their fingernails and the shine on their shoes." 8. Keep Your Shoes Shined At All Times. Most women feel that they can tell quite a bit about a man through the upkeep of his shoes. You can wear a \$500 suit, but if your shoes have mud on them, it says that you are sloppy.

9. Use A Small Hand Mirror To Double Check The Back of Your Head. On more than one occasion I have been embarrassed totally by discovering that the back of my hair had not been brushed. Check it out every time.

10. Shave Every Day or Whenever Necessary. I have purchased several electric shavers; however, I still use the inexpensive disposables. In my opinion they are the best on the market today.

11. Keep Your Socks Fresh. Most of us have boyhood habits that still linger. We got tired of hearing our mother scream! It seemed to be our non-confrontational expression of rebellion when she could not discover us wearing the same socks over and over.

12. Carry A Breath Freshener With You In Your Briefcase or Coat Pocket. There are many good people who have breath problems because of food or diet.

13. Keep Your Hair Cut And Groomed At All Times. Keep a small pair of scissors to keep the hair clipped on your face, your nose, your ears, your beard. Simply feeling good about yourself is worth it. It is popular among some to save money by waiting and waiting to get a haircut. Do not do it.

I wish I would have known about moisturizing creams, facials, etc., in my younger years. I thought those things were a bit feminine and unmanly. Things like hand and body lotion and powder seemed too much for women for me to use them. 14. Keep Your Clothes Wrinkle-Free, Pressed And Crisp By Hanging Them Up Immediately After You Wear Them. You can waste a lot of money getting clothes cleaned because you do not take the time to hang them up each day. Hanging your clothes up is just a good success habit. The sooner you start it, the better off you will be. (Besides, your wife will be so proud she will tell all her friends!)

I think it is a good practice to keep your closet clean. Group all your white shirts together, your blue shirts together, etc. Purchase a tie bar to hang your ties and belts on. Yes, I think shoe trees are worth their price.

If I could start my ministry over, I would invest more in good clothes. I grew up in a rather poor atmosphere, so spending money on clothes was not a high priority for me. I encourage any minister to look carefully for special sales and clearances in higher quality men's stores. If your finances simply do not permit, at least take care of the clothes you have by keeping them pressed and looking neat and clean. If I had a choice, I would rather have two high quality suits than 10 cheap ones.

Who Chooses Your Clothes?

I made a few mistakes along this line. Some men let their wives dress them, and that is fine if your wife knows what she is doing. Some wives like their men in yellow suits, red ties, green sports coats and purple pants; which is great if you are into that. If you are going to deliver a believable message of the gospel of Jesus Christ, you need to dress with *dignity, elegance* and *strength*. Colors do make a difference in your clothes. I personally prefer deep blues and greys above the splashy colors so prevalent among many young preachers. (I have had some crazy experiences along this line in my early ministry!)

Two books I would suggest that you read are, *New Dress For Success*, by John T. Molloy (Warner Books). I have attended his seminar in Los Angeles. It is worth every penny. There is another book called *Winning Images*, by Robert L. Shook (Simon and Schuster Adult Publishing Group). These books are crammed with enough information to assist you for years to come. I would not even attempt to replace them in this book. I suggest you go to a good bookstore, thumb through the best selling books along this line. *Purchase* them, *read* them, *examine* them and *apply* them.

6 Facts You Should Remember About Your Personal Appearance

1. Your Appearance Influences Your Own Emotions. I have learned a lot since those early days. Sometimes, when I am really feeling in a "do not care mood," I proceed to put on a nice suit, clean shirt and an attractive tie. Within minutes, my energy and mood *adapt* to my new appearance. I begin to feel and become the way I am dressed.

2. Your Appearance Sends A Message To Others. The Proverbs 31 Woman dressed to communicate her dignity. "Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies. She maketh herself coverings of tapestry; her clothing is silk and purple. Strength and honour are her clothing," (Proverbs 31:10, 22, 25). "In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works," (1 Timothy 2:9-10).

3. Your Appearance Educates Others On How You Desire To Be Approached. That is why the prostitute dressed to seduce a man. "And, behold, there met him a woman with the attire of an harlot, and subtil of heart," (Proverbs 7:10).

4. Your Appearance Influences What Others Feel Toward You. That is why Joseph shaved his beard and changed his raiment when he came into the court of Pharaoh. Egyptians hated beards. Joseph packaged himself for where he was going instead of where he had been. "Then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they brought him hastily out of the dungeon: and he shaved himself, and changed his raiment, and came in unto Pharaoh," (Genesis 41:14).

5. Your Appearance Can Decide Your Acceptance or Rejection. Some years ago, Elvis Presley did a concert in Indianapolis, Indiana. One of my close friends, a deputy sheriff in Indianapolis, was in charge of security backstage. He noticed that a man was walking around dressed in an old windbreaker jacket. He was shuffling around as if he were some bum off the street. As my friend prepared to evict him from the building, someone stopped and said, "That man is Colonel Parker, the manager of Elvis Presley." He was shocked and stunned. He had misjudged the man because of his *appearance*. That is why Joseph *changed* his outward appearance to create a climate of acceptance. 6. Your Appearance Can Influence The Decisions And Plans of Those Who See You. Naomi mentored Ruth about her dress and appearance. When she approached Boaz, she made herself *desirable* for the man she desired. "Then Naomi her mother in law said unto her, My daughter, shall I not seek rest for thee, that it may be well with thee? And now is not Boaz of our kindred, with whose maidens thou wast? Behold, he winnoweth barley to night in the threshingfloor. Wash thyself therefore, and anoint thee, and put thy raiment upon thee," (Ruth 3:1-3).

Dress to create the feeling you need for the job you face.

Dress The Way You Want To Feel, Instead of How You Presently Feel.

Recommended Investments:

Four Forces That Guarantee Career Success (Book/B-09/32 pg) 31 Secrets For Career Success (Book/B-44/112 pg) The School of Wisdom, Vol. 1: The Uncommon Life (CD/CDS-41)

The School of Wisdom, Vol. 2: 101 Wisdom Keys That Have Most

Changed My Life (CD/CDS-42)

The School of Wisdom, Vol. 3: What I'd Do Differently If I Could Begin My Life Over Again (CD/CDS-43)

The School of Wisdom, Vol. 4: Unleashing Uncommon Favor (CD/CDS-44)



Assignment

3-0-6

Do You Know Your Assignment?

You have something that makes you unlike others.

The success of your Assignment occurs because of something God has chosen to anoint in your life.

"And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ," (Ephesians 4:11-13).

"For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching; Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness," (Romans 12:4-8).

While true men of God respect the unique callings of other men of God, they rarely really understand them. After you read 1 Corinthians 12, there is hardly an additional comment necessary. Yet, how few of our ministers really accept the function of other ministers around them. God has given every man a different set of instructions for his particular calling, function and dream.

Just as God told Oral Roberts to build a City of Faith, He may tell you to build a home for abused children. Concentrate on discovering your particular theme and calling that God wants you to accomplish with your life.

How Do You Know Your Calling?

You know your calling by whatever creates the strongest emotion within you.

1. What You Hate Is A Clue To Something You Are Assigned To Correct. Do you become angry over abortion? This may be your cause. Are you fearful of communism? God may give you a message with a political influence.

2. What Grieves You Is A Clue To Something You Were Assigned To Heal. Does child abuse grieve you? God may want you to get involved in this area.

3. What You Love Is A Clue To The Gifts, Skills And Wisdom You Contain. What truly excites you the most? What energizes you? What subject would you rather talk about more than any other subject in the world? This will reveal your calling. Your greatest interest reveals your gift. As you develop the ability to sever all alternatives and give total focus and concentration to that which interests you the most, you will discover incredible, remarkable success.

What Are God's Instructions To You?

I am easily influenced. When I listen to men like Hilton Sutton, I get stirred up about the coming of Christ. When I would listen to Oral Roberts, I would want to stand against disease and sickness by bringing the healing power of Jesus to my generation. Whatever I am around will influence me; I know that.

I must be very careful that I do not expend valuable time and energy trying to understand the callings of others. It is extremely important that you get alone with God, discern His instructions, and give yourself to them in *Total Focus*. God will not duplicate His memos to you and send copies of them to other ministers for them to understand you. In fact, few of your minister friends will really understand your particular calling or message. However, if they really know God and stay in tune with Him, they may eventually discern the worth of God's instructions to you.

Do not become overly concerned about finalizing God's plan for your life this month. The Will of God is like a scroll. Each day a little more of His plan is revealed. He will not give you twelfth grade instructions until you have finished the eleventh grade test! Concentrate on fulfilling the present known Will of God. Upon completion, He will give you new inspiration, new revelation and the next set of instructions.

Do not worry about pastoring, traveling or the mission field. Anywhere God places you is a Harvest field. Concentrate on sowing in your present circumstances. Joseph gave himself to success even in the prison. It created the wave that eventually brought him to the palace. "But the Lord was with Joseph, and shewed him mercy, and gave him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison. And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners that were in the prison; and whatsoever they did there, he was the doer of it. The keeper of the prison looked not to any thing that was under his hand; because the Lord was with him, and that which he did, the Lord made it to prosper," (Genesis 39:21-23).

Remember, God will not give you all the materials to build your skyscraper in one day. This month, the bricks may arrive. Next month, the door frames. The month after, the paint. The point is to immediately utilize whatever God has given you to start building your life.

Your Assignment May Cost You Everything

Everything Important...Costs. ALWAYS.

Your salvation was costly. "For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's," (1 Corinthians 6:20).

1. The Assignment of Jesus Cost Him Social Acceptance. "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not," (John 1:11).

2. The Assignment of Jesus Cost Him Everything. "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot," (1 Peter 1:18-19).

3. Jesus Even Taught His Followers That It Would Be Costly For Them To Follow Him. "Then said Jesus unto His disciples, If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for My sake shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul," (Matthew 16:24-26).

4. The Assignment of Moses Cost Him Dearly. "By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing Him who is invisible," (Hebrews 11:24-27).

5. The Assignment of Abraham Cost Him The Comfort of His Relatives And Home. "Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee," (Genesis 12:1). "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise," (Hebrews 11:8-9).

6. His Assignment Cost The Apostle Paul His Prestige. "Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ," (Philippians 3:5-7).

His Assignment Cost Him Physically. 7. "Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep: In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches. Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not? If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities," (2 Corinthians 11:23-30).

All champions discover the high cost of their Assignment.

The Assignment of Joseph cost him years of slavery, false accusation and total isolation from his father and family. Esther knew that her Assignment could have cost her very life had the king not accepted her. Daniel paid the high cost of enduring the lion's den. The 3 Hebrew children followed their Assignment with total devotion, even through the fiery furnace.

The consecration of Job was not celebrated by his wife. "Then said his wife unto him, Dost thou still

retain thine integrity? curse God, and die," (Job 2:9). Job refused to sin. He stayed true to God. Payday was coming.

Yes, your Assignment may cost you the highest price you have ever paid for anything in your entire life.

Why should you pay any price to believe your Assignment? *The rewards. They are guaranteed, achievable and forever.*

Jesus paid the price to produce a future. "Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God," (Hebrews 12:2).

Your Assignment Will Require Miracles

Your Assignment will require the supernatural interventions of God.

Jesus said it: "For without Me ye can do nothing," (John 15:5). Your Assignment will require miracles. Miracles require God, and God requires your obedience.

When Joshua and the Israelites approached Jericho, it took a miracle to bring the walls down.

When Gideon and his 300 men took on the huge army of the Midianites, victory required an absolute miracle.

When Naaman dipped in the Jordan River to receive healing of his leprosy, it took a miracle for the healing to occur.

When the wine ran out at the marriage in Cana, it took a miracle of Jesus for the water in the water pots to be turned into wine.

When the widow of Zarephath was eating her last meal, it required a miracle for it to multiply. The Harvest from her Seed fed her, Elijah and her son for the rest of the famine season.

When the armies of Pharaoh chased the Israelites, their drowning in the Red Sea required a miracle.

God Will Never Give You An Assignment That Does Not Require His Participation.

Your Assignment will always be *big enough* to require a *miracle*. You will *not* be able to do your Assignment *alone*. You cannot complete your Assignment without the continuous, obvious and necessary *hand of God*.

You want a *miracle*.

God wants a *relationship*.

He makes miracles *necessary* so that you will be motivated to *pursue Him* and His involvement in your life.

God will never involve Himself in a dream that you can achieve alone.

Every single act of God is designed to increase your dependency upon Him and feed your addiction to Him and His presence. "And He humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that He might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live," (Deuteronomy 8:3).

Cross-Currents

A cross-current simply means a current flowing at an angle to the main current or a clashing, an opposing opinion, influence or tendency. For instance, it would appear that those who preach discipleship are a crosscurrent to those preaching prosperity.

Your Success Is Decided By What You Are Willing

To Ignore. I suggest that you avoid battling with others at the cross-currents. Good men of God limit their influence when they become angry and disagree with other ministers' special callings.

It is also important to walk in the current anointing that God has placed on your life. The more that I walk in the current anointing, the more I enjoy my ministry, and the more revelation seems to come to me on that given subject. I would urge you as a minister to not get sidetracked into being "anti" any other preacher. Simply stay in love with The Word of God and keep preaching "Jesus."

Further References For Special Callings

"For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance," (Romans 11:29). (Read also 1 Corinthians 12:1, 4-31.)

"Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery," (1 Timothy 4:14).

"Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands. Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles," (2 Timothy 1:6, 11).

"But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry," (2 Timothy 4:5).

You Are The Only One God Has Anointed For Your Specific Assignment

Your Assignment requires your participation.

Nobody else can *discern* it for you. Nobody else can *pursue* it for you. Nobody else can *complete* it for you. "So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God," (Romans 14:12).

The Apostle Paul took personal responsibility for his life. At the close of his life, he wrote Timothy, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith," (2 Timothy 4:7).

Nobody else fought Paul's fight. Nobody else could finish his course for him. Nobody else could run his race. He kept his faith. He kept his own focus. He fought his own fight.

You must grasp this. You must decide the conclusion of your life that you desire. You must decide to run your own race. You must grow the kind of Harvest you desire.

Jesus, our example and pattern, declared, "I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do," (John 17:4). *He took responsibility for His own Assignment.*



Our Prayer Together...

"Holy Spirit, Thank You for revealing to my precious friend the calling, the Assignment You have given them. We ask for Your help in recognizing their significance, their difference, what makes my friend like no one else. We ask for uncommon discernment of every clue You have given them concerning their life's Assignment. We take personal responsibility to fight the good fight, finish our course, keep the faith and *complete* the Assignment from You. In Jesus' name, Amen."



ATTITUDE

Grasp The Importance of Attitude.

Your attitude is more powerful than your gifts and talents.

Your attitude simply means the way you look at things, your opinion and reaction to people, what you think about life, what you think about God. Your attitude is your personal interpretation and value you place on others around you.

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another," (Galatians 5:22-26).

Have you ever sat listening to a well-known, successful minister and wondered what secret invisible golden thread God used to weave the garments of his success? Perhaps his preaching did not seem spectacular. The content of his sermon may not have been extraordinary. His grammar may have been imperfect, but something about him touched your heart.

Few of us will ever know all of the reasons God uses some men in significant ways. Yet, I am convinced

that one of the *most powerful, influential ingredients* of a successful minister is his *cultivation of good attitudes;* his attitude about himself, God, the ministry, money, self-discipline, weaknesses of others, his own mistakes, his work habits, giving, receiving and adversity.

There are good attitudes that can bring you to the pinnacle of success. However, there are devastating attitudes which can unravel every achievement you attempt.

Read this section carefully and prayerfully.

Our attitudes are always needing constant repair. Just like the storms and the winds affect a ship, your opinions, feelings and attitudes will need to be continually adjusted, corrected and healed.

Bitter experiences affect us. Disappointment in people can create defensiveness. You are in a people business. It is so easy to be scarred, bruised and crushed. Those experiences can be stumbling blocks stopping you from progress, or stepping stones to take you higher in your achievements.

One particular young man comes to my mind. I have known him for a number of years now. He is loaded with talent and gifts. His singing, his energy and enthusiasm are electric. People love him. Several years ago he suffered a bad financial situation. He called and asked me to help. I agreed to talk to some minister friends of mine and help him get some invitations. It seemed like every door had closed for him. I wrote 27 handwritten letters to 27 pastor friends; he received 27 invitations in response.

Several months later I asked some of those minister friends how they had enjoyed him at their church. Each one said the same thing, "I will never invite him again and I suggest that you not recommend him again." I was shocked. "But he is excellent in the pulpit, and people enjoy his ministry." They agreed. "But," they added, "His attitude was terrible. He acted like we owed him a huge salary. He was unfriendly after the service."

A bad attitude will paralyze your progress in the ministry regardless of how talented you may be.

I can listen to a young man talk for 5 minutes and discern whether he has the success attitudes necessary to be effective in the ministry. You can become an expert in your knowledge of the Word. You can be gifted in speech. You may be the greatest storyteller anyone has ever heard in the pulpit. However, if you do not really love people and care about their needs, you will never succeed in ministry.

Again, I remind you of the famous Law of the 250. It has been said that every person in the world has a direct or indirect influence on 250 other people. This is why one bad attitude is contagious. It publicizes itself through one person to 250 others. I have seen more than one young preacher totally destroy his future through one bad reaction, one public display of his anger.

There are many ministers who have quick minds, strong gifts and a genuine love of God. Still somehow they have developed bad attitudes toward people, even toward themselves. Some of these bad attitudes originate in our backgrounds.

A strict and structured upbringing may make you critical, cynical and even hostile toward those who were raised in a liberal home. A background in poverty may cause you to resent those who are raised in wealthy surroundings.

On the other hand, if you were raised with financial abundance and good education, you might tend to feel superior to others without those privileges. You might become picky, fault-finding. A bad attitude can grow in any environment. Satan's target is to sour your attitude toward yourself, toward others and toward God. He wants to make you feel inferior, insecure, insignificant or even arrogant and know-itall.

Let me share insight concerning some of these destructive attitudes which can hurt your ministry.

Attitudes That Affect Your Ministry

Anger. A minister friend of mine was a great 1. help to me many years ago when he shared how he almost lost his ministry because of his temper and anger. This minister was extremely meticulous in his pursuit for excellence, especially in music, and getting the proper sound out of his sound system. Occasionally his sound system technician would make some mistakes which would be extremely distracting to him. In an effort to present the best to the people, he would become so agitated that he would flare up in anger with a statement toward the man. Later of course, he would apologize. Finally, God began to deal with him. He realized he was going to destroy his ministry if he did not harness his temper. Through it, he began to learn patience. As he focused his energy more productively, God began to use him in an even greater way.

It is so easy for us in the ministry to forget the influence we have on those who are watching us. One minute of uncontrolled anger can destroy a lifetime relationship.

2. Arrogance. "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted," (Galatians 6:1).

The thrust of this verse is to "help your weak brother," but the part that has meant the most to me is "lest thou also be tempted." You see, you will make mistakes as well. You have weaknesses. So make a special effort to remind yourself that others are important. Their opinions have value. One of the greatest gifts you can give to men is recognition and respect.

Arrogance is an exaggeration of your worth revealed by a condescending attitude. It is making others feel stupid, unwanted, insignificant. Never forget that you may be the only *Experience-In-Love* that others may ever know.

3. Critical Spirit. Since I travel thousands of miles each month, I have spoken in hundreds of churches over many, many years. Each church is different. Every pastor has different strengths and weaknesses.

Since my mind is somewhat analytical, I have a tendency to diagnose people, circumstances, and naturally anybody's special "revelation." It is sometimes difficult for me to ignore opposing opinions and allow them to go uncontested. True, sometimes God uses me to correct those things which are in disorder. However, I am discovering the *danger* of a *critical spirit*. It *destroys relationships*. It will *mute the joy of your own accomplishments*.

Do you see the flaws of others? Fine. Do not place your *magnifying glass* over them. Learn from the mistakes of others. I have been amazed in my ministry to find out that others knew more about what they were doing than I thought they did. Do not be hasty in speaking your personal opinion of everything. Time will force knowledge to surface that you do not have today. I urge you to be very cautious in correcting an older minister. If he pursues your opinion, then share it with him. Otherwise, just ponder and keep your opinion to yourself.

4. Jealousy. I wish that I could tell you that it does not exist in the ministry. However, as long as people exist, you will see jealousy and envy.

It almost crushed me in my early ministry to find that those I admired the most sometimes yielded to this temptation. Jealousy is straight from hell. It destroyed the relationship between King Saul and David. As Saul heard others praise and applaud David's accomplishments, he felt inferior and lashed out to destroy David. "And the women answered one another as they played, and said, Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands. And Saul was very wroth, and the saying displeased him; and he said, They have ascribed unto David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed but thousands: and what can he have more but the kingdom? And Saul eyed David from that day and forward," (1 Samuel 18:7-9).

Jealousy is the child of inferiority. When people feel inferior, they become vulnerable to jealousy and envy entering into their lives. Resist it. Do not let it destroy you.

When your congregation praises a visiting evangelist, do not let satan weave a garment of inferiority around you. Do not put down other preachers in your conversations to your people; likewise, be sensitive when you sense satan using this tool among your fellow ministers.

When I first entered church evangelism many, many years ago, I had some very bitter experiences along this line. Right in the middle of a crusade, the minister and his wife would sometimes become withdrawn and rather unfriendly. It would crush me. I did not know what to do about it. Finally, I talked to a friend of mine about it.

He asked me, "Have you publicly expressed your support and respect for them each night in the crusades?" I told him I did not believe in a lot of public compliments. He then shared with me the importance of letting others know how much I loved them, appreciated them and respected their labors. He advised that I should take a special moment in each service and observe a particularly admirable quality or characteristic in their local shepherd.

The results were remarkable! Suddenly, my pastor friends became more relaxed toward me. They realized how I respected them. They felt my support. I did not know then that they were encountering great waves of varied emotions during the meeting. The increased crowds, the unusual enthusiasm, and the wonderful altar response only magnified their sense of inferiority and lack of worth among their people. Once they realized I understood and recognized God's touch upon their own ministry, they felt more comfortable with me.

5. Boasting. Every preacher wants approval and acceptance of his ministry. You will not be an exception. I have seen some very fine ministers hurt

their ministry through constant boasting and bragging on themselves. True, there are friends who need to know what God has helped you to achieve and accomplish. Be careful. When people come to hear you preach, they want to hear of the power of Jesus Christ. They want to know what He can do. They want to hear His Name exalted. Someone has said *the best way to impress others is not to try*. I believe it. Let them discern your worth.

6. Competitive Attitudes. I believe competition can be good in our world. It makes each of us strive for excellence, but it also can be used by satan in a destructive manner. As God begins to bless your pastorate, as you double and triple your attendance, you will be tempted to judge your success in relationship to others' successes. Do not do it. Find what God wants *you to accomplish* and do it with all of your heart.

7 Winning Attitudes That Multiply Your Success In The Ministry

What are those attitudes which make ministers different? What will build an influential, powerful, respected ministry? I would like to talk to you about a few of these winning attitudes which I have observed in effective men of God around the world.

1. Humility. Humility is recognition of *your own limitations* and *God's ability* to compensate for them. Humility is *recognizing the worth of others.* It is *respecting people* as God's personal gifts to your life. Humility is not "crawling in the mud." It is not feeling sorry for yourself. Humility is not belittling your own talents and gifts. Humility is not saying, "I cannot

preach very good." Humility is recognition of your deep need and *dependence upon God*. The Proof of Humility Is The Willingness To Reach.

"Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another," (Romans 12:10). Yes, humility can help bring a minister to honor and promotion. "Before destruction the heart of man is haughty, and before honour is humility," (Proverbs 18:12). "The fear of the Lord is the instruction of Wisdom; and before honour is humility," (Proverbs 15:33).

Humility is evidenced by a man's willingness to respond to correction. The proof of humility is your pursuit of knowledge. Proud men rarely seek knowledge. You see, knowledge necessitates change, and haughty men do not want to change.

I personally feel willingness to respond to correction was one of the golden secrets in the life of Oral Roberts. I have rarely seen a man who pursued the knowledge of God with such diligence. He was quick to discern mistakes, and even quicker to correct them. Do not waste your energy justifying a wrong decision that you have made. Be humble enough to *recognize your mistake* and *correct it* immediately.

2. Teachableness. It is so important to be teachable. To be willing to make changes in your life. I overheard one minister declare, "I have no regrets!" Well, I do have regrets about my ministry. I really do not think he meant it the way he said it. That statement implied that during his lifetime he had not received any new information!

New information always creates a need to change something you are doing. Your ability to recognize a need for change determines how much success you will experience in your ministry.

The Willingness To Reach Births The Ability To Change. "A wise man will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels," (Proverbs 1:5).

"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge," (Hosea 4:6).

Life will prove to be a constant series of promotions to the minister who is flexible and teachable.

3. Compassion. Jesus had it. Men who change the lives of others have it. It is *the ability to feel the hurts of others*. It is an *intense desire* to pour the healing oil of God into their wounds. Compassion is *caring* what happens to people. I especially like Richard Roberts' definition, "*Compassion is the irresistible urge to rid someone of a problem*." The proof of your compassion is the effort you put forth to bring healing to others.

Are you having difficulty unlocking the stream of compassion within you? Then expose yourself to men of God who have it. Read their books, listen to their tapes. One man who greatly affected my life was Marvin Gorman, who was pastor of First Assembly of God Church in New Orleans between the years of 1965 and 1986. His anointing, his love for souls and his compassion will change your life. Oh, how I wish I could say to every minister, "In all your getting, get compassion."

This reminds me of an experience I once had with Richard Roberts at the City of Faith. We had just finished some television programs. The schedule was tight. We both were in a rush for airline schedules. As we approached the elevator, a woman came running up to Richard, "Please, Brother Roberts, come and pray for my husband. He has wanted to see you personally. Would you come and pray for him in his room?" "Now?" I was a little agitated. I was in a hurry. The hospital had prayer partners and ministers. I personally thought that Richard would simply tell her he would come back a little later when time permitted. However, he did not. He immediately turned to me, "Mike, please wait for a few moments. I will be right back." Then he and the lady rushed off to the hospital room where her husband lay.

When he came back, he stepped into the elevator where I thought he would probably apologize for the delay. Quite honestly, I anticipated a statement like, "Everybody wants prayer; everybody needs help; and it is exhausting me." He did not. With a sparkle in his eye he looked at me, "Mike, that is what the City of Faith is all about. That man is dying with cancer. He really had a fear of death, and it began to leave him as I laid hands upon him and prayed."

What drives men like Oral and Richard Roberts? What is the force which created the City of Faith and Oral Roberts University, the ministry that has reached around the world? *Compassion*! It is the gasoline that drives the vehicle of evangelism. I wish more ministers had compassion. I wish more prayed for the sick and afflicted.

4. Patience. Patience is the ability to discern the advantages of your present circumstances. An Uncommon Dream Requires Uncommon Patience. One of the most powerful traits of influential ministers is their ability to cooperate with the timing of God.

"The Lord is good unto them that wait for Him," (Lamentations 3:25).

"But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint," (Isaiah 40:31).

Dr. Richard Dobbins says that maturity is the ability to delay gratification. Patience means completing an immediate priority before leaping to another. It means completing your goals for today before reaching for tomorrow's responsibility.

Are you in Bible school while you are reading this Handbook? I think Bible college is the incubator where the Seeds of patience first grow. It is very difficult to be receiving knowledge without the opportunity to release it. It is like sitting down at a piano and being commanded not to play. That is patience! So, I urge you, please do not do anything foolish. Concentrate on the advantages of your present circumstances.

Many pastors have changed churches because of pressure from an unhappy board member only to find they face the same problem elsewhere. *Impatience is an inside problem*. It is an *unsettled heart*, a *restless mind* that seeks change.

Certain influences will make you impatient such as:

- ► Fatigued, Disgruntled People Around You. (Consult Moses about this!!)
- Reports of Others' Successes Can Make You Unhappy About Your Successes.
- Your Associations With Especially Gifted People Can Make You Feel Inferior.

Be sensitive in discerning the influences around you which create unrest.

"My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing," (James 1:2-4).

"But we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, hope: And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us," (Romans 5:3-5). Patience Is The Weapon That Forces Deception To Reveal Itself.

5. Generosity. What do I mean by the winning attitude of generosity? I mean to live by the Principle of Seed-Faith; sowing whatever God has given to you toward the Harvest He has promised you.

"Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom," (Luke 6:38).

Have you ever seriously read 2 Corinthians 9:6? "But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly, and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully."

