

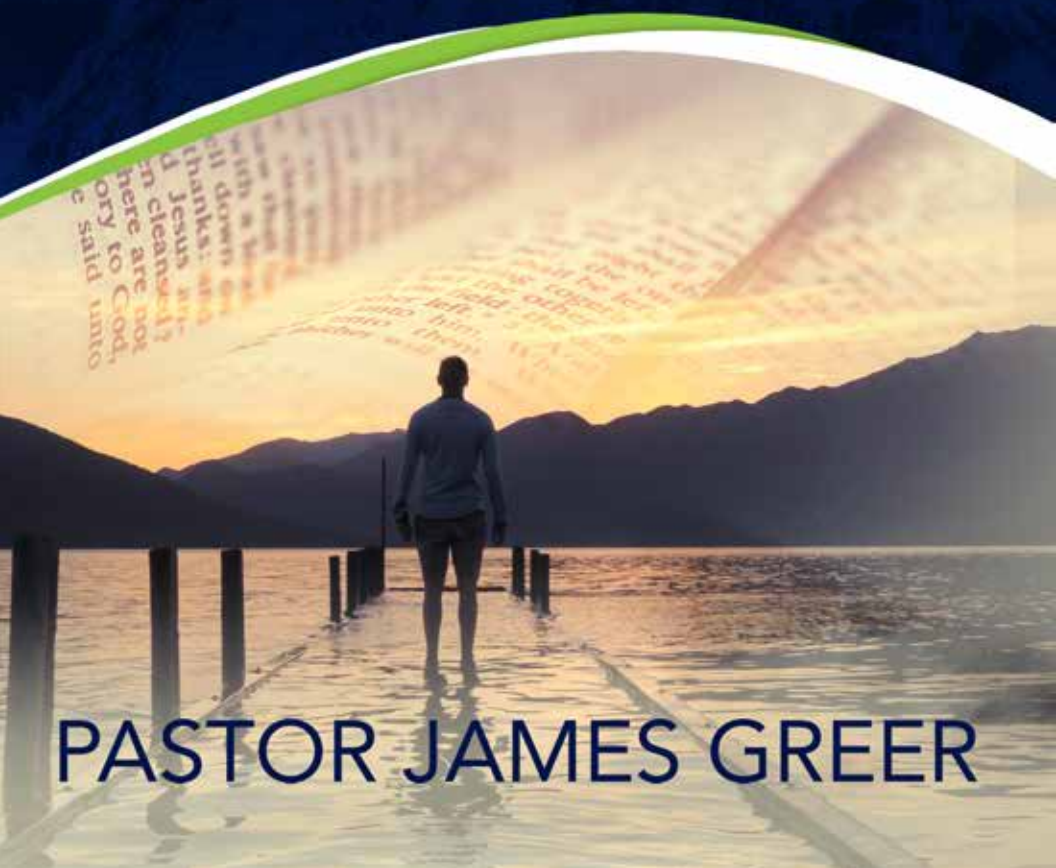
*Journey* CHURCH

# TRUTHS

TO AN

# ABUNDANT LIFE

## 52 WEEKS TO LIVING OUT GOD'S PURPOSE AND PLAN FOR YOUR LIFE



PASTOR JAMES GREER



## About the Author



With 30+ years of ministry and business experience, Pastor James Greer brings practical preaching to everyday people. He excels in communicating the Bible with real life application. His love for God, his wife, family and church are unwavering. It is the foundation for

the vision of Journey Church; to bring those far from God close to God one step at a time. His passionate, young at heart mentality is a draw for all ages. Pastor James is now semi-retired from his business, but busier than ever. In his free time Pastor James loves to take photos. You may find a few photos taken by him throughout this devotional book.







## Acknowledgements

*First I would like to thank my wife Debbie for all her encouragement, patience, and belief in me. She's also good looking on the outside and beautiful on the inside.*

*Josh Poe, the Executive Pastor, for his encouragement and fantastic creative ability.*

*Sharon Jones, my secretary, for her encouragement, reading, correcting and then some!*

*Journey Church for accepting and loving me for who I am. I'm the most blessed pastor in the world.*

*I thank the Lord for the insights. Most of these lessons or devotions came from sermons I've preached.*

**- Pastor James Greer**







## How to Use this Devotion

**#1** Read the verse everyday when you have time, read it over and over and stay on the same verse all week.

**#2** Practice memorizing the verse or one of the verses all week.

**#3** Ask God to speak to you personally on how to apply it: what the verse means to you.

**#4** Write your insights as God reveals them to you.

**#5** Imagine you are in one chair and God is in the other chair. Talk to Him as if He is with you, because He is.

**#6** When there are blanks, fill them in with your name or someone else you're praying for or a specific situation.

## The Rewards

**#1** God promises to bless you as you memorize and meditate on God's word. *Psalms 1:2-3, Joshua 1:8*

**#2** God promises to help us have victory over sin if we will memorize and mediate on God's word. *Psalms 119:11*

**#3** God teaches us that speaking the word helps move mountains, but you can't speak the word if you don't know the word.

**Memorization + Mediation = New Met Expectations!**

## WEEK 1

### How to Have the Best Year Ever

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**Matthew 6:33** *NKJV But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.*

#### 3 Steps to Have the Best Year Ever

1. Know where you come from, where you are, where you want to go, and how to get there.
2. Intentionally prioritize spiritual growth.
3. Happiness is a by-product of seeking Jesus.