Many preachers are embarrassed when talking about generosity, liberality and giving. It is because they have been on the receiving end for so long. As we teach people to support the work of God, it sometimes makes us feel awkward to talk about giving. Because it can appear to some that we are misusing the principle to fill up our own bank accounts. Do not allow satan to intimidate you.

Stinginess will *destroy* you. Greed is *devastating*. I know evangelists who become angry when the pastor receives an expense offering before his crusade offering. Other pastors sometimes become infuriated when their people support other ministries outside the local church. Greed is *contagious*. It is a disease which can start in your own pulpit and eventually reach your pews unless you prevent it.

What is generosity? It is *sending special gifts* to those young graduates in your church. It is "taking the ceiling off" of your evangelist when he receives his offerings for his ministry. It is *rejoicing* when a missionary receives a huge check from your biggest donor in your local congregation. Generosity is having a fruit basket placed in the hotel room of your visiting guests. Generosity is receiving a special love offering *for* the pastor and his wife to go to the Holy Land. It is giving, giving, giving! Your love. Your loyalty. Your *finances*.

6. Diligence. Diligence is simply making things happen. It is reaching for what you want. It is energetic pursuit of something you desire and respect.

God reacts strongly to ministers who are diligent to accomplish His commands, to reach out to people to improve themselves.

"The hand of the diligent maketh rich," (Proverbs 10:4).

"The hand of the diligent shall bear rule," (Proverbs 12:24).

"The soul of the diligent shall be made fat," (Proverbs 13:4).

"The thoughts of the diligent tend only to plenteousness," (Proverbs 21:5). "Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before mean men," (Proverbs 22:29).

What does this mean? Abundant finances come to those who will take the *initiative* to *complete* their goals. They shall be *promoted*. They shall be *noticed* by other great achievers. Get an early start each day. Do not watch television until two o'clock each morning and expect to experience remarkable successes in your ministry. It just will not happen. *Target your goals*. Set up deadlines. *Schedule* appointments which help you achieve your dreams. Activate others. Make those telephone calls you have been neglecting. *The world moves for the preacher who can move himself*.

7. Enthusiasm. One of my dearest friends is also one of the greatest men of God I know. He has an incredible gift for unlocking enthusiasm in people. No wonder satan has assaulted him so many times. He has activated dormant faith, unlocked the energy of countless thousands through his enthusiasm.

Enthusiasm Does Make A Difference

I encourage you to *pursue* those accomplishments and dreams which truly *excite* you. You cannot transmit to others feelings you do not really possess. Do not pursue goals and dreams that do not excite you personally. Your ability to stay excited over your goals will become one of your master keys in achieving unusual success for God. Do not allow satan to use others to stop your flow of enthusiasm.

Look at Job. His wife suggested that he curse God and die. "Then said his wife unto him, Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God, and die," (Job 2:9). David's wife became upset over his dancing. "And as the ark of the Lord came into the city of David, Michal Saul's daughter looked through a window, and saw king David leaping and dancing before the Lord; and she despised him in her heart," (2 Samuel 6:16).

Sometimes those who are most capable of crushing your joy and enthusiasm for your dream are those closest to you. Do not allow it. Refuse to let go of your God-given dream. Without enthusiasm you will never accomplish anything significant for God. It may be writing a book, completing a recording project, launching a television program or building a Bible college. Do not rely solely on people to continually inspire you. Your dream will always be bigger on the inside of you than it will be on the inside of others.

Several things can affect your enthusiasm on your project.

1. When You Do Not Spend Enough Time In The Presence of God To Get His Complete Plan.

2. Waiting For Others To Fully Support You.

3. Allowing Your Conversation To Become "Fear-Talk" Instead of "Faith-Talk." It is very important that your conversation reveals your confidence in God.

Your ministry is in serious trouble when you lose *your joy.* I have found four basic reasons for losing my enthusiasm and joy in ministry.

4 Enemies of Enthusiasm

1. Fatigue. Trying to do too much too fast and neglecting my health and spiritual life. Remember: *When Fatigue Walks In, Faith Walks Out.*

2. Broken Focus. "No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God," (Luke 9:62).

The Only Reason Men Fail Is Broken Focus. Do not permit your time and energy to be sapped by critics, time-wasters or others who show no respect toward your achievements for God.

3. Rebellion Toward Daily Priorities. Certain essentials are necessary for you to experience a successful day: a) rest, b) exercise, c) Scripture study and d) time in prayer. When you ignore these daily priorities, there will be a heaviness within your spirit. God has arranged for you to feel uncomfortable when He is unhappy with you. *What You Do Daily Determines What You Become Permanently.*

4. Unwholesome Associations. There are two kinds of people to allow in your life as a minister. First, those who respect your ministry enough to pursue and receive it; secondly, those who are capable of ministering to you. Jesus never spent very much time at the houses of the Pharisees. They did not respect him. It is futile to serve bread to the non-hungry or to teach the non-seeking. In fact, He told the disciples to "shake the dust off their feet" when they were shown disrespect and not welcomed in homes.

Those Who Disrespect Your Assignment Are Unqualified For Access. On the other hand, you will meet hundreds of people throughout your ministry who feel like they have a "word from God" for you. You have the responsibility of discerning the worthiness of their message, and appropriating the time you feel necessary to receive it.

I receive hundreds of telephone calls each week.

There are invitations to speak at every luncheon imaginable, and a constant stream of calls to help churches, television stations and other worthwhile organizations in some manner. It is impossible to accommodate everyone. I must discern where my labor can do the greatest good. Thousands need help, but you cannot help them all. Concentrate on giving help to those you feel God has called you to help.

Additional Notes On Attitudes

Your attitudes will be greatly influenced by your background and parental upbringing. The nature of your particular calling will affect your attitude. Someone has said that the difference between a priest and a prophet is that the priest has a message *from the people* to God, but the prophet has a message *from God* to the people. Ministers who are called to motivate people to their highest good will probably project happiness, joy and enthusiasm. However, the minister who carries the burden of the Lord for the rebellious and stubborn might appear to be harsh and unfeeling, even pessimistic.

Be aware and sensitive to those influences that affect men's ministries.

Take a moment to do an attitude check.

Attitude Checklist

1. What Is Your Attitude Toward God?

It is not always easy to be close enough to people to help them and at the same time be close to God.

Look at Moses. God commanded him to speak to the rock and the water would come forth. His closeness

to the Israelites made him vulnerable to their complaining and murmuring. Frustrated, he smote the rock with his rod instead of speaking to it as God had commanded. The result? God would not permit him to enter Canaan. He could never taste the victory he had worked so hard to achieve. "And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he smote the rock twice: and the water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their beasts also. And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed Me not, to sanctify Me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them," (Numbers 20:11-12).

Do not allow people's needs to distort your photograph of God. You must spend time with God if you want to keep your vision accurate. Remember, The Word of God is like a mirror. When you are not standing before it, life becomes blurred and distorted. Different ministers react differently to God. I believe that God will speak to you in the way that will motivate you the most. If you tend to be rebellious, God will probably speak to you as would a commander in the army. If your nature is sensitive and emotional, God may nudge you gently, like a father.

I heard something interesting some years ago that made a lot of sense. Someone said our attitude toward our earthly father affects the kind of relationship we experience with our Heavenly Father. If your earthly father was blunt, crude and uncomplimentary, this will be your photograph of God. He will appear harsh, unbending and insensitive. If your earthly father was patient and compassionate, this will become your picture of God. (One more thing, your opinion of your earthly father is usually established by your mother. You see, she is probably the one who conversed with you as a child. She explained your father to you, what he liked and what angered him. Whatever the children's opinion of their father is, it is usually planted by the conversations with their mother. That is interesting.)

2. What Is Your Attitude Toward The Ministry?

Again, our background tremendously influences our opinions and attitudes. I believe God strategically links your personal childhood with the nature of your calling and ministry. That is why you see some ministering to troubled youth, and another ministering the healing power of Jesus to this generation.

"Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations," (Jeremiah 1:5).

It is not uncommon for a minister raised in poverty to receive a revelation on financial abundance. I believe the tragedies in our past can become master keys to our ministry. *The Broken Become Masters At Mending*.

Be sensitive to the possibility that the wounds and hurts of your childhood can flavor your message to people. Strive to keep your message pure, Scriptural and healing. The purpose of the ministry is to heal the broken and restore those who have been disconnected from God. As one well-known preacher used to say, "On every pew sits a broken heart." Your purpose and attitude toward the ministry should be to preach the Good News that Jesus Christ loves them, wants them restored and healed.

3. What Is Your Attitude Toward Your

Weaknesses?

It is important *not* to become flippant toward, careless about, nor justifying of your weaknesses. An Unconquered Weakness Always Births A Tragedy. It is equally important that you not become obsessed with them. Concentrate on your strengths. Do not meditate on your weaknesses, but ask God for their Scriptural solution. Little by little, you will find the faith and power of The Holy Spirit increasing your mastery over them. All Men Fall; The Great Ones Get Back Up.

4. What Is Your Attitude Toward Adversity?

Just as sure as you live and breathe, you will experience conflicts, temptations and assaults which you never expected. It is almost humorous to hear young preachers in Bible colleges talk about an experienced television minister in financial trouble. They evaluate and make judgments before they have encountered the assaults and attacks of demonic spirits against their own ministries.

Fasting and prayer can help you avoid many problems. Knowledge will assist you in avoiding many other problems. Keeping the spirit of love will also cause volcanoes in human relationships to subside. Even so, never forget for one single moment that you are the number one target of satan. The strategy of hell is designed to mute your voice, cause you to stumble, blind you to the rewards of ministry and attempt to wreck and fragment God's plan for your life. Satan fears you and your ministry...you are what stops his plans from succeeding.

"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world. But the God of all grace, Who hath called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you," (1 Peter 5:8-10).

"Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil," (Ephesians 6:11).

Keep this in mind regarding your warfare against satan. The pressure is passing, not permanent. It is seasonal; it will not remain.

Adversity is a place of information. You will discover what you truly believe. Your Wisdom will multiply in adversity. Adversity can be motivating. It makes you reach for God. It makes you dig. It reveals the true strength of your relationships with people. You find out who your real friends are.

Adversity almost always is *the door to your promotion* and greater joy. Almost every great man of God can trace his growth and promotion to a crisis experience.

5. What Is Your Attitude Toward Criticism?

Criticism never feels good, even when it is constructive. It makes you feel insignificant, inferior and even stupid. You will encounter a lot of criticism as you follow the Lord in progressive successes. You will find that satan uses critics to demoralize and stifle your creativity. Here are my suggestions.

1. Do not open yourself up to unnecessary and unwise criticisms.

2. Do not advertise, magnify and bemoan your

weaknesses and mistakes.

3. Do not make anybody a part of your problem unless you expect them to be a part of your solution.

Someone said criticism is usually the death gargle of a non-achiever. I believe that. The people who have criticized ministers the most have generally contributed the least to the work of God. On the other hand, your enemies may tell you the truth more readily than your very best friend. Sometimes it pays to listen. Assess the worth of any criticism. If necessary, make changes. "Open rebuke is better than secret love," (Proverbs 27:5).

If you receive undeserved criticism, poke fun at it. Laugh at it. Joke about it and get busy again in your goals.

You Can Judge The Worthiness of Any Criticism By The Thought The Critic Has Given To Your Solution. Generally speaking, I have found that criticism is a favorite distraction used by hell. It strips you of your energy, joy and ability to concentrate on your dream. Do not let it. Evaluate its worth. Implement changes that will benefit you, then move on toward your goals.

6. What Is Your Attitude Toward Your Personal Gifts And Talents?

Please do not neglect your music and those gifts that God has given to you for ministry. Do you write songs? Then give yourself to them. Has God called you to a particular area of ministry? Concentrate on doing it well. Remember, you only possess the Seeds of your gifts. They will only grow as you fertilize, nurture and water them.

7. What Is Your Attitude Toward The Word of God?

There is a real temptation for a minister to use The Word of God for sermon material only, a devotional guide for his family, or a Survivor Kit when he is depressed. Men invest time into those things they consider most important—family, recreation or study. Decide a time each morning when you will have your Divine appointment with God. Allow nothing to disturb those moments with Him. Spend quality time. Spend lengthy time.

An Important Concluding Thought

I do not believe any of us in the ministry can honestly say that we have kept our attitude sweet, kind and perfect before God at all times. Each of us has stumbled and faltered in this area many times.

What I suggest is this: Get alone with God when you discern your attitude is off course. Pour your heart out to Him in open honesty. Select a minister friend who can intercede for you. *Get your mind back on where you are going, not where you have been.* Soak yourself in The Word of God. God always rewards the seekers. "But without faith it is impossible to please Him: for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him," (Hebrews 11:6).

Aim for the highest quality in everything you do.

I asked a very successful pastor what would be the single most important advice he would give to a minister. Without hesitation he said, "I would urge him to *pursue excellence* in everything he attempted...to strive for the *highest quality* he could produce." Your attitude is where this mentality can *begin* to work for you and *produce the results* you want for your life and ministry.

Our Prayer Together...

"Heavenly Father, our desire is to fulfill the Assignment You have given us to accomplish on the earth. God we recognize our great need for You; so we reach for You today. Holy Spirit, we ask that You reveal the areas needing change. Expose wrong attitudes that are destructive to our ministry. Help us to recognize wrong relationships and those who are unqualified for access. Forgive us for any wrong attitude toward You, Your Word, the ministry or Your people. Today we make a *decision* to change, to aim for the *highest quality* in everything. In Jesus' name. Amen."

RECOMMENDED INVESTMENTS: The Jesus Book (Book/B-27/166 pg) 31 Secrets For Career Success (Book/B-44/112 pg) The Mentor's Manna on Attitude (Book/B-58/32 pg) The Strategy of Hourly Obedience (CD/CDS-08) How To Stay Motivated To Achieve Your Dream (CD/CDS-14)

Protocol Will Take You Further Than Genius.

-MIKE MURDOCK



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Banking Relationships Are Important.

Churches are not alike, neither are banks.

Preachers are not the same, neither are bankers.

Find and build a good relationship with a good banker: a man who is sympathetic with preachers and the ministry, who understands your goals and dreams. Take a little time to discuss where your ministry is going.

I did this with a lady who has been one of my bankers for many years. I began banking with her when I was seventeen. As the years went by, she saw growth, changes and improvements. It became easy to work with her because she understood the plans of my ministry. This is so very important.

Building a strong banking relationship with someone you can fully trust is an important need of a ministry.

Ignorance Is The Only Weapon Satan Can Effectively Use Against You.

-MIKE MURDOCK



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What Books Should I Buy?

You should purchase the books which make you knowledgeable of the topics that excite you the most. Each book is a brick in your skyscraper hotel of Wisdom.

Start with some basic reference books such as *Strong's Concordance, Halley's Bible Handbook,* a dictionary, a book of illustrations to use during your sermons. Secure a few different Bible translations such as the *Amplified Bible* or the *Living Bible*.

Since people are so important in the life of a minister, it would be advisable to pick up a copy of Dale Carnegie's book, *How to Win Friends and Influence People*.

If you want to be a success in your ministry, pick up Dennis Waitley's book, *Seeds of Greatness*.

Since you are building a "financial support system," pick up Napoleon Hill's book, *Think and Grow Rich*.

Time-management is a golden key to an effective and productive ministry. The best book I have found on the subject is Alan Lakein's book, *How to Get Control of Your Time and Your Life*.

If you have an obsession to dig deep into the well of Scriptural Wisdom, check out *Gleanings from the* *Scriptures,* by Arthur W. Pink. This is a set of commentaries which can prove to be fascinating to the analytical mind.

Start building a collection of great biographies of world leaders. Discover the daily habits that brought them to their great accomplishments.

Ministers often ask me about commentaries. I think they are beautiful and enhance the beauty of any minister's office. I have several sets of commentaries. Frankly, I receive very little usable material for the amount of time it has taken me to study them. If a minister or someone you know or respect recommends a set, then look through them. Do not buy them just to decorate your office. I might suggest that you even thumb through the set the minister has to see how much marking he has done himself.

One minister friend was bragging to me one day about his set of commentaries and how much good he had gotten out of them. So I went and picked up one, thumbed through several pages, and found no markings through any of them. What happened was, one day he had read an interesting line in one of them and thought that he had received much help from them. He really had not.

Carefully examine your books before you purchase them.

10

CANCELLATION OF CRUSADES

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Keep Your Word.

Never Make A Promise Impossible To Keep.

Truth is the most powerful force on earth. *It cannot be changed*. Be honest. Cherish your integrity.

Some of the most bitter experiences which evangelists have are cancellations by pastors. Let me talk about this a moment from the viewpoint of the evangelist.

As a pastor, you may not realize that rescheduling is sometimes impossible. It means coordinating a crusade with other cities and other pastors, and it can severely affect the income of that evangelist for months to come. It is sometimes impossible for an evangelist to reschedule another church at the last minute. It is my sincere and honest conviction that when a pastor cancels an evangelist, he is responsible for the income for that evangelist during that period.

Likewise, when an evangelist cancels a pastor for the sake of continuing his crusade elsewhere, he should absorb the publicity and advertisement expenses of the pastor he has just cancelled. (An exception to this would be if either are in a physical crisis in their health.)

What Are Valid Cancellations By Pastors To An Evangelist?

1. If You Feel A Strong Check By The Holy Spirit Regarding The Timing or The Evangelist Himself.

2. If You Genuinely Feel That Your Congregation Would Not Receive The Ministry of That Particular Evangelist.

3. If You Feel Incapable of Satisfying The Evangelist's Financial Needs, You Should Call And Discuss This.

4. If You Feel Threatened By Any Negative Report That You Have Heard Regarding The Evangelist's Ministry. This should be discussed by phone.

Unjustified Cancellations By Pastors

Again, I address this from the viewpoint of the evangelist.

1. "I Am In A Building Program And Really Too Busy To Give Any Attention To The Crusade." An experienced evangelist knows better; his ministry would revitalize your people.

2. "This Is Just A Bad Time Right Now For A Crusade." Why? Is there ever a time that the anointing, presence and the power of God is a disadvantage, a burden?

3. "My Board Members Just Do Not Feel Good About This Meeting." Are you the pastor or a puppet?

4. "We Just Had A Speaker Last Week, And It Is Too Close To Have Another One." Why did you have that speaker? Was it unwise planning? What does that have to do with my particular message to your people?

5. "My Wife Is Sick Right Now." The experienced evangelist thinks, "I will pray for her, maybe she needs her faith built up!"

Unjustified Cancellations By Evangelists

1. "It Is Just Too Far To Drive Right Now." The experienced pastor knows airplanes are available. You should have used forethought when you scheduled.

2. "I Felt Impressed of God To Accept Another Invitation In Another City." An experienced pastor knows that a larger and more influential church invited you. It is an unwise evangelist who would break his word in his ambitious climb to success and acceptance.

3. "My Car Broke Down." Rent another one. Fly. Take a bus. Borrow a car. When did it break down? Exactly what is wrong? All of these go through the mind of the experienced pastor.

Valid Reasons For Cancellations By Evangelists

1. When You Are Experiencing An Extraordinary Move of God In Another Church Who Wants To Continue Your Crusade. Some feel that you can cut off a crusade at any time and continue on to another church and have equally as great a meeting. This is not true. I have made some mistakes along this line.

Several years ago I was in a marvelous move of

God. I called the pastor of the meeting scheduled ahead and asked him if he would adjust his schedule to accommodate an extension of the meeting that I was presently in. He was angry. Rather sarcastically he stated, "Brother, I have spent hundreds of dollars on this meeting already; you can go back to him later. Our people are excited about this meeting. We have been ready for weeks and months, praying about this."

Being inexperienced, I was intimidated and closed my meeting and went on to accommodate him. Most of his people did not even attend the meeting. It was one of the worst meetings I ever had in my life, because I was out of the Will of God. I should have discerned his attitude, and disconnected from him immediately, but I was trying to accommodate his expectations.

In my personal opinion, the Will of God is revealed by the moving of His Spirit. Phil Hogan said, a number of years ago, "Find out where God is moving, and go there and move with Him." I believe this should be the decision of every wise man of God.

2. Emotional or Physical Burnout. I believe this was one of the areas where I hurt my ministry. Financially, I felt driven to stay in crusades to generate finances. I also felt like I had to live up to others' expectations.

If I could start over again, I would never go into a crusade when I felt "burned out." Do not enter your crusades frustrated, exhausted, tired, weary and incapable of sensing the move of The Spirit. Usually when you are too tired or worn out, you will say wrong things, think wrong thoughts and in general will hurt your friendship with others.

If you anticipate canceling, whether a pastor or evangelist, do not hesitate to call and discuss it. You

might be surprised to find out that he is having the same "reservations" at the same time, or wants to change the crusade date. He simply does not know how to approach you about it. Be honest when you call him. If you want to maintain the friendship, be sure and talk to him immediately on the phone about an alternative date for another crusade. Each of us are deeply hurt through any rejection, so be sensitive about this in your canceling.

Changes In Your Life Will Always Be Proportionate To Your Knowledge.

-MIKE MURDOCK



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You Can Change Your Life.

Your future is decided by what you are willing to change.

Creating Dramatic Change In Your Ministry

1. Wrong Relationships. Ask yourself: "Will this friendship bring me closer to Jesus? Or, will it soil the beauty of what God has begun?" Get rid of anything that clouds your mind or spirit. *When Wrong People Leave Your Life, Wrong Things Stop Happening.*

2. Moral Impurity. Nothing can destroy your testimony and inner joy faster than *immorality*. The Apostle Paul made this statement to Timothy: "Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity," (1 Timothy 4:12).

When satan plants the "Seed" of a bad thought in your mind, immediately resist it. Exercise your authority! Say: "Satan, I bind you and resist your ungodly suggestions. I am a child of God walking in the power of The Holy Spirit. I cast your thought back to you. I am a new creation in Jesus!"

Immediately, thank God aloud for good, wholesome thoughts. "Casting down imaginations, and every high

thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ," (2 Corinthians 10:5).

3. Ungodly Mind-Manipulators. We are influenced greatly by what we see and hear: "Mine eye affecteth mine heart," (Lamentations 3:51). Depressing television shows, sensual music and suggestive books guarantee spiritual suicide. Replace these by *saturating your life* and *home* with wholesome books, tapes and Christian materials.

You Cannot Have A Great Life Unless You Have A Pure Life; You Cannot Have A Pure Life Unless You Have A Pure Mind; You Cannot Have A Pure Mind Unless You Wash It Daily With The Word of God. "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things," (Philippians 4:8).

4. Negative Conversation. Words minister life or death. "Death and life are in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof," (Proverbs 18:21). Put off the former conversation. "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers," (Ephesians 4:29). "To him that ordereth his conversation aright will I shew the salvation of God," (Psalm 50:23).

Insist on positive and uplifting conversation.

5. Bitterness And All Other Sin. *Bitterness is deadlier than betrayal.* The Apostle Paul states in Ephesians 4:31, "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and

anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you." Bitterness is like a cancerous sore that deteriorates the inward soul of man. Sin is the deceptive snare that poisons the possibilities of a would-be winner. It promises roses, but delivers *thorns*. Repent and ask God to pour out His love through you to others.

6. Time-Wasters. Those Who Do Not Respect Your Time Will Not Respect Your Wisdom Either. God is a planner. From the creation of a world in seven days, including a rest zone, to a scheduled rapture, even the Marriage Supper of the Lamb projected thousands of years in advance, it is easy to conclude that our Father is a Master in details, goal-setting, priorities and order. Learn to avoid nonessentials and energy wasters. *Make your time count.* "See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil," (Ephesians 5:15-16).

Chart your course hourly. Daily. Monthly. Stay on target. Schedule every small success literally. Time spent with *God*, time spent with *others* and time for *yourself*.

Nobody else can change your life for you.

You must do it. So, do it today.

Order Is Simply The Accurate Arrangement of Things.

-MIKE MURDOCK



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Disorder Is Distracting.

I have seen some choirs in my travels that literally took a service from *zero* to number *10*, from the *basement* to the *Upper Room*.

It is my usual and general observation, however that most choirs add very little to the service; except that it may give the members something to do, and utilize their gifts before the people.

Most choirs, and this is after 17,000 church services in over 100 countries, pay very little attention to the preacher during the preaching. They are busy scanning the audience. The audience does the same to them.

I think that it is unwise to have a choir remain on the platform during your preaching if you really want the people to *hear* your preaching. Most pastors do it for a lack of space, or for the beautiful formal appearance it projects. Still, anytime more than one person is on the platform, you have *diluted*, *diversified* and *fragmented* the *concentration* of the congregation. It is like watching forty television sets at one time, because each person's face is a story within itself.

As a pastor, I would urge you to dismiss everyone from the platform when you get up to speak. That is, if your message is worthy of concentration and focus by the congregation. Do not make it hard for the people to listen to you. Do not make it hard for the people to watch you. How would you like a big screen right next to the pulpit which constantly had messages flashing to the congregation as you spoke and preached? It would be impossible for your people to concentrate on you. Yet, throughout the world, thousands of pastors every Sunday get up and keep 40 to 125 faces behind theirs on the platform and expect the congregation to be able to focus on their message.

The exception to this, of course, is that if the view of the choir on the platform is of higher quality than your message!! (I am feeling a bit humorous right now...) If it is vital that the choir be on the platform, please instruct them: no gum chewing. Have them concentrate on your message as you preach. Insist they be joyful and smile if you are doing television taping. How often have I heard from the crushed heart of a pastor who was reviewing his TV broadcast after a Sunday morning service! His most important illustration was devastated totally by a yawn behind him or a giggling choir member. On the other hand, the pastor asked for it by allowing them to remain on the platform.

13

CONDUCTING SERVICES

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Any Movement Towards Order Creates Pleasure.

The more you preach, the more comfortable you will become in the pulpit. However, there are thousands of ministers who have never concentrated on being effective and comfortable in directing a service.

The congregation will always react to what you project in the pulpit. If you are comfortable, they will become comfortable. If you are ill at ease, they will become so. If you are nervous, they will become nervous. If you are happy, they will become happy. In a matter of time the people become like their leader.

Keys To Turning Point Church Services

1. Establish A List of Priorities. Write out those priorities to follow during the service.

2. Discern The Direction You Feel That God Wants The Service To Go. Do not let the people control the climate of the evening.

3. Start The Service On Time.

4. Keep The Service Moving. Do not let it lag and become uninteresting. Their time is precious. If you have one thousand people in your auditorium and each person's hour is worth \$10 and you keep them there for two hours, you have in your possession \$20,000 worth of time. Do not waste it. *Respect the responsibilities of others.* Honor the work schedule and unique family needs of your people. As an evangelist, it has taken years to understand this key. Since I come to a church only once a year, I always expect everyone to drop everything they are doing to attend my special conference. Sometimes, people have to rush out because of their jobs and other responsibilities.

One night, I was startled to see a man leave as I was speaking. In my brashness, I publicly questioned him rather jokingly. "Are you angry at my ministry?" I asked. He looked back so embarrassed as everyone stared at him. "I am late for my work shift tonight," he replied quietly. I could have crawled under the front seat. I simply had not understood *his* schedule.

Successful ministers recognize that many mothers have restless children; many fathers work long hours. They honor and respect this and their people appreciate this respect. *Respect the schedule, focus and needs of your people.* If you are a guest speaker, you must simply adapt to the schedule the pastor has determined. *What You Respect, You Will Attract.*

5. Take Charge of The Service With Confidence.

There are several ways to create attentiveness when you walk to your pulpit.

6. Set The Stage. Willard Cantelon is a master, in my personal opinion. Invariably, he will go to the pulpit, beginning with a date, or a country, when a certain experience has occurred in his life; such as, "On November 11th, 1973, I stood in Frankfurt, Germany, staring at the ruins..." He immediately takes you where he wants you to be. He "sets the stage."

7. Go Directly Into The Mind of The People. The second approach is when you go directly into the mind of the congregation with a statement such as: "Some of you here tonight are living in a fragmented marriage which is coming apart; you are hurting and God knows it." Immediately, you have gone into the world of your listener, and you usually have his attention.

8. A Third Approach Is That of A New Friend. Your approach is more comfortable, "I am so glad you have come tonight; God has something special for you and me." This usually relaxes a congregation, though it does not necessarily ignite their interest.

It is common for the young preacher to think he must begin every message with a humorous joke. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Humor has an important place, but I believe it should come naturally as the result of a relaxed atmosphere with friends, not a pulpiteer trying to be "funny."

It is important for you to stay with what is comfortable for you and your personality. If joking is not comfortable for you, do not do it. If quoting Scripture endlessly is not comfortable for you, do not do it. Find your strength. Some preachers use illustrations. They tell stories which involve the listener. Jesus used this method often.

9. Acknowledge Other Men of God Visiting In Your Church. "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine," (1 Timothy 5:17).

10. Always Be An Example To Your People During The Praise And Worship Portion of The Service. A complaint from thousands of church members is that they are encouraged to lift hands, sing and worship while their pastor sits idly by and thumbs through his Bible. "So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the Lord with shouting, and with the sound of the trumpet," (2 Samuel 6:15).

11. Always Check Your Zipper Before You Walk On The Platform!! Believe me, it will become a habit after a few embarrassing moments. Make sure you look your best. Check yourself carefully, and when you walk to the pulpit, focus totally on the message burning in your heart.

12. Give Attention To Giving Strong Altar Calls. Possibly the most important aspect of any service is the Altar Call. This simply means in modern vocabulary, action taken toward God by "coming to the front," or whatever way of *confirming* a commitment.

I asked one great pastor what was the biggest mistake he had made in his ministry. He replied, "I have failed to showcase and create a climate of importance around the Altar Call."

We have pushed special singing, announcements, and the Altar Call is rushed and hurried as the people are in a hurry to leave. "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls," (Acts 2:38, 41).

13. Give Attention To The Offerings of Your People.

Offerings matter to God. Offerings matter to *people.*

Offerings *should* matter to *you*.

Recognize the importance of an offering to God. Think of the many Scriptures where God carefully explains the value and future of the sowing of His people. He even listed various kinds of offerings such as the trespass offering, the peace offering, the sin offering, and even the tithe! "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed Me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed Thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed Me, even this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in Mine house, and prove Me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of Heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the Lord of hosts. And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the Lord of hosts," (Malachi 3:8-12).

Recognize that the offerings of your people are deciding their future. *Their Seeds determine their Harvest.*

Your ministry and celebration of their Seed will affect their opinion of their giving. Teach your people to treasure the moment of sowing. Jesus stood and watched the widow give all she had. "And He looked up, and saw the rich men casting their gifts into the treasury. And He saw also a certain poor widow casting in thither two mites. And He said, of a truth I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all: For all these have of their abundance cast in unto the offerings of God: but she of her penury hath cast in all the living that she had," (Luke 21:1-4).

Remember that the attention you give to the Seeds of the people affects their view of its importance. When you make statements like, "I wish we never had to receive offerings," you have just belittled, sneered at and destroyed the impact of their Seed.

Never rush the offering of the people to their God. You do not rush the choir. You do not rush the announcement about the baseball games. Why would you rush this Thanksgiving Moment that occurs only three times in a seven-day period?

Make the moment of bringing an offering to God an unforgettable portrait of blessing in the hearts of your families.

One of my dear friends in Pennsylvania has an event at every service during the offering. He places several offering containers on the steps of the platform. Each family comes as a unit, standing at the offering container and praying together over their Seed. When they have finished praying over their Seed, they place it in the offering container and return to their seats. Then, the next family moves up behind them. There are several rows of people giving. It is a most *holy*, *sacred* and *unforgettable moment* of receiving offerings.

Recommended Investments:

31 Scriptures Every Minister Should Memorize (Book/B-201/32 pg) The Minister's Topical Bible (Hardback) (Book/B-217HB/400 pg) The School of Ministry The Uncommon Minister, Series 1 (CD/CDS-46)

The School of Ministry The Uncommon Minister, Series 2 (CD/CDS-47)

14

CRUCIAL AND CRITICAL TIPS FOR YOUR BOOKKEEPING

The Function of Wisdom Is Order.

Accountability is vital in today's world. Information that is not retrievable is not usable.

Financial Records And Bookkeeping

I cannot emphasize enough the importance of this. Be meticulous in keeping track of receipts for your purchases.

I received a phone call from a minister who could go to jail because of not keeping adequate records. I am not an authority on any of this, so let me suggest that you go to a bookstore, pick up books on income tax, what is deductible, what is not deductible. Consult a CPA. Find out what you are to do. Do not say you cannot afford it. It is too important to neglect. (For example, when you eat at a restaurant, you should write down the names of those eating as well as the business purpose on the receipt. When you take trips involving your ministry there should be meticulous notes taken on that also. Even petty cash tickets are important to the IRS.) Believe me, there are hundreds of preachers who would look you in the eye today and say their biggest mistakes were in thinking it foolish to become meticulous in their bookkeeping.

Document every purchase.

Sometimes, it may not seem to be important. However, it is very important that you develop the habit of keeping receipts on everything that you buy. When I leave the airport, I secure a receipt for the fifty-cent cost, not because I am desperate for the reimbursement, but I need the *habit* of asking for a receipt to be emphasized and made permanent in my life. I want the habit to become *instinctive*, not requiring my memory or attention.

Something interesting happened many years ago. When I left a hotel in Kentucky, I pulled out my credit card to pay for my telephone calls. Usually, the church pays for the room and food. I always pay for the telephone calls, faxes or other items. I was in a hurry to leave for the airport. I placed the receipt in my little leather bag.

In those days, I would often go to several weeks of meetings before returning home. Receipts pile up. After a few weeks, you collect a stack of receipts that you cannot begin to explain to anyone! Especially when you are taking flights, shoving \$5.00 bills in the hands of a bellman at the hotel, the hands of a skycap at the airport. When you are busy making change and running through airports, receipts become a blur. (Since then, I try to *write something on every receipt* that explains it so that it will trigger my memory two or three weeks later while reviewing it with my bookkeeper.) Thirty days later, the telephone rang. I was in my little garage working at my desk. It was my office at the time in Houston, Texas. My pastor friend from Kentucky was on the phone. He sounded rather distant and cool.

"Hello, Mike? I just wanted to know why you did not pay your own telephone calls here at the hotel when you checked out?" He did not even bother *asking* me if I had paid the hotel for the telephone bill or not. He plunged in with full confidence that the hotel personnel had given him accurate information.

I was taken back. In fact, I felt rather agitated that he had not questioned me first. The telephone bill was not that high, but, I explained to him that I *had* paid my own telephone bill.

"Well, they have just charged the church for it again, if you did pay it."

I asked him to hold the line for a few moments. I began to dig through my desk drawer for the credit card receipt. Miraculously, it was still in the stack of receipts. I pulled it out and gave the details to him on the phone. Then, I made a copy and mailed it to him. (This was before the days of fax machines. How I bless the person who created the fax machine!)

My receipt salvaged my reputation. However, he was so embarrassed over his attitude toward me that he never again had the courage and comfort to approach me about a crusade. I had been speaking for him every year. The meetings were tremendous. The receipt episode damaged our relationship.

5 Benefits of Keeping Receipts

1. The Habit of Keeping Receipts Will Help

You With Your Taxes. When you complete your income tax forms at the end of the year, you will be thankful for every receipt that can save you money.

2. Keeping Receipts Keeps You Reminded of Where Your Money Has Been Spent. This is important. Expenses are always much more than what you had planned. Keeping receipts helps you in budgeting and thinking ahead.

3. Keeping Receipts Can Protect Your Reputation of Integrity. When you keep receipts, you can prove your honesty.

4. When You Keep Receipts, You Send A Message of Organization And Order. You know what you are talking about, and it shows.

5. When You Keep Receipts, You Increase The Confidence of Others Toward You. They will consider your opinion valuable on other matters as well.

When an employee approaches my bookkeeper for a reimbursement without a receipt, this sends a message to me. Were they sloppy in their organizing of receipts? Did they really secure a receipt? Did they actually spend the money? Are they unconcerned about the finances of the ministry?

The answer? Simple. Get a receipt.

When You Fail To Secure Receipts

- 1. You Portray Sloppiness And Disorder.
- 2. You Send A Message of Rebellion.

3. You Cause Others To Doubt What You Say.

- 4. You Slow Down Reimbursements.
- 5. You Create A Climate of Suspicion.

Solomon was meticulous about record keeping. Every single animal was accounted for that was used in a meal in the palace. "Be thou diligent to know the state of thy flocks, and look well to thy herds," (Proverbs 27:23). Why? "The riches are not for ever," (Proverbs 27:24).

Keep A Receipt For Every Ministry Purchase.

Recommended Investments:

Ten Lies Many People Believe About Money (Book/B-04/32 pg) Seeds of Wisdom on Prosperity (Book/B-22/32 pg)

31 Reasons People Do Not Receive Their Financial Harvest (Book/B-82/252 pg)

Secrets of The Richest Man Who Ever Lived (Book/B-99/179 pg)

Debt Is Emptying Your Future To Fill Up Your Present.

-MIKE MURDOCK



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The Proof of Impatience Is Debt.

Debt Is Emptying Your Future To Fill Up Your Present.

Financial pressure is devastating to a marriage, family and ministry. Debt is considered the major cause of divorce. "The rich ruleth over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender," (Proverbs 22:7).

Buying on credit is merely stripping your future to enhance your present. Slow down and start living within your means. It is possible to live on less and still be happy. The missing ingredient in much "prosperity teaching" is *temperance* in all things. "And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things," (1 Corinthians 9:25).

You often hear that billionaires are stingy. Some are even known to bring their own lunch to work. They learned early to make every dollar count. What you do with \$10 is what you will eventually do with \$100. Respect what God has given you. What you do not respect, you will eventually lose. "Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord," (Romans 12:11).

Pay Your Bills!

"A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches," (Proverbs 22:1). Oh, how true! Many preachers have been haunted by unpaid bills of the past. I cannot over-emphasize integrity. You may not believe this, but ministers have one of the worst reputations in the world for paying their bills! It is popular these days in some ministries to overbuild, overplan, overspend and make their creditors wait for months and months. I feel this displeases God.

What Do You Do When You Overspend?

Do Not Panic.

1. Sit Down And Write A Complete List of What You Owe.

2. Write Down All The Ways You Believe You Can Generate Finances or Income. You might sell something you have.

3. Develop A Plan To Pay Each Creditor Off Step-By-Step. Most do not mind slow payments as long as they feel like you have integrity and will pay them off with consistent small payments.

4. Call Each Creditor Personally. Briefly explain your situation and your plan to pay them. Each one will usually appreciate this kind of conscientious effort on your part.

Someone has said that forty percent of the bankruptcies are by born-again Christians. This is sad. What is even worse is that many people feel no guilt for filing bankruptcies, and walk off leaving hurting people who they owe money to and never repay it. I have been in businessmen's homes who owed hundreds of thousands of dollars to others, filed bankruptcy, rebuilt their finances, and never even went back to pay those they wronged. This is incorrect behavior and I urge you to do everything you can to protect your name and your integrity.

Great things take time. "He that hasteth to be rich hath an evil eye, and considereth not that poverty shall come upon him," (Proverbs 28:22). Human pregnancy takes nine months. Jesus' preparation for ministry took thirty years.

Willingly pace yourself on the journey to prosperity. Your present joy depends on it.

Recommended Investments:

Seeds of Wisdom on Prosperity (Book/B-22/32 pg) Greed, Gold and Giving (Book/B-66/32 pg) Secrets of The Richest Man Who Ever Lived (Book/B-99/179 pg) Paul's 26 Secrets for Negotiation (CD/CDS-10) Wisdom for Crisis Times (CD/CDS-40) 10 Steps for Overcoming Financial Adversity (Video/VI-07) Champions Make Decisions That Create The Future They Desire; Losers Make Decisions That Create The Present They Desire.

-MIKE MURDOCK



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DECISON-MAKING

Champions Make Decisions That Create The Future They Desire; Losers Make Decisions That Create The Present They Desire.

How important are decisions? That is the purpose of Wisdom. The purpose of Wisdom is to make *right decisions*. My decisions are deciding my world. My decisions decide my stress. My decisions decide my joy. My decisions decide my peace. My decisions are deciding my income. Once you internalize that, embrace that, you *empower* yourself to *create change* within twenty-four hours.

Decisions Create Events.

I call it *The Law of Inevitable Eventuality*. If you eat two slices of pecan pie every night, what is the *inevitable eventuality*? If you smoke two packs of cigarettes daily, what is the *inevitable eventuality*? Everything you are presently doing will impact your *present* or your *future*. The choice is yours.

You will make a lot of decisions today. Some of them will give you pleasure today, but the result of them tomorrow will make you miserable. Some of those decisions may make you a little uncomfortable today, but tomorrow you will be thrilled.

Tonight you will sit down at supper. Your mouth will water at the beautiful chocolate cake someone has

prepared. You will make a decision about that chocolate cake. If you eat it, it will taste good for now. Tomorrow morning you will be unhappy with yourself for not refusing it. Look at that piece of cake and say, "I am going to make a decision that *benefits my future*. I refuse." That is the decision of a champion!

Jesus could have called ten thousand angels to deliver Him from the crucifixion. He was capable of coming down from the cross. Yet, He made the decision in the garden of Gethsemane that created an incredible future. *He was willing to go through a season of pain to create an eternity of gain.*

"For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory," (2 Corinthians 4:17).

Those who wait usually win. Those who refuse to wait usually lose. Patience is powerful. Patience is productive.

Reprogram your thinking toward distance. Reprogram your life for endurance. Start thinking "long-term" about your eating habits, your prayer life and your friendships.

Jesus was a "long-termer."

Jesus made decisions that created a desired future instead of a desired present.

Tired Eyes Rarely See A Great Future.

When I am weary, I am not the same person. I do not have the same kind of faith, the same kind of enthusiasm and the same kind of patience as I do when I am rested, strengthened and feeling good in my spirit.

How Fatigue Affects Your Decision-Making

1. Mountains Look Bigger. I do not understand it. Yet, it is true. When I am tired at night, things that normally would appear simple suddenly feel very burdensome and complex to me. Tasks that usually require a minimal effort suddenly seem too much to take on.

2. Valleys Seem Deeper. Discouraging factors seem to enlarge. Disappointments seem keener and stronger when my body is worn out.

3. Offenses Come Easier. I seem more easily offended than I normally would be. Little things become big.

When I am tired, I begin to replay in my mind wrongs that people have done to me.

When I am rested, my mind moves to positive, wonderful and glorious dreams, things I want to accomplish and do. However, fatigue affects me in the opposite manner.

Jesus understood this. That is why He encouraged His disciples to "Come ye apart and rest awhile." "And He said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while: for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat," (Mark 6:31). One of our great presidents once said that he would never make a decision past 3:00 in the afternoon. He was too tired and weary to consider every option available. The late Pastor Jamie Buckingham often said, "Come aside or come apart."

4. You Become Less Tolerant of The Views And Needs of Others. When others are weary, they seem less understanding of your own opinions and views, also.

5. Your Focus Is More On What You Want Instead of The Appropriate Method For Achieving It.

6. Your Focus Turns To Short-Term Goals Rather Than Long-Term Goals.

7. Your Words Become Rash, Hasty And Usually Inappropriate.

8. You Become Unwilling To Invest Appropriate And Sufficient Time For Planning Ahead On A Project.

9. You Begin To Meditate On Your Own Mistakes And The Mistakes of Others. There is a Scripture that indicates that satan wants to wear out the saints. I believe it. "And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High," (Daniel 7:25).

A tired mind rarely makes good decisions. Rest will restore.

Never make important decisions unless you are strengthened, mentally alert and spiritually perceptive.

Recommended Investments:

The Making of A Champion (Book/B-59/128 pg) 31 Scriptures Every Leader Should Memorize (Book/B-189/32 pg) What Every Uncommon Man Should Know, Series 1 (CD/CDS-31) What Every Uncommon Man Should Know, Series 2 (CD/CDS-32)

What Every Uncommon Woman Should Know, Series 1 (CD/CDS-33)

What Every Uncommon Woman Should Know, Series 2 (CD/CDS-34)

17

DEPRESSION

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It Was Past Midnight.

The crusade was over and I sat in an expensive home of the fine pastor of a very successful church. Two new Cadillacs were parked in the driveway. From *outward* appearance, life could not be better.

Yet, he was weeping.

"I have been in the ministry more than twenty years. God has blessed me more than I ever dreamed. Yet, I have been living with a depression that has brought me to the very brink of leaving the ministry. It is like a wave about to drown me and my entire family. What in the world is going wrong?"

Frankly, I had no pat answers. All I knew was that this scene was being repeated all too often in the ministry. If this was happening to clergymen, the leadership, what must be happening to our people?

Certainly there are normal setbacks that motivate us to this type of reaction...temporary blows that deflate our arrogance. But the depression in my minister friend was not the Godly sorrow of 2 Corinthians 7:8-10 that "worketh repentance." It was the sorrow of disobedience that *worketh death*.

Depression is a thief.

Your *motivation* is drained.

Your desire to *pursue* God is gone.

Your *conversations* become sour. You are *blinded* to current blessings. Your enthusiasm is *forced*. You are *in a daze* regarding future plans. You see *thorns* instead of *roses*.

What To Do During Depression

There are *five steps* you can take out of such a state of mind. *There is a way out!* It is a condition of the mind! "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he," (Proverbs 23:7). So, Paul encourages *thought-control.* "Whatsoever things are true...honest... just...pure...lovely...of good report...think on these things," (read Philippians 4:8). My father calls this "The Whatsoever-Formula."

Your depression can be *temporary*. Our Heavenly Father will "give thee rest from thy sorrow," (read Isaiah 14:3). Read on in faith! Regardless of how dark your circumstances, God's Word "giveth light," (read Psalm 119:130).

1. Understand That Depression Can Come To Every One of Us. Recognize your feelings as normal, human and predictable. Your feelings are not unique or unusual. Biographies of notables Abraham Lincoln and Winston Churchill record periods of great depression by these famously gifted personalities.

According to one survey by the National Institute of Mental Health, at any one time, perhaps one-third of the population is *experiencing* depression!

The Bible fascinates us with such details about the feelings of *highs* and *lows* of Spirit-filled men!

DAVID, a musician and king, sobbed: "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? And why art thou

disquieted within me," (Psalm 42:11).

One preacher thought the motel business would be better than the ministry! *JEREMIAH* cried, "Oh that I had in the wilderness a lodging place of wayfaring men; that I might leave my people, and go from them," (Jeremiah 9:2).

Even a *prophet* lost confidence in people: *MICAH* cried, "The best of them is as a brier: the most upright is sharper than a thorn hedge: Trust ye not in a friend," (Micah 7:4-5).

That *man of power, ELIJAH*, who outran horses for thirty miles, was fed miracle-meals by birds and called down fire on water-soaked sacrifices, once became so despondent he asked God to KILL him! "But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree: and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers," (1 Kings 19:4).

JONAH, famous graduate of "Whale University," had 120,000 converts in a single crusade. Yet, later, he begged God to take his life: "Therefore now, O Lord, take, I beseech Thee, my life from me; for it is better for me to die than to live," (Jonah 4:3).

As one of my longtime friends once stated: "Depression came when Jonah's personal *security* was more important than the *souls* of people."

Even the rich and wise *SOLOMON* confessed that he came to a place that he "*hated life*." "Therefore I hated life; because the work that is wrought under the sun is grievous unto me: for all is vanity and vexation of spirit," (Ecclesiastes 2:17).

2. Recognize The Danger of Depression. A

nonchalant mother shocked me: "Oh, my teenager stays depressed. I guess it is the stage he is in."

We treat depression too lightly. Depression can *result* in broken homes, physical breakdowns, suicides, devastating attempts at suicide, spiritual breakdowns and countless other sorrows.

Broken Homes: A depressed mate exaggerates the negative side of his marriage, thinking, "Maybe I made a mistake." The parade of home-wrecking thoughts can become endless.

Physical Breakdowns: The National Institute of Mental Health has estimated that 125,000 Americans are hospitalized annually with depression. Another 200,000 get aid from psychiatrists.

Suicide: Between 50,000 to 70,000 people commit suicide every year. It is estimated that over one million attempt it!

Two brokenhearted parents wrote me: "Our daughter attended church regularly. She appeared to be as happy as any normal eighteen year old. Suddenly, for a few days she became withdrawn. Last week we walked into her room and found her dead. *She took her own life.*"

Among all the people being treated for depression in hospitals and clinics, nearly twenty percent are under eighteen. The suicide rate among fifteen to nineteen year olds has DOUBLED in the last ten *years*. In a national survey of people between eighteen and seventy-four years of age, those under twenty-nine showed the highest incidence of depression.

By the way, *listening* parents often mean the difference between life and death for their frustrated teenagers.

Spiritual Breakdown: Millions of Christians who would not lie, cheat or kill are immobilized by frustrations and paralyzed in their pursuit of spiritual goals.

3. Find The Basic Cause And Scriptural Solution To Your Depressions. Though medical doctors speak of physical cycles and "highs and lows," *all depression is not necessarily physical*. Be honest with yourself. *Honestly face the real cause of your depression*. Men are rarely angry or sad for the reasons they think. Pinpoint your CAUSE of stress and take it to God.

Unconfessed sin is like a rock in your shoe. Get it out! If hidden sin is bringing inner frustration, no vacation or doctor will heal it. "But your *iniquities* have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid His face from you," (Isaiah 59:2).

Greed for gain will begin an avalanche of despondency. King Ahab's obsession for Naboth's vineyard affected the entire family: "He that is greedy of gain troubleth his own house," (Proverbs 15:27). Jesus knew the danger: "And He said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth," (Luke 12:15).

Making comparisons is a sure road to frustration. One young pastor lamented, "When I hear a conference speaker share a personal success story, I feel like a *lawn mower* in a Cadillac showroom. Where is God when I *pray*?"

As one of my friends has said many times, "Comparing has brought more people unhappiness than they could ever imagine."

Taking criticism personally can bring depression

to the person who forgets that "Poverty and shame shall be to him that refuseth instruction: but he that regardeth reproof shall be honoured," (Proverbs 13:18).

Many years ago, while lunching with a pastor during a crusade in Dallas, Texas, he shared with me a wise observation: "Mike, our brethren help to keep us *balanced.*" I believe that. On the other hand, seeking *people approval* is a quick road to inner turmoil.

Fault-finding: One friend noted an inner depression when he indulged in revealing the flaws of others: "The words of a talebearer are as wounds," (Proverbs 18:8). God brought healing through the Word: "Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from troubles," (Proverbs 21:23). Guard your conversations. Your words can create death or life.

Stop fueling the fire through critical conversation with others. Let the fire go out. There are two ways to make something bigger, through *thought* and *talk*. Starve your thoughts and conversation, then the circumstances usually change.

Impatience has impoverished thousands. Despondent youth, blinded to the benefits of *waiting,* become runaways, dropouts, premature parents and candidates for divorce.

An unforgiving attitude will drain your joy. David Wilkerson, author of *The Cross and the Switchblade*, once said that a major problem he encountered among teens involved bitterness and hatred toward parents.

Many youth have found a *new world* of power and victorious living when a *forgiving spirit* was allowed to control their lives: "And when ye stand praying, *forgive*, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also

which is in Heaven may forgive you your trespasses," (Mark 11:25).

Fatigue is a major cause of depression. One renowned U.S. President avoided speaking after 9:00 p.m. He lost speech discipline as the evening progressed.

Refocus and concentrate on the four major priorities of your life: time in the Word, time in prayer, physical exercise and rest. More preachers have backslid through fatigue than through deception, in my opinion. I have fought many personal battles along this line myself. It is amazing how one night of sleep can totally change your opinion of the world!

Leaders have learned the power and strength of systematic recuperation.

"For ten years I lived knowing I missed God's perfect plan," one pastor confessed. "Weariness and mental fatigue blinded me to the fruits of my labors in a pastorate. Impulsively, I resigned. A few weeks later I realized the serious mistake. *Complete rest and relaxation with my family would have changed everything.*"

If we refuse Christ's invitation to come apart and rest awhile, we usually *come apart!* "And He said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while: for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat," (Mark 6:31).

4. Take Immediate Action!

5. Immediately Seek Counsel From An Experienced And Respected Minister Friend. Swallow your pride.

6. Assist Someone Who Is In Trouble Around You. "Knowing that whatsoever good thing

any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free," (Ephesians 6:8). Remember when Job prayed for his friends, his own captivity was turned. "And the Lord turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: also the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before," (Job 42:10).

7. Initiate A Change In Your Environment. Read a new book, go shopping in the mall, bowling, etc.

Remember, the real battle is your mind. You win or lose "between your ears." Satan is a master in this area but defeatable.

In one of my crusades, one lady said that she had felt a cloud over her home for months. She had decided that "divorce was the only answer." Unaware of her situation, I preached the message, "Stay on Board." I said, "If you think the 'Sea of Divorce' is better than your 'Ship of Marriage,' you are in for the heartache of your life." That sentence lodged in her mind. The next one was revolutionary for her. "Stay on board and give God a chance to bring you to a harbor!"

Putting her doubts aside, she placed new faith in God and vowed new efforts to make her marriage work. *One week later her husband was wonderfully converted to Christ.*

You should *anticipate* and *plan* for personal victory! Sometimes what begins in tragedy ends in *triumph*!

Consider Daniel—from *lion's bait* to *honor*.

The three Hebrew children—from *fiery furnace* to *awe* and *approval*.

Joseph—from a slave to a prime minister. Jesus—from the Cross to the Resurrection. You can begin stepping out of depression now! Enter into joy. Enter into rest. Enter into the powerlife. Enjoy the Winner's World!

You are more than a conqueror. *You can!* Paul said, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me," (Philippians 4:13). God has assured us, "My grace is sufficient for thee," (2 Corinthians 12:9).

Believe it! Do not let the words, the failures, the opinions of people crush you. Declare the promises of God. Boldly. Aloud. Often.

8. Practice Three Secrets of Power-Living Daily.

Respect the opinions of God concerning your life. (Intake Scripture daily.)

Habitualize your morning talks with God. (Commit to one hour of prayer each day.)

Faith talk. (Repeat *aloud* the viewpoint of God.)

First: Your Wisdom Hour. Someone has said, "Many people can find the secret of a defeated life in a *neglected Bible.*" Of all activities, satan will attack this practice vehemently. Just make up your mind to read the Word daily! Start by starting. Do by doing.

Second: Your Morning Talks With God. Oswald J. Smith has said the happiest moments of his life were during prayer and Bible time called his "Morning Watch." His praying aloud prevented wandering thoughts. His walking ensured against dozing!

In Calcutta, India, a renowned missionary friend of mine often stopped in the midst of our conversations to pray for various needs. This is the secret behind God's great work in Calcutta.

He who majors on *achievements* will find his thrills short-lived; but the child of God who majors on his *relationship* to the Father will find the well of joy endless...springing up with new victories daily. **Third:** Faith Talk And Word Declaration. It simply means to say aloud what is written in The Word! Your conversations will develop problem-consciousness or create promise-awareness. Cultivate promise-awareness!

As I write these words, I am looking across famous Lake Victoria in Kisumu, Kenya, East Africa. Sitting here in the home of outstanding missionaries, it is easy to forget that they must encounter cultural barriers, endure separation from children in boarding schools, work alone without closest friends and confidants, prepare meals without the all-accommodating American supermarkets, and live with unbelievable delays and frustrating mechanical breakdowns.

THEIR SECRET?

They refuse the *oral confession* of defeat. They have learned to *activate Word power by praise*. With infectious laughter and practice of Proverbs 16:24: "Pleasant words are...health to the bones." This turns miserable experiences into *praise sessions*. Small wonder their lives have counted so beautifully for God here in East Africa!

So remember, you are the property of God! You will not lose to depression. *You will win over every circumstance as long as He is your Source and Focus.*

I sat at lunch in Lagos, Nigeria. My father and I were the guests in the home of my dear friend. He shared some changing truths that are influencing me greatly:

1. Gratitude Provokes Joy.

2. Joy Provokes Praise.

3. Praise Provokes Divine Presence.

Gratitude ultimately cures depression.

18

DEVELOPING YOUR PERSONAL BIBLE READING SCHEDULE

The Word of God Is His Wisdom.

Everything worth knowing comes through the Scriptures. Everything you need to know to succeed in your ministry is in The Word of God. "Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord, that delighteth greatly in His commandments. His Seed shall be mighty upon earth: the generation of the upright shall be blessed. Wealth and riches shall be in his house: and his righteousness endureth for ever," (Psalm 112:1-3).

Think of the importance of The Word of God in your own life! Embrace The Holy Word of God with all your heart.

Believe it. Listen to it on tape. Memorize it daily. Obey it. Pray it aloud. Preach it. Study it.

See the Bible as the success handbook for your ministry.

7 Keys For Bible Reading

1. Establish A Method For Reading The Bible. Get a pattern...a ritual. Habit Is More Powerful Than Desire. Have a Bible you study from that you highlight in different colors things you want to remember. Take a speed reading course to help.

2. Memorize The Word of God. Store The Word of God in you. So you know what the Bible says about everything. That is the way you want to develop your ministry and your life.

3. Become An Authority On One Topic. Choose your topic...what do you crave for? What is your passion? Research the Bible and mark all the Scriptures pertaining to that topic. Then put them in sequence from Genesis through Revelation. Then memorize a Scripture a day on that topic.

4. Keep A Journal. Take notes when you study. Do not study for sermons. Study to know The Word of God and share what you know. Whatever you do have a rhythm...a pattern.

5. Read The Bible First Every Morning. Read it first because you will never get into it if you do not read it first.

6. Listen To The Bible On Audio (cassettes, compact discs, MP3, etc.). Listen to it to wash your mind.

7. Become An Authority On The Word of God. Know what His Word says. Teach your people. The most important thing you can do for another person is to fuel their passion for The Word of God.

READING THROUGH THE BIBLE IN 30 DAYS

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- 1. Gen. 1-40
- 2. Gen. 41-50 / Ex. 1-30
- 3. Ex. 31-40 / Lev. 1-27 / Num. 1-3
- 4. Num. 4-36 / Dt. 1-7
- 5. Dt. 8-34 / Josh. 1-13
- 6. Josh. 14-24 / Jud. 1-21 / Ruth 1-4 / 1 Sam. 1-4
- 7. 1 Sam. 5-31 / 2 Sam. 1-13
- 8. 2 Sam. 14-24 / 1 Ki. 1-22 / 2 Ki. 1-7
- 9. 2 Ki. 8-25 / 1 Chr. 1-22
- 10. 1 Chr. 23-29 / 2 Chr. 1-33
- 11. 2 Chr. 34-36 / Ez. 1-10 / Neh. 1-13 / Est. 1-10 / Job 1-4
- 12. Job 5-42 / Ps. 1-2
- 13. Ps. 3-42
- 14. Ps. 43-82
- 15. Ps. 83-122
- 16. Ps. 123-150 / Pro. 1-12
- 17. Pro. 13-31 / Ecc. 1-12 / SoS. 1-8 / Is. 1
- 18. Is. 2-41
- 19. Is. 42-66 / Jer. 1-15
- 20. Jer. 16-52 / Lam. 1-3

- 21. Lam. 4-5 / Ez. 1-40
- 22. Ez. 41-48 / Dan. 1-12 / Hos. 1-14 / Joel 1-3 / Amos 1-3
- 23. Amos 4-9 / Ob. 1 / Jon. 1-4 / Mi. 1-7 / Na. 1-3 / Hab. 1-3 / Zeph. 1-3 / Hag. 1-2 / Zech. 1-14 / Mal. 1-4
- 24. Matt. 1-28 / Mk. 1-12
- 25. Mk.13-16 / Lk. 1-24 / Jn. 1-12
- 26. Jn. 13-21 / Acts 1-28 / Rom. 1-3
- 27. Rom. 4-16 / 1 Cor. 1-16 / 2 Cor. 1-11
- 28. 2 Cor. 12-13 / Gal. 1-6 / Eph. 1-6 / Ph. 1-4 / Col. 1-4 / 1 Thes. 1-5 / 2 Thes. 1-3 / 1 Tim. 1-6 / 2 Tim. 1-4
- 29. Titus 1-3 / Phil. 1 / Heb. 1-13 / James 1-5 / 1 Peter 1-5 / 2 Peter 1-3 / 1 John 1-5 / 2 John 1 / 3 John 1 / Jude 1
- 30. Rev. 1-22

READING THROUGH THE New Testament In 30 Days

- 1. Matt. 1-9
- 2. Matt. 10-15
- 3. Matt. 16-23
- 4. Matt. 24-28
- 5. Mk. 1-6
- 6. Mk. 7-13
- 7. Mk. 14-Lk. 2
- 8. Lk. 3-7
- 9. Lk. 8-12
- 10. Lk. 13-19
- 11. Lk. 20-24
- 12. Jn. 1-6
- 13. Jn. 7-11
- 14. Jn. 12-19
- 15. Jn. 20-Acts 6
- 16. Acts 7-13
- 17. Acts 14-20
- 18. Acts 21-28
- 19. Rom. 1-9
- 20. Rom. 10-1 Cor. 4
- 21. 1 Cor. 5-14
- 22. 1 Cor. 15-2 Cor. 10
- 23. 2 Cor. 11-Eph. 2
- 24. Eph. 3-Col. 2
- 25. Col. 3-1 Tim. 4
- 26. 1 Tim. 5-Heb. 5
- 27. Heb. 6-James 1
- 28. James 2-1 Jn. 2
- 29. 1 Jn. 3-Rev. 8
- 30. Rev. 9-22

READING THE BIBLE THROUGH IN ONE YEAR: A COMPLETE PROGRAM

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JANUARY	6. Num. 2-4	15. 1 Sam. 4-8
1. Gen. 1-3	7. Num. 5-7	16. 1 Sam. 9-11
2. Gen. 4-6	8. Num. 8-12	17. 1 Sam. 12-14
3. Gen. 7-9	9. Num. 13-15	18. 1 Sam. 15-17
4. Gen. 10-14	10. Num. 16-18	19. 1 Sam. 18-20
5. Gen. 15-17	11. Num. 19-21	20. 1 Sam. 21-23
6. Gen. 18-20	12. Num. 22-24	21. 1 Sam. 24-26
7. Gen. 21-23	13. Num. 25-27	22. 1 Sam. 27-31
8. Gen. 24-26	14. Num. 28-30	23. 2 Sam. 1-3
9. Gen. 27-29	15. Num. 31-35	24. 2 Sam. 4-6
10. Gen. 30-32	16. Num. 36- Dt. 2	25. 2 Sam. 7-9
11. Gen. 33-37	17. Dt. 3-5	26. 2 Sam. 10-12
12. Gen. 38-40	18. Dt. 6-8	27. 2 Sam. 13-15
13. Gen. 41-43	19. Dt. 9-11	28. 2 Sam. 16-18
14. Gen. 44-46	20. Dt. 12-14	29. 2 Sam. 19-23
15. Gen. 47-49	21. Dt. 15-17	30. 2 Sam.24-
16. Gen. 50-Ex. 2	22. Dt. 18-22	1 Ki. 2
17. Ex. 3-5	23. Dt. 23-25	31. 1 Ki. 3-5
18. Ex. 6-10	24. Dt. 26-28	APRIL
19. Ex. 11-13	25. Dt. 29-31	1. 1 Ki. 6-8
20. Ex. 14-16	26. Dt. 32-34	2. 1 Ki. 9-11
21. Ex. 17-19	27. Josh. 1-3	3. 1 Ki. 12-14
22. Ex. 20-22	28. Josh. 4-6	4. 1 Ki. 15-17
23. Ex. 23-25	MARCH	5. 1 Ki. 18-22
24. Ex. 26-28	1. Josh. 7-11	6. 2 Ki. 1-3
25. Ex. 29-33	2. Josh. 12-14	7. 2 Ki. 4-6
26. Ex. 34-36	3. Josh. 15-17	8. 2 Ki. 7-9
27. Ex. 37-39	4. Josh. 18-20	9. 2 Ki. 10-12
28. Ex. 40-Lev. 2	5. Josh. 21-23	10. 2 Ki. 13-15
29. Lev. 3-5	6. Josh. 24-Jud. 2	11. 2 Ki. 16-18
30. Lev. 6-8	7. Jud. 3-5	12. 2 Ki. 19-23
31. Lev. 9-11	8. Jud. 6-10	13. 2 Ki. 24-
FEBRUARY	9. Jud. 11-13	1 Chr. 1
1. Lev. 12-16	10. Jud. 14-16	14. Chr. 2-4
2. Lev. 17-19	11. Jud. 17-19	15. 1 Chr. 5-7
3. Lev. 20-22	12. Jud. 20-	16. 1 Chr. 8-10
4. Lev. 23-25	Ruth 1	17. 1 Chr. 11-13
5. Lev. 26-	13. Ruth 2-4	18. 1 Chr. 14-16
Num. 1	14. 1 Sam. 1-3	19. 1 Chr. 17-21

20. 1 Chr. 22-24 21. 1 Chr. 25-27	JUNE 1. Ps. 20-22	18. Pro. 23-25 19. Pro. 26-30
22. 1 Chr. 28-	2. Ps. 23-25	20. Pro. 31- Ecc. 2
22. 1 Chr. 20 2 Chr. 1	3. Ps. 26-28	20. 110. 51 Lee. 2 21. Ecc. 3-5
23. 2 Chr. 2-4	4. Ps. 29-31	22. Ecc. 6-8
24. 2 Chr. 5-7	5. Ps. 32-34	23. Ecc. 9-11
25. 2 Chr. 8-10	6. Ps. 35-37	24. Ecc. 12-SoS. 2
26. 2 Chr. 11-15	7. Ps. 38-42	25. SoS. 3-5
27. 2 Chr. 16-18	8. Ps. 43-45	26. SoS. 6-Is. 2
28. 2 Chr. 19-21	9. Ps. 46-48	27. Is. 3-5
29. 2 Chr. 22-24	10. Ps. 49-51	28. Is. 6-8
30. 2 Chr. 25-27	11. Ps. 52-54	29. Is. 9-11
MAY	12. Ps. 55-57	30. Is. 12-14
1. 2 Chr. 28-30	13. Ps. 58-60	31. Is. 15-17
2. 2 Chr. 31-33	14. Ps. 61-65	<u>AUGUST</u>
3. 2 Chr. 34-	15. Ps. 66-68	1. Is. 18-20
Ez. 2	16. Ps. 69-71	2. Is. 21-25
4. Ez. 3-5	17. Ps. 72-74	3. Is. 26-28
5. Ez. 6-8	18. Ps. 75-77	4. Is. 29-31
6. Ez. 9-10-	19. Ps. 78-80	5. Is. 32-34
Neh. 1	20. Ps. 81-83	6. Is. 35-37
7. Neh. 2-4	21. Ps. 84-88	7. Is. 38-40
8. Neh. 5-7	22. Ps. 89-91	8. Is. 41-43
9. Neh. 8-10	23. Ps. 92-94 24. Ps. 95-97	9. Is. 44-48 10. Is. 49-51
10. Neh. 11- Est. 2	24. Ps. 95-97 25. Ps. 98-100	10. 18. 49-51 11. Is. 52-54
11. Est. 3-5	26. Ps. 101-103	11. 18. 52-54 12. Is. 55-57
12. Est. 6-8	20. 1 s. 101-105 27. Ps. 104-106	12. IS. 55-57 13. Is. 58-60
12. Est. 0-0 13. Est. 9-	28. Ps. 107-111	14. Is. 61-63
Job 1	29. Ps. 112-114	15. Is. 64-66
14. Job 2-4	30. Ps. 115-117	16. Jer. 1-5
15. Job 5-7	JULY	17. Jer. 6-8
16. Job 8-10	1. Ps. 118-120	18. Jer. 9-11
17. Job 11-15	2. Ps. 121-123	19. Jer. 12-14
18. Job 16-18	3. Ps. 124-126	20. Jer. 15-17
19. Job 19-21	4. Ps. 127-129	21. Jer. 18-20
20. Job 22-24	5. Ps. 130-134	22. Jer. 21-23
21. Job 25-27	6. Ps. 135-137	23. Jer. 24-28
22. Job 28-30	7. Ps. 138-140	24. Jer. 29-31
23. Job 31-33	8. Ps. 141-143	25. Jer. 32-34
24. Job 34-38	9. Ps. 144-146	26. Jer. 35-37
25. Job 39-41	10. Ps. 147-149	27. Jer. 38-40
26. Job 42-	11. Ps. 150-	28. Jer. 41-43
Ps. 2	Pro. 2 12. Pro. 3-7	29. Jer. 44-46
27. Ps. 3-5 28. Ps. 6-8	12. Pro. 3-7 13. Pro. 8-10	30. Jer. 47-51 31. Jer. 52-Lam. 2
28. Ps. 6-8 29. Ps. 9-11	13. Pro. 8-10 14. Pro. 11-13	SEPTEMBER
29. Ps. 9-11 30. Ps. 12-14	14. Pro. 11-13 15. Pro. 14-16	1. Lam. 3-5
30. FS. 12-14 31. Ps. 15-19	16. Pro. 17-19	2. Ez. 1-3
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8.	Ez. 21-23
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11.	Ez. 30-32
12	Ez 33-35
10	E_{-} 2C 40
19.	Ez. 30-32 Ez. 33-35 Ez. 36-40 Ez. 41-43
14. 15.	Ez. 41-43
15.	Ez. 44-46
16.	Ez. 47-
10.	D2. 41-
	Dan. 1
17. 18.	Dan. 2-4
18	Dan. 5-7
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19.	Dan. 8-10
20.	Dan. 11-
	Hos. 3
21.	Hog 1-6
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<i>44</i> .	HOS. 7-9
23.	Π_{0S} . 10-12
24.	Hos. 13-
	Joel 1
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25.	Joel 2-Amos 1
26.	Amos 2-4
27.	Amos 5-9
28	Ob. 1- Jon. 2
20.	Jon. 3-Mi. 1
30.	Mi. 2-4
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1	Mi 5-7
5	No. 1.9
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3.	Mi. 5-7 Na. 1-3 Hab. 1-3 Zeph. 1- Hag. 2 Zech. 1-3
4.	Zeph. 1-
	Hag. 2
5	Zoch 1-3
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6.	Zech. 4-6
7.	Zech. 7-9
8.	Zech. 10-12
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10.	Mal. 2-4
11.	Tag. 2 Zech. 1-3 Zech. 4-6 Zech. 7-9 Zech. 10-12 Zech. 13-Mal. 1 Mal. 2-4 Matt. 1-5 Matt. 6-8
12.	Matt. 6-8 Matt. 9-11 Matt. 12-14
13	Matt 9-11
$\frac{1}{1}$	Matt. 12-14
14.	Matt. 12-14
15.	Matt. 12-14 Matt. 15-17 Matt. 18-20 Matt. 21-23
16.	Matt.18-20
17	Matt. 21-23
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 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 	Matt. 24-28 Mk. 1-3 Mk. 4-6 Mk. 7-9 Mk. 10-12 Mk. 13-15 Mk. 16-Lk. 2
 25. 26. 27. 28. 20. 	Mk. 16-Lk. 2 Lk. 3-7 Lk. 8-10 Lk. 11-13 Lk. 14-16 Lk. 17-19 Lk. 20-22 Lk. 23-Jn.1 VEMBER Jn 2-6
29. 30. 31. <u>NO</u> 1.	Lk. 20-22 Lk. 23-Jn.1 VEMBER Jn 2-6
2. 3. 4. 5.	Jn. 2-6 Jn. 7-9 Jn. 10-12 Jn. 13-15 Jn. 16-18 Jn. 19-21
6. 7. 8. 9.	Acts 1-3 Acts 4-8 Acts 9-11
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An Uncommon Future Will Require Uncommon Preparation.

-MIKE MURDOCK



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Evangelist

3.0.6

The Evangelist And His Music.

Many ministers do not think they can be really successful in evangelism unless they have a *music ministry*. I disagree.

There are advantages as well as disadvantages of doing your own music in your crusades. If you have *exceptional* skills, I would say, yes, use them in your crusades.

In fact, it was a popular minister who urged me to get started singing and playing the piano. There were many crusades where I never touched a piano nor sang a song. In fact, it was several years after I was in evangelism when I began to sing solos. To this day, I do not feel especially proud of my singing nor my piano playing. Yet, I do know it does something for me personally before I minister or preach.

Naturally, since I have started writing songs, it has become even more important to the church services where I minister. Then I can share my experiences and how God gave me these songs for the people. They sometimes seemed blessed in the uniqueness of it; my songs *serve a purpose*.

I heard C. M. Ward say he had to make a *decision* years ago about whether he was going to *excel in preaching or the piano*. I have seen a number of men

and women lose a major portion of their ministry because they did not *pursue* their music.

On the other hand, I have seen many destroy the influence of their preaching because they mixed *inferior* musicianship on the platform. I will never forget one preacher I went to hear. I knew he was a marvelous speaker. I had heard him preach once. However, in his effort to utilize every gift God had given him, he went over to the piano, sat down and played. I was stunned. His piano playing was very inferior, especially with today's high quality through television. It *stained* and *soiled* the audience's reception of him when he started preaching. It would have been far better, in my personal opinion, had he concentrated on his preaching.

Do not show off your inferior skills. Develop them. Then, project them. Most preachers will have to make a choice in what they will *excel* in: preaching, teaching, musicianship, singing or whatever. I suggest that you give yourself wholly to one thing and become an *expert* at it. Then develop from there.

An Extra Word To Evangelists

When you go into a church for a crusade, get acquainted with the organist, pianist and minister of music.

1. Tell Them The *Direction* Your Ministry Will Take The Congregation In The Services.

2. Share With Them Your Favorite Songs.

3. Give Them A *List* of Songs You Want Them To Sing or Play During The Altar Call, or Even During Your Singing.

Be careful about asking all the musicians on the platform to stay with you and play. Invariably, one or

two will play too loud, the wrong chords, and it will infuriate you in your efforts to sing. I have made this mistake many times; I cannot believe I still make this mistake.

I get excited about someone's great abilities during the song service and forget they do not understand *me*, nor *my music*, nor *what I am about*. Many times I have invited all of them to join in, only to get so discouraged in five minutes that I quit my singing and go back to the pulpit to preach. An *exception* to this is a drummer. They basically can establish a good rhythm for you but will not necessarily create discord.

I have found great joy whenever I was able to take the time to practice with the musicians of a church.

Remember, you are presenting the gospel at its *highest quality* possible. *Invest* a little time, go to the trouble, and the congregation will come back night after night to *enjoy* it.

The Clearer Your Goals, The Greater Your Faith.

-MIKE MURDOCK



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FAITH

Your Faith Decides Your Miracles.

Just as repentance draws God's attention, so *Faith always stimulates incredible favor from God and His angels.* "Bless the Lord, ye His angels, that excel in strength, that do His commandments, hearkening unto the voice of His word," (Psalm 103:20).

Yes, Faith is the magnet that attracts God toward you. You do not have to drive a Rolls Royce to impress Him. Nor is it necessary to be a Harvard graduate.

God is impressed when you *use* the Faith He has *already given you*.

"God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith," (Romans 12:3).

"But without faith it is impossible to please Him: for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him," (Hebrews 11:6).

Every miracle you receive can be traced to a *Seed* of *Faith*.

Faith is what drives ordinary men to accomplish the *extraordinary*.

Faith is what turns common men into *uncommon achievers*.

They may possess different personalities and talents, but they learned to use their Faith. They

focused their believing toward their Dream-Seed.

Faith is the real difference between champions and losers.

Faith is the extraordinary ingredient of every miracle.

Faith can cause your blind eyes to see.

Faith can cause your deaf ears to hear again.

Faith can cause your lame legs to receive strength.

Faith can make your barren womb productive.

Faith can *heal* your scarred and empty marriage.

Faith can *restore confidence* into your broken heart.

Faith can *break the chains* of your cocaine habit or any drug addiction.

Faith can *change you* from an alcoholic into a great achiever again.

Faith can *transform* you from a weakling into the champion God intended you to be.

What Is Faith?

Few people can really explain Faith. It is like electricity or the wind. You cannot hold it in your hand. You cannot seal it in a jar at your house, or package it like a box of corn flakes.

1. Yet, *Faith Is A Substance*. God used it to create the universe.

"Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear," (Hebrews 11:3).

2. Faith Is *The Ability To Believe*. Remember, it is the invisible confidence within you that something exists other than what you presently see. The Proof of Your Faith Is Revealed In Your Pursuit of The Unseen.

3. Faith Is A Seed Planted In The Soil of Your Spirit. God planted it there at your birth. It is invisible to the natural eye, like minerals in water. Yet, Faith is very tangible in the realm of The Spirit.

It may be *dead* or *dormant—or alive* and *growing*.

Faith that is *inactive* toward God is what we call *dead faith.* "Faith without works is dead," (James 2:26). The Bible also refers to it as "unbelief" or "doubt." It does not mean that a man is not using his Faith. Rather, it means that he is not using his Faith *productively*, or *toward God*. He may even be using it against himself in a destructive manner.

Active Faith is when a man uses his believing ability to obtain something he wants from God. He usually will do something to prove that he has confidence in The Word of God.

The starving widow in 1 Kings 17 willingly *gave her last meal* to the prophet Elijah. "And she went and did according to the saying of Elijah: and she, and he, and her house, did eat many days," (1 Kings 17:15).

Naaman, the leper, obeyed the prophet and *dipped in the Jordan River seven times*. "Then went he down, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God: and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean," (2 Kings 5:14).

At the wedding in Cana, they *filled up the water pots* in anticipation of the water-to-wine miracle. "Jesus saith unto them, Fill the waterpots with water. And they filled them up to the brim. And He saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast. And they bare it. When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was: (but the servants which drew the water knew;) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom, And saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: but thou hast kept the good wine until now," (John 2:7-10).

Noah, though he had never seen rain, *began to build the ark* in Faith. "And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth. Make thee an ark of gopher wood; rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch. Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he," (Genesis 6:13-14, 22).

The presence of your Faith is proven by something you do in obedience to God and His Word.

The ability to believe already exists within you. It is the substance called *Faith*. Your Faith is like a muscle. The more you use it, the stronger it will become.

I want to help you begin *using* your Faith to obtain the miracles and blessings God wants you to receive.

7 Principles The Bible Teaches About Faith

1. Your Faith Is An Invisible Substance. Like the wind or electricity, you may not see it with your natural eye, but its presence and force is proven by its results in your life. "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen," (Hebrews 11:1). 2. You Already Possess The Seed of Faith Within You. *Believing ability* is within every person. You choose how you will use it. Whatever you choose to believe decides whether it will be *productive* or *destructive* to your life. "God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith," (Romans 12:3).

3. Whenever You Use Your Faith, You Please The Heart of God. Do you not appreciate it when others *trust* you? Do you not feel humiliated and a bit angry when they show *lack* of trust? Then you know how God feels about your faith in Him! "But without faith it is impossible to please Him: for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him," (Hebrews 11:6).

Faith is very important to God.

Please do not take this lightly. Sometimes we make statements such as, "Well, I just do not have much faith." How would you like to hear your children talking to their little friends, "Well, my mother and dad lie to me all the time. I just do not believe anything they say." You would be crushed, insulted and humiliated.

Well, it is even more important that you trust The Word of God. God wants you to believe *every word* He speaks to you. You insult Him when you do not.

When you *use* your Faith, you are pleasing to God.

When you do not trust Him, you disappoint God.

It is just that simple.

I know several great men of God who are not necessarily perfect. They have made mistakes. Yet, the principal secret of their success is that they have learned to use their Faith in God. 4. You Will Change Your Circumstances When You Change The Direction of Your Believing. "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth," (Mark 9:23).

You will inevitably experience what you consistently expect.

Henry Ford said that men who believe they *can* do something, and those who believe they *cannot*, are *both* right.

God really wants you healed. Dare to *believe it*.

God really wants you happy. Dare to *believe it*.

God really wants to supply all your needs. Dare to *believe it.*

One of the songs I have written is called, "Dare to Believe."

Dare to believe, and even demons tremble. Dare to believe, and sickness must depart. Dare to believe, and even mountains can be cast into the sea.

Your world can change my friend, when you dare to believe.

The Seeds you have planted are not wasted. They are ready to burst forth with new life.

So today, my friend, let your faith be awakened.

Dare to believe that God is still alive!© Copyright © 1996 by Win-Song Productions, Inc.

5. Your Biggest Mountain Will Succumb To Your Smallest Seed of Faith. "If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you," (Matthew 17:20).

You may feel as though you have little Faith. I have felt that way before, too. However, Jesus did *not* say, "If you have faith like a *mountain* you can move a *mustard seed!*" He said that *your smallest act of faith is enough to get a mountain moved*.

You must act on your Faith. You must *speak* to the mountain. You must tell your mountain exactly what you want it to do. Sometimes you must keep on speaking to your mountain when it refuses to budge. When you learn this secret, the mountains in your life will move. Jesus said it. Believe it and this principle will start working for you.

6. You Must Pursue What You Really Believe God Wants You To Possess. "If any of you lack Wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed," (James 1:5-6).

Remember the earlier principle of desire: *The Proof of Desire Is Pursuit*. Miracles do not just happen where they are needed. They happen where they are *wanted*. Jesus did not always go where He was needed, but where He was *wanted*.

We rarely reach for the things we really need.

We always reach for those things we truly desire.

7. Your Guarantee of Eternal Life Hinges Upon Your Faith In Jesus Christ. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life," (John 3:16). I think we all have a built-in craving for immortality. In other words, we would love to live *forever!*

The Bible clearly teaches there is life beyond the grave. "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also," (John 14:1-3).

I have never regretted my decision to accept Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior. In fact, I wrote a song expressing my feelings about it.

> I wouldn't want to try to live without the Lord in my life. I wouldn't want to have to live in darkness when there is light. And I won't trade away the joy I know today. I wouldn't want to try to live without the Lord in my life.© Copyright © 1996 by Win-Song Productions, Inc.

3 Ways To Increase Your Faith

Your Faith is like a Seed.

Like any Seed, it must be *watered* and *nurtured* for it to grow. As the apostles said unto the Lord, "Increase our faith," (Luke 17:5).

1. The Most Important Secret In Increasing Your Faith Is To Hear The Spoken **Word of God.** "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by The Word of God," (Romans 10:17).

Do you own a CD player or a cassette tape recorder? Then use it. Keep it plugged in for continuous use. Keep a stack of Scripture and teaching tapes or discs close by.

While you are shaving or bathing, *play them*.

While you are waiting for your wife to get dressed, *play them*.

While you are driving your car to work, *play them*.

I usually keep a CD or tape player in every room of my house. Since I travel over 15,000 miles a month, I keep a compact disc player in my hotel room at all times. *These compact discs can feed your spirit*.

"Oh, but they cost too much," a little lady told me. "Ignorance will cost you *more*," I replied.

It is amazing how we will pay \$40 for a tank of gas that is gone in three days, while excusing ourselves from knowledge that could revolutionize our entire lifestyle.

Some people spend more money on their cars than they do their minds. (Maybe that is why their cars run better than their minds!)

Meditate on Scripture.

Memorize Scripture.

Talk about Scripture.

Compose songs with Scripture.

2. Be Honest With God About Your Personal Needs And Desires. "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy," (Proverbs 28:13).

"Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out," (John 6:37).

It was a marvelous moment in my life when I learned to *speak* my real feelings *aloud* to God. I discovered that He would never ask me to do something that I could not do. He would not ask me to achieve something I could not accomplish.

You see, I really hate to make mistakes. Any kind of mistake. Whether it is getting lost on a strange freeway or failing to spot a misspelled word in my current newsletter! Satan delights in taking advantage of that kind of conscientiousness.

He wants us to feel that we are incapable of pleasing God. I have had moments when I felt that God was simply unfair. I felt that His standard was just too high for anyone to achieve—especially me!

It is not always easy to live holy.

I sometimes have difficulty understanding the head-in-the-clouds, glib-tongued Christian who says that he never experiences any type of adversity. Personally, I have found that the same thing happened in the lives of Joseph, Daniel and the Apostle Paul.

Is it humanly possible for us to please God? *Yes, without a doubt*.

Do you really *want* to live in obedience? Then tell *Him.* He needs to hear it from your own lips.

I have discovered that God is the easiest person to please that I have ever known. He is *consistent* in His expectations, incredibly long-suffering and unwavering in His confidence in me.

The real truth is that people are harder to please than God! Subconsciously, each of us attempts to please those around us. It is impossible. *Therein is the weariness of life*.

Man-pleasing is enslaving. "The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe," (Proverbs 29:25).

I have found that one of the keys to pleasing God is to focus on 24-hour achievements only. This simply means to discern *each morning* what will make Him happy for that day only. Then concentrate on His goals for *just that day*.

3. Verbally Express The Presence of God That Is Now Within You! As a believer, you already contain the power of God within you. *Release it!* Do not bottle it up. Uncork it! "He that believeth on Me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water," (John 7:38).

Do not let anyone clog up that inner river inside you. Someone near you today desperately needs the Water of Life from *your* well!

Feel Jesus. Think Jesus. Talk about Jesus!

Do not hesitate to pray for someone on the street or in a restaurant. The whole world is your turf. Dominate it!

Healing the sick is more important than accommodating a critic.

Yes, your *marriage* can be *restored*. Your *body* can be completely *healed*. Yes, God can provide the *extra finances* you desperately need at this time.

It can begin happening the very moment you learn to use the most explosive weapon God has given you: *Your Faith*.

Faith is that invisible confidence that something exists other than what you presently see. It is that internal belief system planted by God in every human being.

Faith is simply the *ability to believe*. Faith always draws the attention of God.

Your Faith Decides Your Miracles.

-MIKE MURDOCK



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Use The Weapon of Fasting.

There are a number of good books on the subject of fasting available at your local bookstore. I suggest that you get one, study it, practice it and establish a regular time of fasting, praying and waiting before God each week. Few ministers fast regularly. Some even doubt its power and effectiveness.

If you talk to a man of God who has practiced fasting on a regular basis, he will tell you it is one of the greatest *weapons* of his life.

During a great crisis season of my personal life, I prayed, studied, listened to Scriptures on cassettes, memorized Bible verses, but something was not breaking through. One day as I prayed, it dawned on me that my fasting had been rather *erratic, unplanned* and *unscheduled*. I "fasted when I felt like it."

When I gave myself to fasting, the results were absolutely phenomenal. The *revelations* of God poured into my spirit. My *nature* changed, my *opinion toward life* changed, the *freedom in my preaching* changed.

What Fasting Has Done For Me Personally

I cannot speak for others, but I would like to tell you the *significance* of fasting in my personal life and ministry. When I Fast And Pray...

1. My Personal Ambition To Succeed In The Ministry Subsides. It is replaced by a calm willingness to wait for God's timing for promotions.

2. I Seem To Lose All Fear of What Men Might Say or Do To Hurt Me.

3. I Become Extremely Gentle, Tender And Compassionate Toward People In General.

4. My Anxiety Over Finances Subsides And Is Replaced By A New Confidence That Special Provision Is Being Designed By God.

5. I Receive Invisible Pictures of Understanding The Nature, Motives And Intentions of Others Around Me. Fasting has been incredibly helpful for me to recognize deceit and deceptive people in my life.

6. My Greatest Financial Ideas Come To Me During A Fast.

7. It Seems That An Extraordinary Revelation And Relationship With Jesus Surfaces During A Fast. I see Him differently.

8. An Unusual Aura And Charisma Seems To Surround Me. I become *conscious* of *His Presence* which surrounds me when I am on a fast, and my staff verifies this. There are sometimes remarkable changes on my facial countenance. I have had some unusual experiences that I would not share with anyone, and quite frankly I am not sure anyone would believe me. They have happened while on a fast.

5 Helpful Keys About Fasting

1. Become Knowledgeable of Fasting Through Reading Books On The Subject From **Your Local Bookstore.** One excellent book on this subject is *The 21 Day Fast* by Dr. Bob Rodgers, senior pastor of Evangel World Prayer Center in Louisville, Kentucky.

2. Select A Day In Which You Can Get Alone With God And Concentrate On His Presence.

3. Do Not Feel Condemned For Drinking Water, or Whatever While Fasting. The purpose of your fast is not to be weak but to abstain from desirable foods in preference of time with God, in concentration on spiritual matters.

4. Consciously Direct Your Attention To The Purpose And Your Desire From God On This Fast.

5. Do Not Confuse Fasting For Spiritual Reasons With Depriving Yourself of Food To Lose A Few Pounds.

I have completed several 21-day fasts and a good number of seven-day fasts. For the last two years or so, I have averaged fasting three days a week. I try not to come off a fast with heavy food. I try not to make a public show of it, when I am visiting or in crusades, etc. I try to abstain from relationships that discourage my fasting and prayer life. Someone who says, "You need to eat, do not hurt yourself" is too immature to be a part of my lifestyle.

My strongest suggestion to you in the ministry is to select one day a week and keep that with regularity as a day set aside for God. Some will accuse me of legalism, or ritualism, but I cannot think of any possible disadvantages in fasting a basic meal or two a week. As you fast, I pray the blessing of God on you, your ministry and your family.

Scripture References For Fasting

"Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face; That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly," (Matthew 6:16-18).

"Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh? Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy rereward. Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and He shall say, Here I am...If thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday: And the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not. And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in," (Isaiah 58:6-12).

Prayer

"And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, He went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed," (Mark 1:35).

"But I give myself unto prayer," (Psalm 109:4).

"Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done. And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive," (Matthew 21:21-22).

"For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith. Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them. And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in Heaven may forgive you your trespasses," (Mark 11:23-25).

"But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word," (Acts 6:4).

"Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God," (Philippians 4:6).

"And He said unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for an memorial before God," (Acts 10:4).

"But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in The Holy Ghost," (Jude 20). "For he that speaketh in an unknown tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God: For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful. What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also. I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all," (1 Corinthians 14:2, 14-15, 18).

"Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because He maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God," (Romans 8:26-27).

The Word of God

"Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get Wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding. Exalt her, and she shall promote thee: she shall bring thee to honour, when thou dost embrace her. She shall give to thine head an ornament of grace: a crown of glory shall she deliver to thee. Hear, O My son, and receive My sayings; and the years of thy life shall be many. I have taught thee in the way of Wisdom; I have led thee in right paths. When thou goest, thy steps shall not be straitened; and when thou runnest, thou shalt not stumble. Take fast hold of instruction; let her not go; keep her; for she is thy life," (Proverbs 4:7-13).

"For the Lord giveth Wisdom; out of His mouth cometh knowledge and understanding," (Proverbs 2:6).

"Happy is the man that findeth Wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding. For the merchandise

of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. She is more precious than rubies: and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her. Length of days is in her right hand; and in her left hand riches and honour. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her: and happy is every one that retaineth her," (Proverbs 3:13-18).

"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge," (Hosea 4:6).

"Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; Then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God," (Proverbs 2:3-5).

"Through knowledge shall the just be delivered," (Proverbs 11:9).

"And by knowledge shall the chambers be filled with all precious and pleasant riches. A wise man is strong; yea, a man of knowledge increaseth strength," (Proverbs 24:4-5).

"That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God," (Colossians 1:10).

27 Important Facts About Fasting

1. Fasting Is A Force In The Spirit World. When the disciples could not cast out the dumb and deaf spirit of the young son, they asked Jesus, "Why could not we cast him out? And He said unto them, This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting," (Mark 9:28-29).

2. Unusual Warfare Requires Unusual Weapons.

3. Jesus Embraced Prayer And Fasting As Effective Weapons. Demon powers always succumb to these weapons. I am so thankful that the body of Christ is awakening again and becoming aware of the remarkable influence we can have when we pray and set aside time to fast. "Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He was afterward an hungred," (Matthew 4:1-2).

You Should Fast Between Major Events 4. of Your Life. Jesus did. When He was baptized by John, "He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon Him: And lo a voice from Heaven, saying, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," (Matthew 3:16-17). Then, Jesus fasted. His next major event was the selection of His disciples. "And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. And He saith unto them, Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men. And they straightway left their nets, and followed Him. And going on from thence, He saw other two brethren, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and He called them. And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed Him," (Matthew 4:18-22).

5. You Should Fast To Influence The Judgments of God Away From Your Children. David did. "David therefore besought God for the child; and David fasted, and went in, and lay all night upon

the earth. And the elders of his house arose, and went to him, to raise him up from the earth: but he would not, neither did he eat bread with them," (2 Samuel 12:16-17).

6. You Should Fast Habitually. Anna did. Anna, an eighty-four year old widow and prophetess never left the temple, but fasted continuously. "And she was a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day," (Luke 2:37).

7. Your Fasting Follows The Examples of Great Champions. The Apostle Paul fasted. "But in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, In stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings," (2 Corinthians 6:4-5).

8. You Should Fast Often. "In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness," (2 Corinthians 11:27).

9. You Should Fast For The Healing of Your Children. David did. "David therefore besought God for the child; and David fasted, and went in, and lay all night upon the earth. And the elders of his house arose, and went to him, to raise him up from the earth: but he would not, neither did he eat bread with them," (2 Samuel 12:16-17).

10. You Should Fast To Create Favor In A Political Crisis. Esther did. She requested that many join her in a fast for three days without eating or drinking, and she got her employees to do likewise. "Then Esther bade them return Mordecai this answer, Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day: I also and my maidens will fast likewise," (Esther 4:15-16).

11. You Should Fast To Create Acceptance And Influence With Those In Leadership And Positions of Power. Queen Esther did. (See Esther 4:15-16.)

12. You Should Fast During Times of Unusual Attack And Isolation. David did. "When I wept, and chastened my soul with fasting, that was to my reproach," (Psalm 69:10).

13. Your Fasting Will Produce Humility. "I humbled my soul with fasting," (Psalm 35:13).

14. You Should Fast To Influence Three Areas of Your Life. Ezra, the priest, did. 1) Direction. 2) Family. 3) Finances. "Then I proclaimed a fast there, at the river of Ahava, that we might afflict ourselves before our God, to seek of Him a right way for us, and for our little ones, and for all our substance," (Ezra 8:21).

15. Your Fasting Is Wasted Effort If You Lack Integrity or Proper Motives. "Then said the Lord unto me, Pray not for this people for their good. When they fast, I will not hear their cry; and when they offer burnt offering and an oblation, I will not accept them: but I will consume them by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence," (Jeremiah 14:11-12).

16. You Should Fast To Avert The Judgments of God Upon Your Life. "Sanctify ye a fast, call a solemn assembly, gather the elders and all the inhabitants of the land into the house of the Lord your God, and cry unto the Lord, Alas for the day! for the day of the Lord is at hand, and as a destruction from

the Almighty shall it come," (Joel 1:14-15).

17. Your Fasting Affects Your Supernatural Provision. "Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast...Yea, the Lord will answer and say unto His people, Behold, I will send you corn, and wine, and oil, and ye shall be satisfied therewith: and I will no more make you a reproach among the heathen," (Joel 2:15, 19).

18. Your Fasting Is Wrong If It Is Done Publicly To Impress Other People About You Spiritually. "And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast," (Matthew 6:5, 16).

19. Your Fasting Should Be A Private And Silent Posture Before God. "But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face; That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly," (Matthew 6:17-18).

20. Your Father Guarantees To Reward You Openly For Private Fasting. (See Matthew 6:17-18.)

21. Your Fasting Moves God To Destroy Your Enemy. "Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly....and I will no more make you a reproach among the heathen: But I will remove far off from you the northern army, and will drive him into a land barren and desolate, with his face toward the east sea, and his hinder part toward the utmost sea, and his stink shall come up, and his ill savour shall come up,

because he hath done great things," (Joel 2:15, 19-20).

22. Your Fasting Births A Season of Restoration After Loss. "Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly....and He will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month. And the floors shall be full of wheat, and the vats shall overflow with wine and oil. And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm, and the caterpiller, and the palmerworm, My great army which I sent among you. And ye shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise the name of the Lord your God, that hath dealt wondrously with you: and My people shall never be ashamed," (Joel 2:15, 23-26).

23. Your Fasting Can Cause An Outflowing of The Holy Spirit Toward Your Life. "Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly: And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out My spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out My Spirit," (Joel 2:15, 28-29).

24. God Commanded Us To Fast. "Therefore also now, saith the Lord, turn ye even to Me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God: for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth Him of the evil," (Joel 2:12-13).

25. Various Fasts Are Possible. Some people fast from food and water for three days. Some simply fast without food for 3 days, 7 days, 21 days or 40 days.

The important thing is to be *led by the voice of The Holy Spirit*. (It is always wise to have a physician oversee fasts for the purpose of keeping your health strong.)

26. The Purpose of Fasting Is Not To Destroy Your Health. It is to deprive yourself of something you love, to move the hand of God to provide something you do not have. I have fasted three days per week for many months of my ministry and life. I have discovered the importance of total focus during meal times. Rather than sit at the restaurant table with friends during a dinner, it is better to *withdraw yourself from* the company of others and focus in private prayer time *with Him*.

27. The Geographical Location For Your Assignment Can Be Revealed Following A Fast. "As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate Me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus," (Acts 13:2-4). The same Holy Spirit that revealed the city and country for their Assignment following a fast is not a respecter of persons. He will honor this Seed of love and deprivation.

Every champion of faith knows the power of prayer. Those who embrace the extra weapon of *fasting* see *increased* results beyond their imagination.

Any Movement Towards Order Creates Pleasure.

-MIKE MURDOCK



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FILING

Move Toward Order.

Any Movement Towards Order Creates Pleasure.

Establish Your Filing System. On the following pages I have listed several hundred possible topics of interest. You may want them for your own filing system. You do not have to use every one of them. You may have your own established already. I suggest that after you have selected the topic for your Master File, then you should give each topic a Number.

For instance, "Negotiation" might become number forty-three in your Master Filing Cabinet. Every time you read a magazine article relative to this subject of negotiation, simply write the number "43" on the top of the article. Tear it out and paper clip it. Stack it in a box and have one of your volunteers, or whoever gives you one day a month, to file all of your information according to the Topic Code Number.

There are many fancy ways people have tried to help me to establish my files. Ninety percent of those files went totally unused. I had no interest in the subjects, or they were too confusing. Simplify your files.

Now, suppose you have just decided on twenty-five major topics you are interested in. Go to the local office supply. Purchase twenty-five file folders. I recommend Pendaflex hanging files. Write those topics on your twenty-five folders. (I suggest you wait with assigning them a number until you are sure you are not going to add any more.) On the other hand, you might want to file them in alphabetical order.

Many preachers have one day a week when they clip and file from newsletters, newspapers, magazines and books. They take a small micro-cassette recorder, go through the books they have accumulated that week, then using dictation, they place the information from the books on the recorder which is given to a secretary later.

Do not worry about pleasing others when it comes to developing your own filing system. Find what motivates you and helps you become your best. Implement usable ideas others share. The most important thing is to keep a constant flow of fresh knowledge and information coming into your life. Developing a system gives you *instant access* to it when needed later.

Brainstorming

One of the greatest things I ever did during a difficult time in my life was to "brainstorm" each morning for thirty minutes on a selected topic. I would get up at six o'clock each morning, go over to a restaurant at six-thirty, and from six-thirty to seven with a notebook and pen in my hand I would write down everything I could possibly remember or know about a particular subject. After two years of this, it stretched my mind to incredible proportions. It made me strain and reach.

For instance, I would take the subject of angels

and look up everything from Genesis to Revelation and would write down those Scriptures and thoughts on angels. I still have a lot of fun doing this. It is a great way to turn your mind into a file cabinet of information!

Possible Word Topics

Α Abilities Abstinence Abundance Abuse Achievement Addiction Administration Adolescence Adversitv Advertisement Aging Agnosticism Alcoholism Altar Calls America Angels Anger Answers Antichrist Appraisals Archaeology Armageddon Assets Astrology Astronomy Atheism

Athletics Attitude Authority

B

Babies Bachelorhood Bankruptcy Baptism **Behavior Bestiality** Bible **Biographical** Notes Biology Birth Control Bisexuality Bitterness Blessings Blood of Christ **Book Writing** Buddhism Budgeting Building Proposals **Bylaws**

С Calvary Calvinism Character Catalogs Charge Accounts Childbirth Christianity Christmas Clothing Cocaine Colleges Commitment Communication Communion Communism Companionship Complaints Computers Consultants Contributions Cooking Copyrights Correspondence Cosmetics Coupons

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Creations Creativity Credit Cards Crime Crisis Criticism Cross

D

Dating Decision-Making Delinquency Democratic Party Depression Daily Devotionals Dictation Divorce Doctor

E

Easter Education Eternity Evangelism Evolution Excellence Exercise Exorcism Expenses

F Facts Faith Fame Family Famous People Fashions Fasting Father's Day Federal Government Filing Finances Food Foreign Travel Foreign Missionaries Fornication Freedom Friendships Fundamentalism **Fund Raising** Funerals

G

Gambling Giving God Golf Government Graduation Grief Guidance

Η

Habits Happiness Healing Heaven Hell Heresy Heredity Heroine Herpes History Hobbies Holiness Holy Spirit Homiletics Homosexuality House Plans Humanism Humor Hygiene

Ι

Ideas Income Tax Insanity Insomnia Insurance Integration Intercessory Prayer Investment Invoices Israel

J Jealousy Jehovah Witness Jesus Jewelry Jogging Judgment Juvenile Delinquency Justification

K

Kingdom Living

L

Law Lawsuits Leadership Legends Lesbianism Literature Loans Loneliness Losing Love LSD Lucifer Lust Lyrics

M

Mafia

Magazines Mailing List Management Manuscripts Marketing Marriage Materialism Memorization Mental Health Mercy Ministry Miracles Missions Mistakes Money Moral Majority Morality Mosaic Law Mother's Dav Motivation Music

N

Narcotics Negotiation Nobel Prize Nuclear War

O Obedience Objectives Occult Offerings

Organizing

Р

Pain Parenthood Partners Passport Pastoral Care Patience Pentecostalism Persecution Philosophy Photography **Physical Fitness** Poetrv **Politics** Poverty Praise Prayer Preaching Prejudice **Premarital Sex** Price List Printing **Prison Ministry** Problems Prophecy Profit Prophets Prosperity Prostitution Protocol Psychiatry

Psychology Publicity Public School System Publishers Purity

Q

Questions and Answers Quotations

R

Radio Ministry Racism Real Estate Receipts Recreation Redemption Reformation Relationships Religions Repentance Republican Party Research Restaurants Resurrection Revelation Righteousness **Royalties**

\mathbf{S}

Satan Satanism Second Coming of Christ Seed-Faith Self-Confidence Self-Improvement Sermon Building Sex Sickness Sin Singing Social Security Song Writing Sorrow Stress Success Suffering Superstition

Т

Taxes Teaching Technology Teenagers Telephone Television Ministry Testimonies Theology Time-Management Time Saving Techniques Tragedies Tragedies Travel Travel Agency

V

Vacations Vaccination Venereal Disease Video Cassette Ministry Visualization Vitamins Volunteers

W

Wealth Weddings Winning Wisdom Witchcraft Witnessing Worship



FINANCES

Your Success Matters To God.

I am very excited about sharing this section on finances with you. I believe this is one of the most important subjects in this whole book. So little is being said about understanding finances and its importance in the ministry. Satan's strategy is to make preachers feel guilty about money, and use the accusations of the unbelieving and secular world to paralyze our ability to generate finances for the Kingdom of God.

4 Facts Are Clear In The Bible

1. God Is The Source of All The Silver And Gold In The World. "The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine, saith the Lord of hosts," (Haggai 2:8).

2. God Wants You To Have Abundant Finances To Accomplish His Will And Plans In Your Life. "But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God: for it is He that giveth thee power to get wealth, that He may establish His covenant which He sware unto thy fathers, as it is this day," (Deuteronomy 8:18).

3. God Wants You To Provide For Your Family And Their Needs. "But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel," (1 Timothy 5:8).

4. The Master Key To Financial Blessing Is The Tithe And Offerings That Are Seeded Into His Work For A Desired Harvest. "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in Mine house, and prove Me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of Heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the Lord of hosts," (Malachi 3:10-11).

Oh, I am so thankful for God's laws of Supply and Provision. The Scriptures abound with beautiful promises of God's blessing upon the work of our hands and our finances. As a minister, one of the most important subjects you must understand is finances.

Traditional Training

My father is a minister. He has pastored for more than 40 years. I was raised in a family of 7 children. Strict standards were upheld, especially in the areas of dress and recreation. The "presence of God" was a common feeling and atmosphere in my home. My father is what I call a true intercessor. I was very accustomed to him praying 6, 8 or even 10 hours each day. It was normal in our home. We had two family altars each day, every morning and every night. I memorized a Scripture verse each morning and every night, thanks to a persistent mother.

My parents always possessed that remarkable tenacity and obsession to please God and walk in the ways of God. Financially, they were extremely careful to stretch their dollars and were very good stewards of what they had. However, I do not recall any visiting ministers ever teaching much about real financial "prosperity" or abundance.

I think the general attitude was that finances were a sovereign act of God in your life. If you were blessed financially, it was because He "could trust you with it." If you were poor, it was because He "could not trust you with it." The responsibility of financial provision seemed to rest on God. I think that attitude *still prevails* a lot today, especially among ministers who fear disapproval and criticism for even mentioning money in the pulpit.

Consequently, my family never had a great abundance of finances. I do not remember having nice annual vacations, nor eating in elegant restaurants, nor enjoying a wardrobe of beautiful clothes. Our house was always adequate but definitely not luxurious. I may have a faulty memory, but the birthday I remember the most in my 18 years at home was when I was 10 years old. My mother gave me two books on that occasion. One was *The Sinking of the Titanic* and the second was *Treasure Island*.

The next party I remember was when I was 18 years old. It was my graduation. I was preparing to go to Bible college.

I remember having intense desires for a horse, a gun and a motorcycle. I remember pleading for a football helmet, shoulder pads and a uniform. I desperately begged to join the Boy Scouts, but we could not afford to buy a uniform. I do not recall receiving any of these things during my entire childhood of growing up. Mother was unable to even buy normal lunch sacks for our school lunches. Instead, we were forced to bring our little sandwich in the bottom of the huge paper sacks left over from her grocery shopping.

My mind is full of memories of lack. I suppose one of my biggest memories is wishing for a huge box of 48 crayons like everyone else had in school. I had a box of 24. In fact, that is the biggest box of crayons I remember having during my childhood years at school. This may not seem important to you today, but these are huge mountains in my mind. So, you can see why I am not exactly turned on to those who preach the "poverty message" instead of God's blessing and abundance.

God blessed in other ways. My mother and father have always been two great assets in my ministry. I still continue to phone my father each morning and have prayer with him. My parents helped me develop music abilities, and the list of their contributions to me is endless. The point I want to make is in regard to finances. Prayer and intercession are not necessarily the keys to financial abundance. Hard work never brought my father financial abundance. He was an incredibly hard worker, pioneering 7 churches alone. Strict standards of "holiness" did not generate great financial blessings from God. That is what greatly concerns me today.

Satan is a master of blinding us to the truth. He is a robber. A depriver. A thief. A distorter of facts. He fears a *prosperous* and *financially successful minister* of the gospel. His treatment of Job proves his hatred of financial abundance.

One young minister told me once, "I think satan is the one who wants us to have wealth." I replied, "Then why did he not double Job's salary?" No, my dear friend, if money could make you backslide, satan would back up a semi-truck to your house tomorrow morning and dump it all over your front lawn.

Your Heavenly Father is the *giver* of wealth. He is the *Source* of your financial supply. Moreover, He *enjoys* giving to His children.

"No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly," (Psalm 84:11).

"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning," (James 1:17).

You see, the subjects of prosperity, money and finances were minimized, muted and almost ignored. Consequently, my knowledge of it was limited.

I left home and went to Bible college at the age of 18 because of a dear woman. Sister Maxwell gave my mother a few dollars to begin a savings account for my college training. After 3 semesters in Bible college, where I sustained myself through the sale of little 45 RPM records, I had to leave. I felt like God wanted me to go into full-time evangelism at the age of 19. (It was rather accentuated by the fact that I could not pay my Bible college bills. I wonder now if God really spoke to me to leave, or if it was my debts that I owed!)

As I look back, I see a parade of disappointments in my personal life, broken promises and high hopes were crushed. As a young boy, I would get so excited and enthusiastic when people would talk and make promises, I could hardly stand it. In fact, I could hardly breathe when I got so motivated. Yet, over and over again I was disappointed. To this day, I have unusual anger over broken promises. You may have had the same experience through your childhood. You too may be asking this question right now, "Well, what does this have to do with my finances?" Everything. Because we never rise above our information. Our background can set the thermostat for tomorrow's income.

You cannot change what happens to you until you change what you know. I was very tempted to shrink my big dreams for the work of God, because I realized one day that I could not accomplish them without an abundance of finances. Since I had not been taught, I began to feel a sense of futility. Hopelessness. I did not want to face the struggle.

Then came the revelation of *Seed-Faith*, thanks to a man named Oral Roberts.

No, it did not come through a Bible college professor, nor my religious background. It was first introduced into my thinking and spirit through his book entitled, *The Miracle of Seed Faith*. Actually, I rejected the teaching when I first heard it. Basically, it is the teaching that when you desire a specific Harvest, you can plant a Seed in God's work as a step of faith toward it. It sounded to me a little too much like "trying to buy God," or "paying for a miracle." It did not register with me for many years, but I will get into that a little later. Right now, I want to talk a little more about the importance of money.

The Importance of Money In Your Ministry

I realize this may sound simplistic, and even presumptuous on my part to attempt to reiterate the importance, influence and power of money. You would be amazed at how many ministers completely ignore this in their ministry. In fact, one young preacher told me, "I never think about money." (To me, this was spoken proof that he was either a fool or a liar!! Maybe both!!) That is like a pianist never thinking about the piano that he plays. Or the contractor who never thinks about his tools!

You see, that is what money is: *a tool*; to help create your dreams, your goals and achieve your life Money buys the books bringing you purpose. information, the vehicles taking you where you need to go, the airline tickets taking you to preach the gospel around the world. Money publishes the books, brochures and newsletters to help create the presence of Jesus. Money purchases television and radio air time which multiplies to build the office building where you house your ministry, to build the church where you mend broken families and heal sick and afflicted bodies through your ministry. It takes money to buy clothing, housing and to meet the needs of your family who deserve it. Money prints Bibles for the people in Europe, China and around the world. Money feeds starving Ethiopians.

Your Biggest Ideas Cannot Succeed Without Money. Your greatest dreams will never be realized without money. You will not be able to accomplish the will of God in your life without sufficient finances.

I will never forget Mark Buntain. It was my first trip to Calcutta, India. Within hours from our introduction, he asked me for a donation of \$25,000 to his ministry! At that time, this was about 6 months of my income! I could have felt insulted. I was not, because I realized that money was his tool to feed the starving children of India, to build the great hospital and to carry out God's command for his life. He was not ashamed to ask. He did not fear money. He saw it as *a tool*. He knew he could never fulfill his calling without money.

You can fight it; criticize it; discuss it; reject it. But if you really want to accomplish something significant for God, you will come back to this section, and read it over again, and again, and again. Because this is one part of this book satan fears, possibly more than any other.

You see, money in your hands, as a minister, is a *threat* to satan. It is explosive! *If satan can steal your finances, he can paralyze your dreams.* He did it to Job. He will do it to you...*if you let him.*

Think About These Ministries

Think for a moment of the Salvation Army, Billy Graham, Oral Roberts, Robert Schuller. Try to imagine Billy Graham's ministry without money to minister in the huge crusades or through television. Try to imagine America without Oral Roberts University.

Ask missionaries what their ministry would be like without ministries that raise funds in their behalf. I wonder how many marriages would have been destroyed or how many alcoholics would still be dying in the pits of their depression without ministers that are willing to stand up and ask people to assist them in their dreams. No, poverty will not keep you from dreaming your dream, but it will most assuredly *keep you from achieving it*.

What About You?

The average preacher rarely thinks about all of this. He thinks about money to buy his books, to get a new car, to pay his college debt, or to get his new furniture for his new house. He rarely realizes that his attitude toward his personal finances affects his attitude toward his ministry finances. You cannot separate the two.

7 Master Keys To Finances For Your Ministry

1. Become Informed. I asked a very successful Dallas businessman, "What is the biggest and most important secret in being a success in business?" His reply, "Become informed."

Information is powerful.

Information Births Confidence.

"My people are destroyed for a lack of knowledge," (Hosea 4:6).

So your first step is to become knowledgeable in what the Bible teaches about financial prosperity. There are several men who God has greatly used in this subject. I suggest a copy of a book by Oral Roberts, *The Miracle of Seed-Faith*, or *God's Laws of Success* by Robert Tilton. Also, Jerry Savelle has written an excellent book, *Godly Wisdom for Prosperity*. There are godly men who have written well on other subjects but poorly in the area of finances. When you get a toothache, you do not call your lawyer. When you get a lawsuit, you do not consult your dentist. When you have a need in your life, go to the men whom God is using to minister to that particular need, especially in regard to finances. 2. Carefully Observe Men And Women Who Are Being Greatly Used of God Today. Listen to what they say. Allow your heart to feel their burden, their dream, their drive. (I will later discuss with you the three areas of financial support: Need-Consciousness, Deed-Consciousness and Seed-Consciousness.) You will discover that every great ministry carries a different anointing which generates partnerships with their ministry.

3. Respect And Appreciate Your Present Finances That God Is Providing. This simply means do not waste it. Do not throw it away. Do not misspend your present income.

4. Establish A Financial Budget That Proves Your Good Stewardship. The purpose of a budget is to *plan the direction* of your spending, not limit the pursuit of your dream.

Draw up a clear-cut, defined, specific budget. Know where your dollars are going. Most financial consultants will encourage you to live on 70 percent of your income. Set aside 10 percent for additional taxes, 10 percent in a permanent savings account, and another 10 percent for investments. Wise ministers are doing this these days.

Remind yourself that *your money will magnify only what you really are.* If you are a gambler with \$10, you will gamble the \$10. If you had \$100, you would gamble the \$100. If you are an investor with \$10, you would invest the \$10. If you had \$100 you would invest the \$100. One of the most difficult things I have had to learn in my ministry is that what I do with a dollar bill is the same as what I would do with \$100 later on. If I am wasteful of a 10 dollar bill, my nature will not necessarily change when \$100 enters my wallet. **5.** Establish Specific Goals. Establish a deadline for the accomplishment of each one. Decide what each project will cost. Write out a description of the purpose of each project, and what good it will generate for others. Ask yourself if anyone else has already done it. Be sure it is a worthy project, or you will not continue to be motivated toward it.

6. Ask God To Give You A True Seed-Faith Heart. There is a difference between being tight in your spending and being tight in your giving. I have known men who could not coordinate the two elements in their finances. Their careful stewardship in spending carried over to their giving. They never learned to separate wise purchases and a generous, giving heart.

What do I mean by a *Seed-Faith heart?* Ask God to show you the ways and methods which you can begin to sow your life into the lives of others; how to give your time, your love, your finances, your suggestions and your motivation to those around you.

Get Excited About Providing Others 7. With An Opportunity To Sow Their Seeds Into The Work of God. I am astounded at preachers who will spend thirty hours on sermons, yet ignore the presentation of the offerings! The people need encourage*ment*. They need your *motivation*. They need to learn how to sow their own Seeds with expectation of a Harvest from their Provider. Where will they get this motivation? Not from the world. Not from the average pulpit. They will only receive inspiration from another giving heart who has tasted the joy of Seed-Faith. As you receive the offerings of your people, do it with joy. Do it with *excitement*. Show them how their giving can help them get their own needs met. (I will talk a little more about this later.)

Learning How To Spend Your Money Productively

It is *impossible* to live your life, manage your church and ministry, without spending money. There are needs, necessities and important purchases to be made. It is important that you establish a budget with a detailed list of the actual necessities of your life, your automobile, your home, insurance, food, clothing, utilities, etc.

When I attended a financial seminar by Don Spear (I suggest you do the same when one is held in your area), he provided a list of questions I found to be important in consideration of each purchase. Consider these 10 guidelines carefully throughout your ministry.

10 Guidelines For Spending Wisely

- 1. Do I Really Need It?
- 2. Is The Price Right?
- 3. Is This The Right Time To Buy?
- 4. Is There A Substitute For This?
- 5. Is There Any Major Disadvantage?
- 6. Have I Researched The Item?
- 7. Will Its Value Increase?
- 8. Does It Complement My Christian Testimony?
- 9. Will It Contribute To Our Unity?

10. Does It Require Expensive Upkeep?

These are powerful questions. Had I had this checklist for determining my expenditures over the years, I would have multiplied my financial worth beyond what it is today. That is why I suggest you create a detailed goal list and plan for your future financial purchases.

I recently saw a billboard, "Pre-planning prevents emotional overspending." That has been etched indelibly in my mind: it is true, so powerful, so lifechanging.

Most people make foolish purchases when they are depressed, fatigued, weary of monotony and when they are bored. More than one preacher has purchased a new desk thinking it will keep him motivated in his private studies. Remember this easy 3-step formula when you buy:

- 1. Do I Need It?
- 2. Can I Afford It?
- 3. Is It Really A Bargain?

One of the burdens of associating with successful people is their influence on your buying habits. Each of us are easily influenced. It is just a matter who we want to provide that influence. God made us to be easily affected by those things around us. This is a reason why it is important to qualify everyone for access to your life.

Be careful as your ministry upgrades and you become more exposed to experienced and financially secure ministers that you do not try to equal their purchases, and develop the buying habits they may be qualified to fulfill. This will be burdensome on the minister's wife, too...tremendously so. If you are on a very limited budget at this time, do not go shopping with preachers who spend thousands of dollars in the high fashion, exclusive stores. It is damaging to your emotions, your mind and totally unnecessary.

My Thoughts On Investing

I have made some real mistakes in this over the years, especially along the lines of oil wells and "get rich quick" plans. I would suggest that you be very careful until you can afford the losses and risks.

I consider any compact disc that I produce, or books that I write, *an Investment*.

I consider my Seed-sowing, and giving to the work of God *an Investment*.

I consider purchasing a home or land, a good Investment.

Do you want to invest? Get qualified counsel.

An extra word here about investments: *Stay with what you know.* Do not invest in anything you are not willing to learn about. This is one of the mistakes I made some time ago. A friend of mine told me about an investment. Instead of giving my time and energy in understanding it, I trusted his word. It not only soiled a beautiful friendship, but I lost my money!

Multi-Level Marketing Investments

Let me say, that I have tried about every multilevel marketing idea imaginable. I honestly believe that multi-level marketing is one of the greatest ideas and concepts ever developed. I really do. There are some beautiful friends of mine involved with these companies, too.

I guess every preacher has a need for financial security. It is only normal to want to find the method which generates that security. However, I want to tell you from my heart, please be careful. Let me explain. When someone tells you that you can make \$100,000 a year, on two hours a week (I was told this), you better recheck his credibility. It takes time and effort to build anything worthwhile; a marriage, a ministry or a business. If I could start my ministry over today, I would give *total concentration to success in the ministry*.

Many people never achieve great success because they are over-diversified. Their interests are scattered. They become diluted by having too many goals, and going in too many different directions.

Some years ago, when I started to get involved in a business, The Holy Spirit spoke to my heart and said, "If you will give Me *total concentration, your hours*, and *total focus*, I will give you ideas that will generate your finances. Your ideas will be of Me, and they will build the ministry, and be a part of the ministry." I rejected it, quite frankly, because I had such varied interests. I wanted to get involved in everything great that was going around.

Consequently, I lost thousands of dollars, and wasted thousands of unproductive hours. Once again The Holy Spirit had to remind me, "What did I tell you several years ago?"

Now, I am back in full obedience, doing what God has really called me to do. What is good for your brother-in-law is not necessarily God's calling for you. I am not saying this is God's will for every man, but I have seen some mighty good ministries fall apart in their pursuit of a business opportunity. I have made some mistakes in this area—*big mistakes*. Nobody was there to explain *focus* and *concentration* to me. I am convinced that you cannot fulfill your full potential in God's work without absolute focus and concentration on it.

4 Ways To Unlock Financial Ideas

1. Talk To Your Present Pastor. Ask him to share the biggest ideas that God ever gave to him to increase his finances. Talk to him about his investments: land, real estate, etc. Secure a list of books which have helped him financially.

2. Converse Often With Successful Businessmen And Women. Ask them specific questions. Every person has a story to tell. Let them tell it to you.

Ask them questions such as: What are the greatest principles you have ever learned about money? What was the biggest mistake you ever made in your finances? What do you think is the biggest waste of money? What was the most unwise purchase you ever made with your money? What would you do differently in your finances if you could start over again? If you were in my present financial condition, what would be the best steps I could take to improve my financial worth?

3. Secure The Assistance of An Established Financial Consultant In Your Area. Talk to businessmen and others you know. Check the telephone book and get friends involved in looking with you into your financial future. It will cost a little at first. You may make a mistake or two, but you need the knowledge of someone who researches, studies and concentrates on helping people manage their money.

4. Start Building Your Financial Library. Go through your local bookstore in the mall. When you find a book that contains information you do not know, buy it, study it.

Overcoming Financial Prejudices

It is unfortunate that some of us were reared with various prejudices. Racism is a terrible and tragic thing. Religious prejudice is sad. Yet, every one of us have felt the sting of our personal prejudices as we move progressively towards the dreams and goals God has for our ministry. A person must be willing to put certain things behind them if they are to step ahead in their work for God.

Thousands of ministers are prejudiced against huge churches, therefore, they will never build them. Millions of ministers will never attain their highest potential, their biggest dreams, experience the ecstasy of effective and powerful ministry because of one simple, but deadly obstacle—financial prejudice!

Can I be direct with you? I almost did not overcome it myself! In fact, I became very angry when two men sat in my home several years ago discussing with me my future, the finances it required and how to generate support from others for it. I became angry; I stood defiantly, and declared heatedly, "I will never ask for money. God knows what I need and He will supply it as I pray, intercede and give myself to the ministry." I did not see at the time that I had neutralized the Scripture, Matthew 7:7, "Ask, and it shall be given you: seek, and ye shall find: knock, and it shall be opened unto you."

Yes, I needed more finances. True, years had passed and the finances had not surfaced, but I allowed my pride and childhood prejudices to steal my dream, my goals and my progress. Oh, I pray to God as I write these words to you that you will not be as foolish as I have been in many years of my own ministry. Are you afraid of a church member's angry response when you spend extra moments during the offering to motivate those who struggle, to unlock their faith with their Seed-Faith giving? Do not be.

Are your fearful of the sinner who is visiting your church? Does he intimidate you? Does his coldness sitting on your pew indirectly control and limit your own dream in achieving more for God?

The pastor who taught you throughout your life, is he a true example of what you want to accomplish in your own ministry? What do you want to do with your life?

What are your invisible dreams which keep you awake at night? What mission field is beckoning you? Will you accomplish these incredible dreams without finances, without money, without partners? If so, you will probably be the first.

So, how will you overcome these prejudices? A step at a time. Little by little. At least, that is the way I overcame many of my prejudices.

As you associate with greatness, as you converse with remarkable achievers of your generation, as you read their books and listen to them preach, your heart will begin to burn. It will burn out the pride. It will burn out the prejudice. The fire of The Holy Spirit will cleanse your mind of guilt, fear, condemnation; and the *dream* that God planted within you will *burn higher* than the criticism of others. It will *motivate* you, *inspire* you, *activate* you, to rise up and with victory, place your foot on the head of the Snake of Prejudice, and once and forever crush it beneath your feet. As you reach for the tools, God has arranged for you to *set men free* and *deliver mankind*.



Protect Your Focus.

The Only Reason Men Fail Is Broken Focus.

While traveling around the world for more than forty years and speaking to more than 17,000 audiences in over 100 countries, I have listened to the details of the personal battles and conflicts of many hurting people. As I have listened, I have learned a very valuable truth: An important goal of satan is to simply break the focus of God's people off of their Assignments.

Focus is anything that consumes your time, energy, finances and attention. So, if satan can blur the focus of your Assignment, he can master you. If he can master you, he can bring pain to the heart of God, Who is his only true enemy.

How important is your focus?

Listen to The Word of God concerning those who would tempt His people to go to another god:

"If thy brother, the son of thy mother, or thy son, or thy daughter, or the wife of thy bosom, or thy friend, which is as thine own soul, entice thee secretly, saying, Let us go and serve other gods, which thou hast not known, thou, nor thy fathers; Namely, of the gods of the people which are round about you, nigh unto thee, or far off from thee, from the one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth; Thou shalt not consent unto him, nor hearken unto him; neither shall thine eye pity him, neither shalt thou spare, neither shalt thou conceal him: But thou shalt surely kill him; thine hand shall be first upon him to put him to death, and afterwards the hand of all the people. And thou shalt stone him with stones, that he die; because he hath sought to thrust thee away from the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage," (Deuteronomy 13:6-10).

Now listen to how *Jesus* addressed *broken focus* in the New Testament:

"And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell," (Matthew 5:29-30).

Jesus encouraged *His disciples* to keep *their focus* on the kingdom of God. He assured them that their financial provisions and everything they needed would be produced through absolute focus upon Him.

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you," (Matthew 6:33).

How do you destroy someone's goal? Give him another goal. How do you destroy another's dream? You give him another dream. Why? *It fragments his focus.* It dilutes his energy. To avoid this in your Assignment, here are 12 Wisdom principles on Focus that can make a real difference in your life.

12 Wisdom Principles In Protecting Your Focus

1. Focus Determines Mastery. Anything that has the ability to *keep* your attention has mastered you. So, any significant progress toward the completion of your Assignment will require every thought, cent and hour of your life.

2. Your Focus Determines Your Energy. Think for a moment. Let us say you are sleepy, laid back on your pillows and the television is on. Then suddenly, the telephone rings. Someone in your family has just had a crisis and they are being rushed to the hospital. Do you go back to sleep? Of course not. Your focus has been changed. Suddenly, you have leaped to your feet, put your clothes on, jumped in your car and are headed to the hospital. Your new focus gave you new energy. Your focus determined your energy.

3. What You Look At The Longest Becomes The Strongest In Your Life. The Apostle Paul focused on his future: "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus," (Philippians 3:13-14).

4. Broken Focus Creates Insecurity And Instability In Everything Around You. "A double minded man is unstable in all his ways," (James 1:8).

5. Only Focused Faith Can Produce Miracles From The Hand of God. "But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord," (James 1:6-7).

6. Sight Affects Desire. What you keep looking upon, you will eventually pursue. "Mine eye affecteth mine heart," (Lamentations 3:51).

Joshua, the remarkable leader of the Israelites, wrote this instruction from God:

"Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses My servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest. This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success," (Joshua 1:7-8).

7. Focusing On The Word of God Daily Is Necessary To Complete Your Assignment Properly. God instructed the people of Israel to teach, train and mentor their children. Why? His Words. Listen to this incredible instruction:

"Therefore shall ye lay up these My words in your heart and in your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes. And ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt write them upon the door posts of thine house, and upon thy gates," (Deuteronomy 11:18-20).

8. Focusing On, Hearing And Speaking The Word of God Continuously Makes You Invincible. This is one of the reasons I keep cassettes of The Word of God in every room of my home. The first thing I do daily is turn on my player to listen to the Scriptures being read. It washes my mind, purges my heart and harnesses my focus.

"There shall no man be able to stand before you: for the Lord your God shall lay the fear of you and the dread of you upon all the land that ye shall tread upon, as he hath said unto you," (Deuteronomy 11:25).

9. Focus Has Reward. "That your days may be multiplied, and the days of your children, in the land which the Lord sware unto your fathers to give them, as the days of Heaven upon the earth. For if ye shall diligently keep all these commandments which I command you, to do them, to love the Lord your God, to walk in all His ways, and to cleave unto Him; Then will the Lord drive out all these nations from before you, and ye shall possess greater nations and mightier than yourselves. Every place whereon the soles of your feet shall tread shall be yours," (Deuteronomy 11:21-24).

10. What You Keep Seeing Determines Your Focus. "I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside; it shall not cleave to me," (Psalm 101:3).

11. Your Enemy Is Anyone Who Breaks Your Focus From A God-Given Assignment. "Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me: For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia," (2 Timothy 4:9-10).

12. Your Friend Is Anyone Who Helps Keep You Focused On The Instructions of God For Your Life. "Having confidence in thy obedience I wrote unto thee, knowing that thou wilt also do more than I say," (Philemon 1:21).

6 Keys That Will Help You Protect Your Focus

1. Recognize That Broken Focus Will Destroy Your Dreams. Distraction from your Assignment will create an unending parade of tragedies and disasters in your life.

2. Take Personal Responsibility. Be the gatekeeper of your eyes, ears and heart. Nobody else can fully protect you. You will be protected by God, as you yield yourself to Him.

3. Control The Music And Teaching That Enters Your Ears. *What You Hear Determines What You Feel.* What you hear also determines what you fear.

"And all Israel shall hear, and fear, and shall do no more any such wickedness as this is among you," (Deuteronomy 13:11).

4. Keep Continuous Praise On Your Lips And Music Throughout Your Home. I keep music playing 24 hours a day on my property and in my house. The rooms throughout my home have sound, and there is music to The Holy Spirit being sung and played every minute. I have 24 speakers on the trees in my 7 acre yard. I am determined to protect my focus.

5. Starve Wrong Friendships. Wrong friends do not feed, fuel or fertilize the total focus of your Assignment. So, let those friendships die. Samson did not have to date everyone to get his hair cut. Only one wrong person was required to destroy his future.

6. Pursue And Permit Only Those Rela-

tionships That Increase Your Focus On Your Assignment. It was late one night in southern Florida. The service had ended, and several ministers wanted to go to a restaurant. As we sat there, I listened to their conversation. I have two major interests in my life: learning and teaching. Both must take place continuously for me to have pleasure!

So, I sat there and listened as everyone discussed ball games, politics and tragedies. I kept listening for worthy Wisdom Keys that might be imparted, and for important questions that might be asked. Neither took place.

Several times I even attempted to change the direction of the conversation, but it seemed to be ignored. The Holy Spirit was not the focus, and I was too tired to force the conversation in an appropriate direction. So I quietly stood and said, "I must leave. God bless each of you." Then I left. I wish I could have that kind of courage every year of my lifetime, every day of my life.

Focus Is The Master Key To The Golden Door of Success.

Recommended Investments:

31 Facts About Wisdom (Book/B-46/32 pg) The 3 Most Important Things in Your Life (Book/B-101/240 pg) The Law of Recognition (Book/B-114/248 pg) The Holy Spirit Handbook (CD/CDS-29)

The Proof of Desire Is Pursuit.

-MIKE MURDOCK



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GOAL-SETTING

3-0-6

Why Should You Set Goals?

You should set goals because your happiness is affected by your sense of progress. It greatly determines your sense of self-worth. That is why God gives us the desire to achieve, to please God and to accomplish His will in our lives.

14 Power Keys For Setting Your Ministry Goals

1. You Must Truly Respect Your Dreams And Goals. The proof is the time and effort you are willing to put into pursuit of your dreams and goals.

2. You Must Truly Have An Intense Burning Desire To Attain Your Goals. The Proof of Your Desire Is Your Pursuit.

I often tell the story of how much I loved the saxophone for many years. One day I made the statement that I would give anything if I could play the saxophone. Suddenly within me I heard, "Then take lessons." "I do not want to," I replied. "Then shut up!"

People rarely reach for what they *need*, they *always* reach for what they *truly desire*. If I can find out where you spend your time and what you invest your money toward, I can determine your true desire.

3. Your Goals Must Begin To Dominate

Your Imagination. You must think about those goals all the time. That dream must become foremost in your heart. If God has given you a true goal and a genuine dream, it will pop up in conversation; it will be something bigger than you. It will be something too big to keep quiet about.

4. You Must Have A Clear-Cut Definite Picture of Your Goals. In other words, it cannot be something that is vague, such as: "I want to be a better Christian," or "I would like to be happier." Those are too vague. They do not have a definite measuring capability. However, if you say I will lose 20 pounds because I will feel better. That is an "achievable goal."

5. You Will Never Attain A Significant Dream Without Using Your Faith. You have got to use your faith in God and faith in yourself and faith in others to help you.

6. The Most Important Ingredient In Achieving Your God-Given Dream Is Obedience To The Will of God. I cannot over-emphasize this about your ministry. Instant response to the voice of The Holy Spirit is worth more than everything else you will ever accomplish in your life.

Obedience is the gate to blessing. I do not know what God is asking you to do in your ministry, but be swift to do it. Always remember, *God Will Never Advance Your Instructions Beyond Your Last Act of Disobedience.*

7. Do Not Be Afraid To Write Your Goals Down.

8. Do Not Be Intimidated To "Live Up" To Your Goals. They are not etched in concrete. They are today's feelings and emotions. You will change your goals often, continuously and that is all right, too! You are simply writing down what your desires are today. (You will find that something which excites you at twenty years of age means nothing to you at thirty. That is okay, too.

I think one of the biggest hindrances I have had in my ministry is the fear of writing a list of my goals; and later on, decide I do not want them, then it is "too late," and I feel I must go ahead and pursue them or I have failed.)

9. Have Fun Setting And Achieving Your Goals. Also, have fun changing them. As you upgrade your information and knowledge, you will change your perception of what pleases you.

Many years ago I thought I wanted to learn foreign languages. Later it did not seem that important any more. It is not that they are unimportant, but different goals have produced a different priority for me right now.

I think you need to upgrade your goals at least every 90 days. Review them. See what you have accomplished, and why you have not pursued other goals. Be willing to let go of a dream or goal which no longer excites you. God does not expect you to pursue an unexciting dream!

10. Always Remember To Establish A Deadline For Every Goal And Dream You Have— A Date, A Time And A Place.

The late Mary Kay Ash of Mary Kay Cosmetics shared her practice of writing down a list of 6 things in the order of their priority and importance. She encouraged her people to avoid writing down more than 6 things for this reason. I will use this illustration as an example. As a minister, you write down on a sheet of paper things you want to do today—a list of 20 tasks. Suppose you only accomplish 10 of those items on your list. Do you feel great progress? No, because your mind has focused on your unfinished projects that day. Instead of feeling fulfilled through the completion of 10 items, you feel unfulfilled because you really did not complete your goal list of 20. What should you do?

11. Write Down The 6 Most Important Things To Accomplish And Complete Each Day. After you have finished them, add more to your list as you can accomplish them. Do not write down what you would like to do or what you think you can complete that day. Write down only those projects which you know without a doubt you can complete that day. That way, each day you reinforce the habit of completing your daily goals. This creates the sense of *momentum* and sense of *success* so necessary in your life. Instead of having daily unfulfillment, you experience daily *satisfaction*.

12. Target On Short-Range Goals And Complete Them. Such as: (1) Reading 3 books this week; (2) Losing 5 pounds during one month; (3) Making those 3 telephone calls to other ministers. (Too many preachers live toward something big, vague and distant. Set up a "Domino Effect" of several mini-goals.)

13. Do Not Overdose Yourself With Unrealistic Deadlines. J. Paul Getty once said he had seen as many people fail from attempting too many goals at the same time as attempting too little.

14. Set Up Your Personal "Dreams And Goals Notebook." One of the ways you can encourage

yourself is by clipping pictures and placing them in your goal-setting book. (You may call that notebook your Dream Book.)

Do you want to travel? Then place pictures of where you want to go. Most anything you can maintain your motivation toward is achievable. The biggest challenge and difficulty in all of your accomplishments is to maintain your motivation for your goals.

It is interesting what Jesus had to say about setting goals, and about planning your future. "For which of you intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest haply after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, Saying, This man began to build and was not able to finish. Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand?" (Luke 14:28-31).

According to one recent survey, only 3 percent of the people in America ever write down goals. It is very important that you have a clear sense of direction of what you want to achieve at this time in your life.

My Ministry Lifetime Goals

At the top of a sheet of paper write these words: My Ministry Goals. For 5 minutes act as if God has handed you a miracle pen and anything you write down will take place during your ministry. Write down anything you want to become, do and have. It can be a physical goal, a financial goal, an educational goal...but as much as possible focus on your ministry goals. God is a goal-setter. You need to be a goal-setter.

1. Assignment. You have to believe you are assigned. If you are persuaded that the goals you set are part of your Assignment on earth...something God wants you to do. Something God has ordained you to do...it will give you endurance ability.

2. Circle of Counsel. Who is in your Circle of Counsel to help you achieve your goal? There is safety in a multitude of counselors. Somebody sees something you do not see. Somebody knows something you do not know. There should be at least 7 in your Circle of Counsel. Discuss your problems, your future, your fears with them. They may not always be right, but you need someone to tell you what you are not seeing.

3. Deadlines. Set achievable deadlines on your goals. When you set a deadline, you rally all the creativity in you. You will be amazed at what you can get done if you set specific deadlines. Set goals that are reasonable so you can taste victory. Your goal has to be measurable...it has to be something you can measure.

4. Faith. Your goal has to inspire your faith because God will not get involved with anything that does not require faith. God is only activated by faith... expectation. Get a goal big enough for God to get involved with. God will not participate in something that man can do alone.

5. People. Who are the people your goal will require? Who is mentoring you on your goal? Who has done what you want to do? You will only get the answers to the questions you ask. Sit at the feet of those who have accomplished what you want to do.

6. Visualize. Something has to be seeable before it is believable...then it is achievable. Have a Dream Wall where you write down and place pictures of

things you really want to become, do and have. You can only do something you see.

The second wall is Ideas. Collect ideas... something that is a potential.

The third wall is a Love Wall. Put letters of people that love you. People that believe in you and who have been blessed by you.

Then you need a Victory Wall of what you have completed. You want to savor and literally wallow in victories...do not race away from a victory too quickly.

7. Write Out Your Goals. Write out your goal exactly as you see it...one year from now, 5 years from now, 20 years from now. What do you want to see happen? Successful people planned their success.

Your Ministry Goals

Each of us in the ministry wants to accomplish significant achievements for God: book writing, the mission field, music or a congregation of ten thousand. Whatever your dreams are, whatever your goals, the most powerful element in great accomplishment is writing out a list of specific achievable goals. (I suggest for more information you listen to my audio series, "How To Stay Motivated To Achieve Your Dream.")

How Do You Set Your Goals?

I have included on the next several pages, a place to write down the goals and dreams which excite you the most.

The first page contains "Your Lifetime Dreams and Goals." Take a few moments and fill out these pages. Would you do that right now? Then, I will talk to you more about them. Never set a goal which you feel incapable of achieving. Work with what you feel you are capable of accomplishing. Now. Sure, you may have a long-range goal which you do not really feel capable of achieving, but target your immediate energy on something that is reasonable and achievable.

Establish a mental reward for working toward that goal. God created us to be motivated by the reward system.

Your mother and father's desires for you will never be enough to sustain your motivation. Your wife's desire and dream for you will not help you. You must pursue those dreams and goals which you really believe are *God-inspired*, *God-intended* and then utilize your gifts, abilities and talents.

Your Lifetime Dreams And Goals

Simply write down everything you would like to become, do, or have during your whole lifetime. Preach in Africa? Build a church? Study Spanish? Build a Bible college? Pastor a church of 2,000? Buy your own home? Build an office complex? Write a book? Write a song? Complete a recording project? Train your ministers? Raise a million dollars for your ministry? Establish a television station? Establish a daily radio broadcast? Publish your Bible notes? Accumulate a library of 5,000 books? Finish Bible college?

What are your goals? Write them down. Next to each of these goals, write down the time frame in which you would like to achieve it. You really do not have a "motivating goal" until a deadline has been established.

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Your One-Year Goals

What do you really intend to accomplish in the next 12 months with your life and ministry? Read onehundred books? Learn a foreign language? Complete your first year in Bible college?

Write down on this page everything you would like to accomplish in the next 12 months. Everything. Remember, establish a deadline for completing each task.

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Your 30-Day Goals

Write down the actual tasks and goals that you want to complete within the next 30 days. Books you want to read, people you need to contact, telephone calls you need to make, whatever you really want to accomplish.

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5 Wisdom Keys To Remember

1. Your Goals Force Every Adversary To Express Their Opposition To You.

2. Those Who Disagree With Your Goals Will Usually Disagree With Your Decisions.

3. Your Pain Decides Your Goals.

4. Those Without Your Pain Never Understand Your Goals.

5. Your Goals Allow Your Friends To Confirm Their Loyalty.

7 Keys To Achieving Your Ministry Dreams And Goals

1. Goals Help You Clarify Your Distinction From Others. It is important to identify your differences. Self-confidence will come through the embracing of your differences. Your Significance Is Not In Your Similarity To Another, But In Your Point of Difference From Another.

2. Goals Help You Stay Focused In The Midst of The Whirlpool of Disapproval. Use disapproval as a School of Wisdom to extract the hidden secrets of adversity. Use adversity to increase caution and sensitivity to accuracy. *The Reward of Pain Is The Willingness To Listen*.

3. Goals Help You Identify Who You Can Minister To And Who You Can Minister Through. Discern unfaithful people quickly. Make them a point of intercession, not a confidante. When God Wants To Bless You, He Brings A Person Into Your Life. When God Wants To Protect You, He Removes A Person From Your Life. 4. Goals Decide Your Energy. You decide your energy when you focus on the ideas in your mind. Successful Men Do Daily What Unsuccessful Men Do Occasionally.

5. Goals Expose Your Enemies. Goals force your adversaries to reveal their opposition to you. You cannot prepare for warfare until you know your enemy. *Anything Good Is Hated By Everything Evil.*

6. Goals Force Your Friends To Prove Their Loyalty To You. Goals reveal those who have passion for your ministry. Qualify the soil around you. Do not waste your energy on those who lack passion for your ministry. *Go Where You Are Celebrated Instead of Where You Are Tolerated.*

7. Goals Qualify Others For Access To You. Goals decide who belongs close to you and who belongs away from you. Those who honor the same protocol you live under are those who are connected to you. Access those who share your goals, want great plans, think big and out-think their present. Access Is First A Gift, Then A Test, Then A Reward.

Habits Are Stronger Than Desire.

-MIKE MURDOCK



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HABITS

Great Men Simply Have Great Habits.

A well-known billionaire said, "I arrive at my office at 7:00 a.m. It is a habit." Recently a best selling novelist who has sold over one million books said, "I get up at the same time every morning. I start writing at 8:00 a.m. and I quit at 4:00 each afternoon. I do it every day. It is a habit."

Habit Is A Gift From God. It simply means anything you do twice becomes easier. It is the Creator's key in helping you succeed.

Jesus stayed busy. He traveled. He prayed for the sick. He taught and ministered. He supervised His disciples. He spoke to large crowds. However, He had an important custom and habit. "And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up: and, as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read," (Luke 4:16).

Habits Are Stronger Than Desires. Look in the eyes of a drug addict and you will know that. Look in the eyes of an alcoholic that wishes he did not succumb to the bottle, but his habit has taken over.

Habit is a good word. Discipline is a good word, but they are two distinct and different things.

The purpose of discipline is to birth a habit. It takes 30 days to birth a habit. You have to do

something 30 consecutive days at the same time to birth a habit. Some of you are going through life trying to be disciplined, and you cannot. Discipline only needs to be 21 to 30 days. Then you birth a habit, and then a habit takes over.

Everything you are doing today is becoming a *habit*. Look at the loose change on your dresser. Where did you place it? You have probably placed it there every morning or night.

Look at your bed. If it has stayed unmade today, you probably left it that way yesterday. If you make it this morning...you will probably make it tomorrow morning.

What you do *first* every morning...is habitual.

Who did you telephone first this morning? It is probably who you think about calling first... every morning.

Everything in your life is a habit.

If you ate breakfast this morning...it is probably a habitual thing you do every morning.

What you read first every day...is probably what you read first every morning.

If you do something different every single morning...you may think you do not have a habit...but, your habit is doing the first thing "that crosses your mind."

Whatever you put off this morning...is probably something you put off every morning.

Where did you lay your clothes after removing them last night? Probably the same place you always do!

I could not find my microcassette this morning.

I looked around at several places...my briefcase,

etc.

As I glanced in my closet, I noticed it on top of some socks in a drawer. Had I broken a habit? Not really. You see, one of my habits is to lay whatever is in my hand close to me when I am doing another task. When I was hanging up some clothes, I simply laid my microcassette there...the habit of "convenience"...was stronger than the habit of placing it back in my briefcase or pocket.

One habit will usually override another habit...in certain situations.

Your habits are creating your future...problems or pleasures. Whatever you are doing today...habitually... is creating a marvelous pleasure in your future...or a problem.

8 Daily Habits of The Uncommon Minister

1. The Habit of Rest. When you are rested, you assess life totally differently and accurately.

- ▶ You will assess your friends accurately.
- ▶ You will assess your enemies accurately.
- ▶ You will address others appropriately.
- ▶ You will plan logically.

Tired Eyes Rarely See A Bright Future. When Fatigue Walks In, Faith Walks Out.

2. The Habit of An Uncommon Prayer Life. Uncommon People Do Daily What Common People Only Do Occasionally. Daniel prayed 3 times a day. "Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime," (Daniel 6:10). The psalmist prayed 7 times daily. "Seven times a day do I praise Thee because of thy righteous judgments," (Psalm 119:164).

Have a place to meet with The Holy Spirit. Pray in The Spirit for one hour a day...when you walk or whenever.

Wrap up every telephone conversation with a prayer about The Holy Spirit.

Include something about The Holy Spirit in every letter that you write.

Memorize 365 Scriptures about The Holy Spirit from The Word of God...one a day.

Stay Spirit-Conscious.

3. Uncommon Study Habits. "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness," (2 Timothy 2:15-16).

Wisdom is hidden.

The greatest revelations you will ever discover will usually be the result of much laborious seeking. Many preachers study for the purpose of creating sermons, but you will find your ministry much more enjoyable, effective and rewarding if you will study for the purpose of becoming a wise and knowledgeable man of God.

I would like for you to consider for a few minutes your study habits and the topics that interest you. Hopefully, I can share some bits of information that you can use for many years to come.

Studying simply means to acquire knowledge. To become informed about a particular topic, you select a topic and ask yourself these basic questions.

1. What?

- 2. When?
- 3. Where?
- 4. Who?
- 5. Why?
- 6. How?

When you apply these 6 basic questions to every subject that you study, whether it be faith, prayer, the coming of Christ, finances or whatever, you will find yourself stimulated and exhilarated beyond your expectations. These questions are extremely important in your pursuit of knowledge regarding a subject.

What are your present study habits? The normal minister simply reads books that appear to be useful in his preaching. Most of us have not developed good, regular, productive study habits.

3 Study Habits of The Uncommon Minister

1. Never Be Without A Book That You Can Be Absorbing. Keep a book handy at all times. Your mind is capable of trillions of facts. Constantly wash your mind with Wisdom.

2. Keep An Appointment With The Wisdom of God...by keeping The Word of God handy and convenient. Keep a schedule for reading the Bible. Read The Word of God aloud daily. Abraham Lincoln read the newspaper aloud each morning in his office. It agitated the others, but he discovered that he remembered much more and remembered it longer than when he read silently.

3. Become An Expert On At Least One Topic In The Bible. Determine the topic that you want to become an expert on in The Word of God. It might be The Holy Spirit, healing or love. Whatever it is, become an expert.

Here are my suggestions for becoming an expert on anything in the Word:

- ► It should be a topic in which you have a continuing interest and desire.
- ► Circle 365 Scriptures from the Bible on that topic and memorize one Scripture a day.
- ► Keep those 365 Scriptures with you at all times to look over and review.
- ► Tell everyone around you what your passion is to know about in the Bible and have them to give you gifts at Christmas and your birthday...relating to that topic. For example, if you have an obsession to know about healing, go to a Christian bookstore and make a list of all the books on healing that you wish you owned.
- Make a list of the books, their cost, the publishers and the bookstore where they are available. Then, when your friends ask you what you want for your birthday or Christmas, hand them your book list and say, "This is the desired library I see in my future."

There must be a habit...something you are doing daily...about your Wisdom. Do not schedule one day a week merely just to read...make it a part of your daily habit.

4. The Habit of Order. Order means the accurate arrangement of things.

The purpose of order is to *create comfort*. When you walk into a room where there is order, you feel comfortable and do not want to leave. When you walk into a room where there is disorder, you feel discomfort and want to leave.

You must build the habit. Keep one item for one place...do not have several places for the same kind of thing in your home. For example, do not have 5 different places for pencils. Have a specific place for supplies.

Order Increases Productivity.

Order is difficult for creative people and spontaneous people. So, they often hire people to keep things in order around them while they create.

I have noticed that people who have uncommon success are meticulous and attentive to order. You go to the homes of people who have uncommon success and their shirts are in one place, ties in one place, their dresses are in order. There is order.

You say, "Well, Mike, that is just not me."

Slow your life down and do things right, and right will multiply. Only *do* what you want to increase in your life.

5. The Habit of Health Consciousness. Eat only those things that build your strength and energy.

Drink water continuously. It is the second best thing you can do each day.

Take deep breaths and breathe properly.

Walk one hour a day. It will revolutionize your life, recharge your emotions and sharpen your focus.

Every day that you move toward health, you increase your joy, your peace and your well-being.

Be *ruthless* in asserting your posture and position on health.

6. The Habit of Financial Consciousness. Wealthy men negotiate everything...because they are financially conscious.

Uncommon millionaires will argue over a penny...because of their financial consciousness.

They are not cheap.

They are not poor.

They are financially conscious.

Financial consciousness is a cultivated habit.

Many people stay poor by trying to appear wealthy. They want to look wealthy...when they are actually flat broke and have bounced checks every month. They want everybody else to think they have plenty of money.

The wealthy are continuously evaluating everything from a financial standpoint.

They refuse to pay retail...they want wholesale or less.

They will buy something used before they buy something new...so as to eliminate all the wasted expenses.

One of the wealthiest men I know refuses to buy a new car. He says, "I can buy two cars for the price of one if I will buy a two year old car." He is simply financially conscious. He is not trying to impress anybody. He simply wants to keep his money.

Sam Walton's son said about his parents, "Mother and dad just refused to ever spend any money."

They are financially conscious when they purchase their car...looking for long-range benefits.

They are financially conscious when they buy their clothes...people worth millions will find the discount and wholesale clothing stores and refuse to go to some retailers. Why? They are simply financially conscious.

7. The Habit of Managing Your Time Daily.

You have to manage your time daily. Make your time count. Your appointments should always have purpose. Do not ever set an appointment with somebody without a deadline. I will meet with you from 1:00 to 1:20. Do not say I will meet you in the afternoon or I will meet you at 1:00. Set an appointment from 1:00 to 1:20, and if they come at 10 after 1:00, they have 10 minutes left in their appointment. If you will start valuing your time, others will be educated by it. Everything you do educates others.

Managing Your Time Will Require 4 Things

1. You Must Have An Uncommon Goal. Your goals must be visual, clear and you must feel passion about your goals. Do not set a goal you do not feel passionate about. Goals are *borrowed* or *born*. You will never pursue long, a goal you have borrowed from somebody else.

2. Set Goals Small Enough To Achieve. Set a goal you can achieve today so you can create progress and a sense of momentum. You do not have to lose 40 pounds to feel good. You can lose two pounds and you will feel great.

I did not write a book today, but I dictated about 8 or 10 chapters. So, I am on my way. Progress, not just arrival, creates pleasure. Completion rarely creates joy; *progress creates joy*.

3. You Were Created For Movement. You have eternity in you. You will never arrive where you are going. You have got to *enjoy the journey* because in Him you live, you move and you have your being.

Eternity is in you. Life is in you. *The Proof of Life Is Movement*.

4. Be Meticulous About Access To You. Do not let just anybody have your telephone number. When you go to bed at night, turn your phone off so you can sleep. "Well, I am afraid I am going to miss something." When? You will not miss anything. Turn that phone off. Limit those who have access to you.

8. The Habit of Relationship Consciousness. Do something for your inner circle of relationships daily.

I call them your "Love Circle."

I called my parents every day (my father now).

I did it for my mother when she was alive.

Talk to your protégés daily.

Build on your inner circle and do something every day to nurture the worthy relationships in your life.

- Appreciate their difference from others around you. Stop making one friend be like another friend. Each is contributing a different asset.
- Assess how God is using each person in your life. Is it for conversation, motivation or inspiration?
- Lavish your love on those you love and care about.
- Create ways to express your affection and caring for them.

You Will Never Change Your Life Until You Change Something You Do Daily.

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HEALING AND HEALTH

Decisions Matter.

I never knew the value of a decision.

Several years ago, I had finished a telethon in Atlanta. I was taking a bath at 2:30 in the morning in the hotel room. I looked down and there was blood all over my chest. There was blood all over the bath. Within 10 minutes it looked like a murder scene. I said, "I must have slashed myself somewhere. What in the world is the source of this blood?" I finally located the source; blood was pouring out of both my nostrils for about 45 minutes.

I called a friend who called a registered nurse who works in our ministry. She said, "It is like a safety valve for your blood pressure." I did not understand anything about blood pressure. I did not understand anything about the silent killer, a stroke. It is really serious. *Your health is serious.* You say, "Well, God is going to take care of my body." Well, go back to the mirror. He has not, has He? *Healing* is *His role.* Your *health* is *your responsibility.*

I landed in Toronto, Canada, two days later. When I started to get off the plane, I felt something wet on my nose...blood. In a few minutes I had filled up about 30 or 40 washcloths full of blood. They could not stop it. I had flown there for a conference, and of course I could not teach, I went to the hospital. It took them two hours to finally shove something up one side of my nose. It was so painful; I cannot tell you how badly I wanted to die.

I took a 26 hour limousine ride back to Dallas. A close friend of mine and his wife, came and spent the day with me. She told me about her dad, who had a blood pressure problem. She said, "Mike, he went to a conference and left his blood pressure medicine home for a week. He had a stroke and became a vegetable." I remembered; 9 years in a wheelchair. She said, "Do not play with high blood pressure. You cannot do that." I said, "Well, I have a staff. We have 50 or so full-time. We have things to do. How am I going to meet our entire budget, keep our mission's commitments and all the things we have going?"

I cancelled 34 partner conferences, meetings, rallies and decided that I would sit at the feet of The Holy Spirit. During those several months of sitting at His feet, He gave me 3 words that *changed my life...changed my world*.

God gave me 3 words that I consider the most powerful 3 words He has ever spoken to me, and it is not "I love you." The most powerful words: *Decisions Decide Wealth*. Wealth is not a money word. It is a supply word. Wealth is having a lot of something you need or love. If you have good health, you have wealth. If you have time to be with your children and your family, you have wealth.

Hidden Keys In Unlocking Your Healing Ministry

1. "And ye shall serve the Lord your God, and He shall bless thy bread, and thy water; and I will take

sickness away from the midst of thee," (Exodus 23:25).

2. "God is not a man, that He should lie; neither the son of man, that He should repent: hath He said, and shall He not do it? or hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good," (Numbers 23:19).

3 "Wherefore it shall come to pass, if ye hearken to these judgments, and keep, and do them, that the Lord thy God shall keep unto thee the covenant and the mercy which He sware unto thy fathers: And He will love thee, and bless thee, and multiply thee: He will also bless the fruit of thy womb, and the fruit of thy land, thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep, in the land which He sware unto thy fathers to give thee. Thou shalt be blessed above all people: there shall not be male or female barren among you, or among your cattle. And the Lord will take away from thee all sickness, and will put none of the evil diseases of Egypt, which thou knowest, upon thee; but will lay them upon all them that hate thee," (Deuteronomy 7:12-15).

4. "He withdraweth not His eyes from the righteous; but with kings are they on the throne: yea, He doth establish them for ever, and they are exalted. If they obey and serve Him, they shall spend their days in prosperity, and their years in pleasures. He delivereth the poor in his affliction and openeth their ears in oppression. Who hath enjoined Him his way? or who can say, Thou hast wrought iniquity?" (Job 36:7, 11, 15, 23).

5. "Blessed is he that considereth the poor: the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble. The Lord will preserve him, and keep him alive, and he shall be blessed upon the earth: and thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies. The Lord will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing: thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness," (Psalm 41:1-3).

6. "Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless His holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits: Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; Who healeth all thy diseases; Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; Who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies," (Psalm 103:1-4).

7. "He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds," (Psalm 147:3).

8. "Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the Lord, and depart from evil. It shall be health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones," (Proverbs 3:7-8).

9. "My son, attend to My words; incline thine ear unto my sayings. Let them not depart from thine eyes; keep them in the midst of thine heart. For they are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh. Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life," (Proverbs 4:20-23).

10. "Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh? Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily," (Isaiah 58:6-8).

11. "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither His ear heavy, that it cannot hear," (Isaiah 59:1).

12. "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek: He hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound. To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God: to comfort all that mourn; To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified," (Isaiah 61:1-3).

13. "Call unto Me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not," (Jeremiah 33:3).

14. "But I will deliver thee in that day, saith the Lord; and thou shalt not be given into the hand of the men of whom thou art afraid. For I will surely deliver thee, and thou shalt not fall by the sword, but thy life shall be for a prey unto thee: because thou hast put thy trust in Me, saith the Lord," (Jeremiah 39:17-18).

15. "But unto you that fear My name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in His wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall. And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the Lord of hosts," (Malachi 4:2-3).

16. "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in Heaven give good things to them that ask Him?" (Matthew 7:7-11).

17. "When the even was come, they brought unto Him many that were possessed with devils: and He cast out the spirits with His word, and healed all that were sick: That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses," (Matthew 8:16-17).

18. "And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people," (Matthew 9:35).

19. "And when He had called unto Him His twelve disciples, He gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give," (Matthew 10:1, 8).

20. "The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them," (Matthew 11:5).

21. "And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and He healed their sick. And when the men of that place had knowledge of Him, they sent out into all that country round about, and brought unto Him all that were diseased: And besought Him that they might only touch the hem of His garment; and as many as touched were made perfectly whole," (Matthew 14:14, 35-36).

22. "And great multitudes came unto Him, having with them those that were lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and cast them down at Jesus' feet; and He healed them: Insomuch that the multitude wondered, when they saw the dumb to speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to see: and they glorified the God of Israel," (Matthew 15:30-31).

23. "Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in Heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in Heaven. Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of My Father which is in Heaven," (Matthew 18:18-19).

24. "But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible: but with God all things are possible," (Matthew 19:26).

25. "Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth," (Mark 9:23).

Stay Healthy. Energy Is A Major Ingredient For Success. Respect your body. Listen to it. A well-known doctor, famous for treating depression patients, said he had never had a depressed patient who was really physically fit.

What You Spend Your Time On Is What You Truly Respect.

Miracles Do Not Go Where They Are Needed -They Go Where They Are Expected.

-MIKE MURDOCK



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HEALING SERVICES

3-0-2

Pray For The Sick.

Importance should be given to special prayer for the sick and diseased who attend your services.

I am just now beginning to understand the importance of praying for the sick, the afflicted, the diseased. As a minister, it is so easy to forget that many people in the congregation need miracles of healing. Subconsciously, we think the sick are in the hospital or they stayed at home. You will be astounded at how many people sit on those pews, craving for someone to pray the prayer of faith for them.

Jesus commanded us to heal the sick. It was God's desire that we lay hands on the sick and see them recover. "And He said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover," (Mark 16:15-18).

There are many ways to minister and pray for the sick. Some anoint from a bottle of oil, as James recommended.

"Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms: Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much," (James 5:13-16).

When I want knowledge concerning law, I consult lawyers. When I need help regarding my teeth, I call a dentist. When I want a book published, I call my printer. When I want to know about Divine healing, I consult men of faith who are being used of God in that area.

I urge you to read the writings and listen to the cassettes of men like Oral Roberts, Richard Roberts, Kenneth Hagin, Kenneth Copeland and Jerry Savelle. These are the men who have brought in waves of healing to our generation. Study their writings. Listen to their tapes. Absorb the anointing and compassion which rest upon their lives. Develop and grow in the area of personal healing and ministry to those who are hurting around you.

Now, in one season, I did not hardly ever pray for the sick. I did not think about it. It was not on my mind. You say, "Well maybe God did not lead you that way."

There are three things Oral Roberts has pounded in my head.

There are three things Jesus did.

- 1. He Preached.
- 2. He Taught.

3. He Healed.

Preaching, teaching, healing. Preaching, teaching, healing; that is all Jesus did. Preaching, teaching, *healing*.

Well, I wanted to pray for the sick and I thought, man, there are so many people that need to be healed. Yet, service after service after service I would not pray for the sick. I did not think about it. When I walked on a platform with Benny Hinn in Dallas, The Holy Spirit said, "Give him \$10,000."

Now I will not give you the details but I mean I literally almost went back down to the floor to walk up again. I felt like something got crossways there. Now you know you do not question God on \$10 or \$20, but you really question Him when it gets to \$10,000, let me tell you. Confirm...you know, let a camel walk in this building right now in the name of Jesus if that is what You want me to do.

I was two people over from Benny; his assistant was between us, and I scribbled a note and handed it to him. I did not have \$10,000. I said, "I will send you \$10,000 next week"...or something like that. I did not have it, but I just knew I was supposed to sow it.

Within five days from the time I planted the \$10,000 Seed into Benny Hinn's ministry, a remarkable thing happened.

This is really big to me. Again, this is really big to me. Every Seed you plant has a different future.

I am going to say something that you will never hear taught but this is the way I see it. Has God ever told you to plant another Seed for the same thing? Yes. I believe the Seed that I planted for the same thing was for a different aspect of that miracle. Every miracle contains different parts. I have planted other Seeds for the same thing because they were different parts God was putting together.

Five days later God gave me the pattern to pray for the sick.

By the way, it is very powerful, very important that you say, "In the name of Jesus of Nazareth." That was His distinction from all other people named Jesus. "In the name of Jesus of Nazareth by whose stripes we are healed." God is full of formulas. Everything is a formula. Talk to the scientific world. Everything is a composite of ingredients. Several parts and the only part that works is the part you understand. The part you know about.

God gave me a pattern and healings exploded.

On a Sunday morning at Joel Osteen's Lakewood Church, when we had people to stand who had been healed (and they run over 30,000 in attendance), people stood all over that auditorium. People stood that had been in pain over a year. Instantly healed. There was a pattern.

Timing of The Healing Service: "Well, Mike, why not wait until the end of the service for healing?" Well, why? Why would you make people hurt for two hours when you could pray the prayer of faith and see them be healed?

I am very strong on patterns. Jesus had a pattern for prayer. Benny Hinn has a pattern for his services. You go to a Billy Graham service, there is a pattern. You want to develop a pattern. Brother Font, pastor of the largest church in Puerto Rico, before he preaches every night, they sing, "How Great Thou Art." People get ready. There is a pattern for his service.

One of the greatest things that has happened in my ministry is discovery of a *pattern*.



HOLY SPIRIT

30.0.5

Your Quest Is For The Holy Spirit.

Everything Inside You Is Moving Toward Something.

The *success* teachers tell us it is a dream to be birthed. *Relationship* teachers tell us that it is a "soul mate." *Religious* leaders teach that you are in search of "the meaning of life." *Philosophers* focus on "your destiny."

The Holy Spirit is the mystery for which everyone is searching. He is the Person Jesus told us to wait for, look for...that would continue His presence on the earth, after His ascension.

There is not a single doubt in me that I have found the *Greatest Secret of the Universe*. The constant presence of The Holy Spirit will satisfy you beyond your imagination.

6 Facts About The Holy Spirit

1. The Holy Spirit Is A Person. He Is Not Wind, Fire or A White Dove.

Jesus knew this. He taught us, "And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever," (John 14:16).

He is not an "it."

He is..."Him."

You see, the pictures, metaphors and emblems used in the Bible can easily be misinterpreted and distorted.

The Holy Spirit is a Person, not merely a presence. He is a Person Who has a presence, an atmosphere emanating from Him. I think the word "spirit" confuses many.

"Oh, she has such a wonderful spirit about her!" said a minister's wife to me. She was referring to the attitude of another lady.

"Oh, I love the spirit in this church!" This kind of statement refers to the atmosphere and climate existing in a building.

The Holy Spirit is not an attitude, atmosphere or environment. He is a Person Who talks, thinks, plans, is incredibly brilliant and articulate. He is the Voice of the Godhead to us. "He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak," (John 16:13). A presence or an atmosphere does not talk! A person speaks.

A presence or an atmosphere does not have a will, a mind or a plan. Thoughts have presence. Birds generate a presence.

The Holy Spirit is much more than a presence. You see, aroma is not really the food. The stink is not the skunk! The bark is not the dog. The quack is not the duck.

His presence is evidence of His Person.

Few people know this. That is why they never discuss their problems with Him. Most believe that He is a silent cloud or wind receiving Assignments to different buildings or people.

Jesus recognized Him as a mentor. "...He shall

teach you all things," (John 14:26).

He is not fog.

He is not wind.

He is not fire.

He is not rain.

He is not a white dove at a baptismal service. If He were wind, He could not mentor men. If He were a white bird, He could not teach you all the sayings of Jesus. (See John 14:26.) If He were fire, He could not impart counsel. The Holy Spirit simply uses various pictures of Himself to reveal His workings, His nature and various qualities about Him.

The Holy Spirit can enter your life *like water* refreshing you. "For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour My Spirit upon thy seed, and My blessing upon thine offspring: And they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water courses," (Isaiah 44:3-4).

The Holy Spirit can enter your life *like fire* purifying you. "And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance," (Acts 2:3-4).

The Holy Spirit can move suddenly and quickly in your life—*like wind*. "And suddenly there came a sound from Heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting," (Acts 2:2).

The Holy Spirit will come to you the way that you need Him the most. He can come as a gentle *Nurturer*—like a mother nourishing her starving and dependent child. He can come as a brilliant and articulate *Advisor*—when you are facing a difficult decision. He can come as a comforting *Healer*—when you have been scarred and tormented from a battle.

The Holy Spirit is a Person. When you embrace this truth, your Christian experience will change dramatically, instantly and satisfy every part of your heart and life.

2. The Holy Spirit Created You. You Are His Greatest Product. Job knew this. "The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life," (Job 33:4).

Your personality, body and everything about you are the designs of The Holy Spirit. Think of this incredible body that functions miraculously. "I will praise Thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are Thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well," (Psalm 139:14).

Your body is His temple. "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?" (1 Corinthians 6:19).

The Holy Spirit was involved in the creative designing of the temple through Solomon. "And the pattern of all that he had by the Spirit, of the courts of the house of the Lord, and of all the chambers round about, of the treasuries of the house of God, and of the treasuries of the dedicated things," (1 Chronicles 28:12).

The Holy Spirit was involved in the creation of the earth at the beginning. "And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters," (Genesis 1:2).

The Holy Spirit is the One sent to form new creations on earth. "Thou sendest forth Thy Spirit, they

are created: and Thou renewest the face of the earth," (Psalm 104:30).

The Holy Spirit appears to be the One Who decides the very shape of every animal. "By His Spirit He hath garnished the Heavens; His hand hath formed the crooked serpent," (Job 26:13).

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Life within you that keeps you living and breathing every single moment. "The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life," (Job 33:4). "Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones; Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live: And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the Lord. And shall put My Spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the Lord have spoken it, and performed it, saith the Lord," (Ezekiel 37:5-6, 14).

The Holy Spirit also is the One that gives you the new life after your second birth, the regeneration. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of The Holy Ghost," (Titus 3:5).

The Holy Spirit is the Source of your life...every part of your life.

3. The Holy Spirit Is The Giver of Life.

Life is a priceless, precious gift to us.

The Giver is The Holy Spirit. "But the Spirit giveth life," (2 Corinthians 3:6).

The Holy Spirit impregnated Mary, the mother of Jesus. "Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise:

When as His mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of The Holy Ghost. But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of The Holy Ghost," (Matthew 1:18, 20).

Think about this incredible truth. The Holy Spirit is the One Who ushered in the entry of Jesus, the Son of God, into the earth.

Any words spoken by The Holy Spirit will bring life and energy into you. "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life," (John 6:63).

The Holy Spirit is the life of God dwelling within you. "Even the Spirit of truth; Whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him: but ye know Him; for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you," (John 14:17).

The Spirit of Life is one of the titles of The Holy Spirit. "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death," (Romans 8:2).

The Holy Spirit will breathe life into every person who died for Christ, at the second coming. "But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you," (Romans 8:11).

The Holy Spirit considers your body His dwelling place. "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and

that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" (1 Corinthians 3:16).

The Holy Spirit is the *Enabler* that helps you to keep and protect any good thing God has given you. "That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us," (2 Timothy 1:14).

The Holy Spirit provides tenacity, strength and determination for those who become dependent and addicted to His presence.

While I was dictating these very words today, something glorious and precious happened. One of my associates walked into the Wisdom Room here, as I was dictating this chapter, with good news. One of my mother sheep had just given birth to a beautiful little black sheep...with a white star on its forehead. I had to stop my dictation, rush out to the yard where all the animals were gathered around the little baby sheep. It was precious. Surrounding the mother and the little baby were many other animals that I have here at my home—several llamas were crowding in trying to nuzzle the little one. Eleazar, my huge camel, wanted to have a part, and Smokey, my miniature donkey, was trying to get his nose in the huddle as well. Mv antelope were watching from a distance...but it seemed that the entire yard of animals was feeling the glory of life itself—*life!* You feel it in the air!

I thought this was wonderful. While I was writing you about the *Giver of all life*, right here a few feet from me outside, something *He created...a first...was just born*.

Think for a moment. Look around you at the incredible animals—antelope, llamas, sheep, goats,

camels and behold the incredible imagination of The Holy Spirit in the many ways He sees methods to generate life and create life!

I look into trees, and I see beautiful white and blue-green peacocks here at my home. The Holy Spirit thought of these.

He created them.

As I look into my aquarium, I see beautiful multicolored fish swimming smoothly through the water. They were created for the water. He thought of this! How glorious!

The Holy Spirit is the Giver of all life.

The trees are beautiful today. New plants are springing forth. Flowers are beginning to bloom. The Holy Spirit has thought of a million ways to bring life into this earth.

You were His idea.

You are not alone.

You have a destiny.

You are on His mind all the time.

You are the focus of everything The Holy Spirit will do today.

"What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where He was before? It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life," (John 6:62-63).

4. The Holy Spirit Is The Author of The Word of God. Your Bible Is His Gift To You.

The Holy Spirit breathed the holy Scriptures through men. "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," (2 Peter 1:21). When you quote the Bible, you are quoting The Holy Spirit. He is articulate, brilliant and authored the words of God to us today. (See 2 Peter 1:21.)

He inspired holy men of God to write under the leadership of The Holy Spirit. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works," (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

Oh, think of this glorious and incredible Bible we carry around every day! The Holy Spirit spoke every word through forty people sensitive to Him, over a 1,600 year period of time.

- ▶ He wanted to breathe His life into you.
- ► He wanted His energy to be poured through you.
- ► He wanted His Wisdom deposited in your heart.
- ► He wanted His instincts and nature to be evident and obvious in you.
- ► He wanted you to know what He knows.
- ▶ He wanted you to see what He is looking at.

The Holy Spirit gave you The Word of God as your special weapon, the Sword of The Spirit. "And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God," (Ephesians 6:17). It is the weapon of The Holy Spirit—the weapon He uses against satan. His Words are His destructive weapons that destroy the things of satan.

Jesus used the weapon of the Word, the Sword of The Spirit. When satan tempted Him, Jesus simply answered with the words of The Holy Spirit! "And Jesus answered him, saying, It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God," (Luke 4:4).

The Holy Spirit led Jesus into the place where He would be tempted, then gave Him the weaponry (The Word of God) to use against satan. Satan was defeated and angels came to minister to Christ.

The Holy Spirit anticipated your warfare. He understands battle. It matters to Him. Your winning is on His mind all the time. He truly has not left you comfortless. He has put His weapon in your hand, in your mouth, in your life.

5. The Holy Spirit Is Holy. Words matter to Him. Conversation is important to Him. Your conduct and behavior is monitored continuously.

Treasure His words today. The Word of God is the weapon satan cannot withstand.

6. The Holy Spirit Intercedes For You Continuously.

Somebody Is Praying For You Right Now. "And He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because He maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God," (Romans 8:27).

3 Ways The Holy Spirit Affects Your Relationships

1. The Holy Spirit Will Give You Discernment Regarding Your Friendships. Some are contentious. Their fault-finding words create a climate of conflict, anger and cynicism. "From such turn away," (2 Timothy 3:5).

Mark people who carry a spirit of debate and strife. When The Holy Spirit is in leadership, you will discern them quickly. "But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes," (2 Timothy 2:23).

2. The Holy Spirit Increases Your Patience With Others. This always brings peace when you interact with those you love. "And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient," (2 Timothy 2:24). Unfortunately, most of us blame everyone around us for the climate of battle. However, battle requires two or more. If you refuse to fight, the war cannot continue. "Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out: so where there is no talebearer, the strife ceaseth. As coals are to burning coals, and wood to fire; so is a contentious man to kindle strife," (Proverbs 26:20-21).

3. The Holy Spirit Will Give You The Courage And Strength To Withdraw From The Company of Foolish People. This increases your peace. "Go from the presence of a foolish man, when thou perceivest not in him the lips of knowledge," (Proverbs 14:7).

After a crusade one night, I was exceptionally joyful. Many had come to Christ. A good number had been healed. Everything was so peaceful. When several of us arrived at the restaurant, a staff person from the local church began to complain to the waitress. (A spot or something was on their glass.)

Within a few moments, everyone circulated their experiences of "roaches in food" and other unhappy and unfortunate experiences with restaurants during their lifetime. Within thirty minutes we went from a glorious move of The Holy Spirit to pessimism and despondency.

It came through the words of one person.

How sad! Remember this. You are a *Door* or a

Wall. You can become a Wall of cynicism, discouragement and pessimism. Or, you can be a *Door of entry* for others to walk into *joy.* Oh, how I want to become the Door for the presence of God to enter. (Now, it is sometimes necessary to become a Wall against things that are unholy, unrighteous and bring unhappiness.)

3 Ways The Holy Spirit Uses The Word of God In Your Life

1. The Word of God Is The Instrument of Peace For The Holy Spirit To Use. "Great peace have they which love Thy law: and nothing shall offend them," (Psalm 119:165).

2. When The Word of God Is Sown Continuously In Your Heart, It Grows A Harvest of Peace. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee: because he trusteth in Thee," (Isaiah 26:3). "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things," (Romans 10:15).

3. You Must Embrace The Word of God As The Most Effective Instrument For Change. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works," (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

When someone approaches me in great emotional havoc and disturbance, I know that The Word of God is not dominating their life. They discuss their battles instead of the One Who is fighting for them.

15 Facts About Holy Spirit Love

1. The Fruit of The Holy Spirit Is Love. "But the fruit of the Spirit is love," (Galatians 5:22). It is The Holy Spirit that places an unexplainable love within a mother's heart for her child; the husband's heart for his wife; the pastor's heart for his people.

2. The Proof of Love Is The Desire To Give. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life," (John 3:16). God gave. That proved His love.

3. The Holy Spirit Enabled Jesus To Love. He prayed, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do," (Luke 23:34).

4. The Holy Spirit Enabled Stephen To Love Those Who Stoned Him. "And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge," (Acts 7:60).

The Holy Spirit alone could plant this kind of love inside a human heart. It would have been normal to pray a prayer that called down fire from Heaven on those stoning you. This is a remarkable work of grace in the human heart. It is normal to retaliate. It is human to fight back. *It is uncommon and Divine to forgive.* This is true love.

5. The Love of Christ Enables Missionaries To Fight Emotional Battles, Financial Difficulties And Cultural Barriers In Their Ministry Among The Heathen. I have lived with missionaries. Some have forfeited the comforts and luxury of home to empty their lives into a small village. Why? The love of Christ, placed there by The Holy Spirit, for unlovable people. 6. Many Wives Have Birthed The Salvation of Their Husbands Because of The Love of The Holy Spirit Within Them. Their husbands came to Christ because of their conversation and conduct. They never quit loving their husbands.

7. Thousands of Rebellious Teenagers Have Been Drawn Back Home Like A Magnet To A Loving Parent Because of The Love of The Holy Spirit. Certainly, parents have felt discouraged and demoralized. Anger is common among disappointed parents. The Holy Spirit can do the impossible—impart an uncommon love for a rebellious and stubborn teenager.

8. God Sends His Love Toward You Even In The Worst Season of Your Life. "But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us," (Romans 5:8).

9. Love Pursues. "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10). "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool," (Isaiah 1:18). (See also John 3:16.)

10. Love Protects. "For I the Lord thy God am a jealous God," (Exodus 20:5).

11. Love Provides. "For I am the Lord that healeth thee," (Exodus 15:26).

I wrote this song to The Holy Spirit some time ago: "Love Words"

> Make all my words—Your love words. Make all my words—Your love words. That's what You've made me for, Holy Spirit,

To pour your healing oil.

Make all my words—Your love words.© Copyright © 1996 by Win-Song Productions, Inc.

12. The Love of The Holy Spirit Is Not Manipulating Another.

13. The Love of The Holy Spirit Is Not Decided By The Conduct And Behavior of Another.

14. Love Will Never Cease.

Paul understood this.

"Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour. For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building. According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is," (1 Corinthians 3:8-10, 13).

15. The Love of The Holy Spirit Dissolves Fear. "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love," (1 John 4:18).

17 Facts Every Christian Should Know About Grieving The Holy Spirit

1. The Holy Spirit Is Easily Grieved And Offended. That is why the Apostle Paul wrote this remarkable warning: "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. And grieve not The Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you," (Ephesians 4:29-32).

2. He Will Withdraw His Manifest Presence When He Has Been Grieved And Offended. "I will go and return to My place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seek My face: in their affliction they will seek Me early," (Hosea 5:15).

3. You Must Permit The Holy Spirit To Correct You When You Have Offended Him. Any words that wound the influence of someone not present are disloyal words. Disloyalty is unholy. It is so important that you permit The Holy Spirit to correct you and prevent you from saying anything that is grievous to Him. His presence must be valued. His presence brings joy, peace and calmness in spirit. You cannot afford a day without His presence.

4. The Holy Spirit Is The Reason You Should Avoid Accusatory And Unflattering Conversation About Others. He withdraws! His absence creates sorrow and heaviness of spirit. "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in Thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my Redeemer," (Psalm 19:14).

Oh, please do not grieve The Holy Spirit! Whatever the cost! Whatever it takes, do not offend the One Who stayed. The love of God has been so misunderstood. His mercy has been taken for granted by millions.

"Oh, well! God knows my heart," laughed one lady when her pastor asked her why she had not been to church in several months. She had been taking vacations, spending her time out on the lake on Sundays. Yet, she had become so accustomed to ignoring the inner voice of The Holy Spirit, her conscience had become seared and numb.

5. It Is A Dangerous Moment To Assume That Access To The Holy Spirit Is Frivolous or Permanent. Oh, treasure His Presence today! His Presence keeps you soft toward Him. His Presence keeps you hungry and thirsty. When you do not pursue His Presence, the danger of becoming callused and hardened is very real.

A minister once told me, "I never dreamed I could get this far from God." As I looked at Him, I was shocked. Here sat a man who had preached with fire in His soul, love pouring through his heart, many years before.

However, he had offended The Holy Spirit, over and over again. Now, The Holy Spirit had withdrawn from Him. He had even lost his hunger and his thirst for the presence of God.

When you feel troubled in your spirit, thank God for such a troubling! Millions have ignored Him so long that the fire of desire has died out. Only ashes remain.

6. There Are Seasons For Repentance Provided By The Holy Spirit. Jesus wept over Jerusalem. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not," (Matthew 23:37).

7. The Presence of God Yesterday Does Not Guarantee The Presence of God Tomorrow. Look at what happened to Saul. He had known the anointing. God selected him. God touched his life. The prophet of God anointed him. Yet, "The Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him," (1 Samuel 16:14).

He died the death of a fool.

8. Great Men Dread The Horror of The Absence of The Holy Spirit. The psalmist knew the terrifying seasons when The Holy Spirit seemed withdrawn from him. David had been with Saul. He experienced evil spirits departing as he played his harp. He saw the touch of God on Saul come and leave. He cried out after his terrible sin with Bathsheba, "Cast me not away from Thy presence; and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me," (Psalm 51:11). Now, theologians laugh at David's confession and pursuit. Thousands of ministers say David was wrong, that The Holy Spirit could not withdraw from him. (Do not kid yourself. He had observed King Saul's deterioration before his own eyes.)

Seasoned 9. **Minister** Everv Has No Encountered Someone Who Longer **Experiences The Deep Wooing of The Holy Spirit.** If you have spent much time with people, as a minister of the gospel, you will meet many from whom The Holy Spirit has appeared to withdrawn His pulling and drawing. No, He does not do it easily or quickly. He is longsuffering. He is patient.

Even so, repeated rejection of His drawing has devastating results.

10. Emptiness Occurs After You Have Grieved The Holy Spirit. The Song of Solomon contains one of the saddest photographs of love rejected and lost. "I opened to my beloved; but my beloved had withdrawn himself, and was gone: my soul failed when He spake, I sought Him, but I could not find Him; I called Him, but He gave me no answer," (Song of Solomon 5:6).

11. Rejection of Him Always Produces Desolation. "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate," (Matthew 23:38).

12. Rejection of The Holy Spirit Can Be Fatal. Jesus said it clearly, "Remember Lot's wife," (Luke 17:32). The angels had appeared personally to escort Lot and his family from danger to safety. Yet, she took it lightly. Their instructions became unimportant. She rebelled and did what she desired. She became a pillar of salt.

13. Satan Often Lies To Someone About The Withdrawing of The Holy Spirit. He makes them feel that it is useless to pray, futile to reach and hopeless to believe for a change. Satan often tells people that they have sinned "the unpardonable sin" when the opposite is true.

Most have never read these terrifying words in Hosea 5:15: "I will go and return to My place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seek My face: in their affliction they will seek Me early."

14. Restoration Is Possible After You Have Offended The Holy Spirit. I raise my voice with Hosea today: "Come, and let us return unto the Lord: for He hath torn, and He will heal us; He hath smitten, and He will bind us up. After two days will He revive us: in the third day He will raise us up, and we shall live in His sight. Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord," (Hosea 6:1-3).

15. If You Have A Deep Desire For God, The Holy Spirit Is Still At Work. This is how you know you have not sinned the unpardonable sin! The Father is the One Who draws you. If you still have within your heart a sincere desire to know God and an appetite to pursue Him, you have not yet sinned the unpardonable sin. You see, only God can draw you. If He is drawing you, it is not too late.

You still have a chance for a miraculous experience with Him.

16. Treasure The Drawing Toward The Holy Spirit Today As A Gift From Your Heavenly Father. "No man can come to Me, except the Father which hath sent Me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God," (John 6:44-45).

17. Conversation Can Grieve The Holy Spirit. "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption," (Ephesians 4:29-30).

I will never forget a conversation in Washington, DC. I came down from my hotel room full of joy and enthusiasm. I had been praying in The Spirit throughout the day. I could not remember happier hours or days in my life. When I sat down to eat, the name of someone came up. I was talking with two of my staff members. When this name came up, I made a statement: "I like him, but he is rather lazy." The conversation continued. After about one hour, I returned to my hotel room again. However, something was wrong. Something had changed since I had gone to supper!

As I began to lift my hands and sing to The Holy Spirit, a cloud of heaviness and a shadow on my heart appeared. Something was out of order. So, not really knowing yet what was wrong, I simply began to sing louder and become more aggressive in my worship.

Yet, the heaviness in my spirit continued. Suddenly, The Holy Spirit spoke to my heart: "Why did you tell them that this young man was lazy?"

I stopped. Then I replied almost defiantly to The Holy Spirit, "Well, because he is lazy!"

"You have offended Me," The Holy Spirit spoke into my heart.

I thought for a moment. Then I replied: "Well, he did not hear me anyway. He is over 1,000 miles away!"

"I heard you, and you offended Me."

I tried another approach. "Well, Lord, it is true that he is lazy, and I would tell him to his face!"

Suddenly, The Holy Spirit stopped me. He brought my mind back to Philippians 4:8 where He gave us the criteria and guidelines for proper conversation "whatsoever things are..."

► True

▶ Honest

- ► Just
- Pure
- ► Lovely

▶ of A Good Report

- ► Virtuous
- Praiseworthy

As He began to deal with my life, my heart began to break. I saw that I had spoken in a destructive way

about someone who was precious to Him.

Thoughts that do not qualify for meditation, do not qualify for conversation. If it did not qualify for my mind, it did not qualify for my mouth.

Picture a mother showing you a photograph of her baby. Can you imagine her response if you began to sneer and make fun of her child? "What an ugly child. I despise that child!" That mother would withdraw from you instantly.

Yet, it happens in your own life every day. The moment you begin to discuss the flaws of those not present—The Holy Spirit withdraws.

A few weeks later, one of my staff members approached me. I asked the purpose of the appointment. She was upset with another staff member.

"Then, we will call her and have her to hear your accusation against her," I reached for the telephone. "I really would grieve The Holy Spirit if I discuss the flaws of someone not present, unable to defend themselves."

"Never mind, then! I do not want her to hear what I am saying! We will just forget about it."

Imagine if every church congregation would focus for 12 months on proper conversation about others. Imagine what your home would be like if every family member would only speak well of each other.

You see, we have been taught to avoid saying bad about people because they may find out about it.

Oh, my precious friend, that is not the only reason to avoid wrong conversation. Others warn, "What goes around will come back around." That, too, is not the right reason for avoiding destructive words about others.

18 Facts Every Believer Should Know About Intercession

1. The Holy Spirit Is On Earth Interceding For You To The Father. "He maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God," (Romans 8:27).

An incredible and beautiful scenario of intercession is occurring twenty-four hours-a-day, every day of your life.

You may feel alone. You may feel isolated. You may even have tormenting thoughts that nobody really cares for you at all. The opposite is occurring. The Holy Spirit continuously talks to the Father about your needs and desires.

While you are asleep, He is praying for you.

While you are working, He is praying for you.

When you have doubts, He is praying for you.

2. Jesus Is In Heaven Praying For You Also. "It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, Who is even at the right hand of God, Who also maketh intercession for us," (Romans 8:34).

3. You Truly Are The Apple of Your Father's Eye. "For the Lord's portion is His people; Jacob is the lot of His inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; He led him about, He instructed him, He kept him as the apple of His eye," (Deuteronomy 32:9-10).

4. Your Father Has Committed Himself To Your Protection. "As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings: So the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him," (Deuteronomy 32:11-12). 5. Your Father Wants You To Experience Uncommon Success And Provision. "He made him ride on the high places of the earth, that he might eat the increase of the fields; and He made him to suck honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock; Butter of kine, and milk of sheep, with fat of lambs, and rams of the breed of Bashan, and goats, with the fat of kidneys of wheat; and thou didst drink the pure blood of the grape," (Deuteronomy 32:13-14).

6. You Cannot Even Imagine The Magnitude And Greatness of God's Desires For You. That is why our prayers are often ineffective, incomplete and unanswered. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him," (1 Corinthians 2:9).

7. The Holy Spirit Has Searched Out, Photographed, Inventoried And Documented The Desires of The Father Toward You. "But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God," (1 Corinthians 2:10).

8. The Holy Spirit Is The Only Person In The Universe Who Knows The Heart of The Father. "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God," (1 Corinthians 2:11).

9. The Holy Spirit Is Given To Us To Reveal The Desires of The Father Toward Us. "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God," (1 Corinthians 2:12). **10. Your Natural Man (The Self-Life) Continuously Rejects The Things of The Holy Spirit.** "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned," (1 Corinthians 2:14).

11. Humans Simply Do Not Know How To Pray Effectively In A Way That Pleases The Heart of God. "For we know not what we should pray for as we ought," (Romans 8:26).

12. The Holy Spirit Is Our Committed Personal Intercessor Every Day. "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities...but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered," (Romans 8:26).

13. The Holy Spirit Is In Total Agreement With The Desires And Will of The Father For You. "And He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because He maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God," (Romans 8:27).

14. The Holy Spirit Is Passionate About Your Needs And Desires Being Fulfilled. "But the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered," (Romans 8:26).

15. The Holy Spirit Stirs Others To Intercede For You, Too. He did this in Samuel's heart for the people of God. "Moreover as for me, God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you: but I will teach you the good and the right way," (1 Samuel 12:23).

The Apostle Paul experienced the same kind of stirring to intercession by The Holy Spirit. His protégé, Timothy, received this word from his mentor. "I thank God, Whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience, that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day," (2 Timothy 1:3).

16. You Are Never Alone In The Storms of Your Life. Ever. Jesus promised it. "And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever," (John 14:16).

Your success is *not limited* to your efforts alone.

Your future is *not controlled* by just your personal knowledge only.

Your victories are *not dependent* on your personal abilities alone.

17. The Holy Spirit And Jesus Are Your Personal Intercessors Throughout Every Trial And Difficult Place of Your Life. That is why the Apostle Paul could shout with joy and thanksgiving in the midst of the most difficult, cold, damp prison experiences: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord," (Romans 8:35, 37-39).

18. Your Survival Is Guaranteed Because Someone Is Interceding For You. "Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them," (Hebrews 7:25).



HOSPITALITY

Honor Must Become Your Seed Before You Reap It As A Harvest.

I have been so blessed. After traveling for forty years, almost every minister friend of mine treats me far better than I sometimes think I deserve. I think I am a little spoiled.

I have been with some of the greatest hosts in the world. Their thoughtfulness, consideration and caring is one of the secrets that creates lasting friendships and partners. An Uncommon Seed Always Creates An Uncommon Harvest.

Guidelines In Ministry Hospitality

1. Have Someone Warm, Friendly And Considerate, Meet Your Evangelist At The Airport...On Time. This person should be aware of the ministry of the evangelist and project respect for him on his arrival. Remember that the evangelist has been sitting in the plane for hours, and it is the epitome of rudeness for a plane to arrive with your guest and no one there to meet him.

2. Personally Call Your Evangelist As Soon As He Arrives At The Hotel. Project enthusiasm that he has accepted your invitation to work with you.

3. Have Flowers or A Fruit Basket Waiting

At His Hotel Room.

4. Do Not Thrust Him Into Your Local Schedule; Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner, Radio, Etc. Remember this may be only one week for you as a pastor, but it is his every day lifestyle.

5. Do Not Make Appointments For Him With Your People Without His Consent. Few evangelists enjoy visiting homes after church services.

6. Give Him Freedom In His Selection of Eating Establishments; Either Have Him Sign The Local Restaurant Bill, or Keep His Receipts To Return At The Conclusion of The Crusade.

It is my opinion that the "Ideal Host" accepts and absorbs the total expenses from the arrival of the guest to his departure (including skycap, tipping and restaurant gratuities).

There are exceptions to these rules: One is a young, struggling pioneer church, or a church in financial crisis. When this happens, be frank with your guest. Tell him that you personally feel like he is far more deserving than what you are presently capable of providing. However, under your present circumstances this is the best that you could provide. Express your appreciation to him for being flexible, and accepting a lower standard of living temporarily. Most evangelists would stay in a tent if they knew it was really advantageous to a church in crisis.

Another helpful hint in being a host: Provide your guest with a detailed list of restaurants, dry cleaners or business establishments which he may need to visit during his stay. A map could be included to assist him.

A good host should not elaborate on the great success of *previous* guests. It only makes the evangelist feel inadequate, analyzed and incapable of measuring up. It is equally unwholesome and in bad taste for an evangelist to overwhelm the local pastor with the *exploits of others* across the country. In other words, *do not* draw attention to, or *magnify* the *lesser accomplishments* of each other by extravagant and unnecessary praise of other men of God. Your Words Are The Seeds For Feelings.

Favor Comes When You Serve Someone Who Is Highly Favored of God. Ruth received favor from Boaz because he saw her serve Naomi. "And Boaz answered and said unto her, It hath fully been shewed me, all that thou hast done unto thy mother in law since the death of thine husband: and how thou hast left thy father and thy mother, and the land of thy nativity, and art come unto a people which thou knewest not heretofore. The Lord recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the Lord God of Israel, under Whose wings thou art come to trust," (Ruth 2:11-12).

You must recognize greatness when you are in the presence of it. It will not always demand attention. Jesus went many places where He was undiscerned, undetected and unrecognized. His own family did not perceive His mantle or His Assignment.

The Anointing You Respect Is The Anointing That Increases In Your Life. What you sow today will reenter your life in your future. This is the Harvest of Favor. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap," (Galatians 6:7).

How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel. (See Romans 10:15.) Give honor to whom honor is due. (See Romans 13:7.)

Remember: *Honor Must Become Your Seed Before You Reap It As A Harvest.*

Package Yourself For Where You Are Going Instead of Where You Have Been.

-MIKE MURDOCK



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INCORPORATING

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Should I Incorporate My Ministry?

There is far more to incorporating a ministry than just going to a lawyer, drawing up bylaws and a statement of purpose for your ministry.

- ► You Must Have Regular Meetings With Your Board.
- You Must Keep Your Board Members Informed.
- ▶ You Must Keep A Record of The Minutes.
- You Must Keep An Account of Every Person Who Makes A Donation To Your Ministry.
- ► You Must Provide Your Partners With Receipt Letters, Especially If You Are An Evangelist.

CPA fees are expensive and will likely cost you more each month. As a pastor, you will probably go to a church which is already incorporated, so that will not be a real problem to you.

To the evangelist I address these few thoughts and suggestions.

The Advantages of Incorporating Your Ministry

1. You Can Give People A Tax-Deductible Receipt For Their Donation To Your Ministry. 2. It Is A Significant Step In Organizing Your Ministry For Future Mailings At Bulk Rate And Nonprofit Rates.

3. You Can Establish A Basic Salary For Yourself And Get More Organized Financially.

4. People Will Want To Be A Part of What They Sense Is An Organized Plan To Accomplish A Vision And Goal For God.

Be aware that there are a lot of details, tax laws and extra responsibility far beyond what it first appears. ≈ 32 ≈

THE IRREPLACEABLE REWARDS OF INTEGRITY

Nobody Really Knows You.

Consider this for a moment. Almost everyone in your life is more preoccupied with themselves than you. Therefore, you know more about yourself than anyone who will ever meet you. Never forget this.

It is not what men say about you that really matters in life. *It Is What You Believe About Yourself.*

Jesus was slandered. He was falsely accused. They said He was possessed with devils. Countless accusations were hurled like stones against Jesus every day of His Life, but it never affected Him. "Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake. Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your reward is great in Heaven: for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets," (Luke 6:22-23).

Jesus knew what He was really about. He believed in Himself. He believed in His product. He knew His accusers were ignorant, unlearned and arrogant. He knew they simply feared Him.

People always fight what they do not understand. *The mind will always resent what it cannot master.* Wars are fought because of ignorance and fear. Throughout human history, champions have had their names soiled and stained. Accusations and slanderous lies have come against great political leaders as well as ministers. This is life. Daniel was accused of arousing mobs through hatred and division concerning the belief systems of religious people.

Jesus never begged anyone to believe in Him. *He* knew that integrity could not be proven, it must be discerned.

He never wasted time with critics. He kept His attention on His goal. *He stayed focused*.

They accused Jesus of being filled with devils! He paid no attention. He simply continued to cast out devils. "But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils. And Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand: And if satan cast out satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand? And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out? therefore they shall be your judges. But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you," (Matthew 12:24-28).

Jesus never strived to "look good." *He simply was good*.

He did not labor to appear truthful. He was truthful.

He never struggled to have a good reputation. *He had character*.

Every successful person wants to be loved and admired, but your enemies and critics will never leave your reputation unstained and untarnished. You must rise above that fact. You must never allow what others say about you to change your personal opinion of yourself. *Never*.

Jesus did not.

Jesus never allowed what others said about Him to change His opinion of Himself.

People Talk.

Everyone knew about Ruth.

Boaz describes it this way, "And Boaz answered and said unto her, It hath fully been shewed me, all that thou hast done unto thy mother in law since the death of thine husband: and how thou hast left thy father and thy mother, and the land of thy nativity, and art come unto a people which thou knewest not heretofore," (Ruth 2:11).

"And he said, Blessed be thou of the Lord, my daughter: for thou hast shewed more kindness in the latter end than at the beginning, inasmuch as thou followedst not young men, whether poor or rich. And now, my daughter, fear not; I will do to thee all that thou requirest: for all the city of my people doth know that thou art a virtuous woman," (Ruth 3:10-11).

People talk. Good things and bad things. False accusations and current assessments.

People spoke well of Ruth. Her sacrificial attitude and dedication to preserving and maintaining the life of her widowed mother-in-law was a known fact in the community. Obviously, she had not even dated or bonded with any of the young men in the city—poor or rich. Her total focus was on Naomi. Yes, these are marvelous qualities that make you unforgettable.

Productivity is a choice.

This had registered heavily in the heart and mind of Boaz who did not hesitate to respond to her pursuit of him.

Others should commend you. "Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth; a stranger, and not thine own lips," (Proverbs 27:2).

Reputation is more powerful than money. "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold," (Proverbs 22:1).

A good name is more magnetic than a strong fragrance. "A good name is better than precious ointment; and the day of death than the day of one's birth," (Ecclesiastes 7:1).

Several years ago, I arrived at the house of a young

lady to take her to supper. As we were driving to the restaurant she remarked: "I had another date planned tonight, but I told him I had to visit a relative in the hospital."

She had lied. It sickened me. I had been excited about establishing a relationship with her only to find out within minutes that falsehood came naturally and easily to her. Obviously, I would be the next victim on her list. It was the first and last date I had with her.

Whatever it takes, develop integrity.

Focus on it. Carefully examine each word and sentence that comes from your lips. Never say anything insincere. Refuse to brag on someone's singing if it is untrue. Do not say things merely to encourage others. "Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men," (Romans 12:17).

The *compassion* of Ruth was known.

Observe how a woman speaks to her mother. Note well, how a man treats his mother. Also, observe how he reacts to the struggles and heartaches of the unfortunate.

Ruth's purity and virtue were known. Admittedly, many false accusations are hurled these days. Good people have been stained through vindictive and violent people. Joseph's is not the only story where someone who has walked totally upright before the Lord has had his reputation devastated by those who had been refused or ignored.

However, the entire town knew of Ruth's obsession and kindness to her mother-in-law. *They said she treated her mother-in-law better than 7 sons would treat a mother.* That kind of treatment is almost unheard of these days.

This does not mean you have to advertise all your good deeds. It is *not* important that you trumpet to the world all your acts of kindness and mercy. Somehow, God has a way of "letting it be made known."

What you are will eventually be exposed and known. Become Known For Integrity.