#### 2 Chronicles 25:5b *NKJV*

*and as long as he sought the Lord, God made him prosper.*

If you don't know where you are at and where you want to go, you will feel lost. Take some time to dream and plan.

How can I better spiritually prioritize my life this year? Are you happy? If not, why not? Did you experience a **conviction**, **challenge** or a **commitment** you need to make from this devotion?

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## May the Force Be with Us

**1 John 4:4** *NKJV* "You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you (The Force or The Holy Spirit) is greater than he who is in the world."

Our goal is to be **ordinary** (*just be yourself*) but be used **extraordinarily** by the Force (*Holy Spirit*) within us. There are two forces: evil and good. The one we feed will **WIN!**

### 5 Insights About the Holy Spirit Within Us

1. Is greater than the force that comes against us. *1 John 4:4 NKJV*
2. Comforts us. *John 14:16-18 TLB*
3. Leads us into all Truth.
4. Reminds us of God's Word. *John 14:26 TLB*
5. Guides us. *John 16:13-14 TLB*

Where do you need the Holy Spirit's help the most today? Take time to read the verses and then personalize them! Did you experience a **conviction**, **challenge** or a **commitment** you need to make from this devotion?

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## WEEK 3

# God has a Divine Destiny for Each One of Us

### 3 Steps to Have Abundant Life

1. Love God
2. Promptly Obey God
3. Be Grateful for what God has done

**1 Corinthians 2:9** *AMP* "But, on the contrary, as the Scripture says, what eye has not seen and ear has not heard and has not entered into the heart of man, [all that] God has prepared (made and keeps ready) for those who love Him [who hold Him in affectionate reverence, promptly obeying Him and gratefully recognizing the benefits He has bestowed]"

### Reach Your Divine Destiny Faster and Go Further

1. Predetermine your decisions before you have to make them.
2. **Dreams** determine destiny when put into action.
3. **Direction** *not good intentions* determines destiny.
4. **Discipline** greatly determines destiny.
5. **Loyalty** greatly determines our direction and destiny.

Would you say you have an abundant life? Which of the 3 steps to having the **Abundant Life** do you feel you're lacking most? Did you experience a **conviction**, **challenge** or a **commitment** you need to make from this devotion?

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## How to Make Godly Decisions

**Colossians 3:17** *NKJV* "And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him."

### How to Have God's Will in the Matter:

1. **God's Word** – Know the Word; Act on the Word.
2. **God's Principles** – God is more concerned with who you are becoming (Character) than where you are. *Colossians 3:17, NKJV*
3. **God's Authorities** – The main reason people don't go to their God given authorities is because of **PRIDE**.
4. **God's Sovereignty** – We can't control the sovereignty of God.

### Making Godly Decisions:

The answer to pressure is a **Jesus** and our **pace**. Yoke with Jesus and He becomes our **partner** and our **peace**.

**Matthew 11:28-30** *NKJV* "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

What decision do you need God's help in making today? Did you experience a **conviction**, **challenge** or a **commitment** you need to make from this devotion?

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## WEEK 5

### How to Know God's Will for Your Life

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**Ephesians 2:10** NKJV

*"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them."*

**To know God's Will for our life,  
He has to be the Center of our life.**

We will be God centered or self-centered. God is more concerned with our **character** than our **comfort**.

What will be our **contribution** to further His Kingdom? What good works are you doing that helps further God's Kingdom?

***Read Ephesians 2:10 again in the AMP version.***

**Ephesians 2:10** NKJV

*"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them."*

Are you living the good life God has prearranged for you? Did you experience a **conviction**, **challenge** or a **commitment** you need to make from this devotion?

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## Miracles, Victories and Success

**Nehemiah 1:11** *NLT O Lord, please hear my prayer! Listen to the prayers of those who delight in honoring you. Please grant me success today by making the king favorable to me. Put it into his heart to be kind to me." In those days, I was the king's cup-bearer.*

**To be a conqueror we have to have a battle.**

The way we respond to the battles in life will greatly determine the miracles we experience. Nehemiah wept, mourned, & prayed. Sin brings curses—God will not be mocked. God wants us to be in the world, but not of the world. Value what God values. Pray and ask God to help you delight in honoring Him.

Where do you need success today?

**Pray this prayer and personalize it with your name:**

Nehemiah 1:11b *"Please grant \_\_\_\_\_ Your Name \_\_\_\_\_ success today"*

Did you experience a **conviction**, **challenge** or a **commitment** you need to make from this devotion?

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### Fasting for Spiritual Breakthrough

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**Isaiah 58:5** *NKJV* "Is it a fast that I have chosen, A day for a man to afflict his soul (bring about a burden)?"

**The Key to Spiritual Breakthrough:**

Have a burden that is great. Activate the burden by fasting on purpose with a purpose. It's our way of coming to God for the answers and relief needed.

**Nehemiah 1:4** *NKJV* "So it was, when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept, and mourned for many days; I was fasting and praying before the God of heaven."

**1 John 5:14-15** *NKJV* "Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him."

Do you have a burden, problem or fear that you need to fast and pray about? There are many types of fasting, simply put , fasting is giving up something you love for something or someone you love more!

Did you experience a **conviction**, **challenge** or a **commitment** you need to make from this devotion?

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## Five Steps to Activate a Miracle

**Nehemiah 1:5** *NKJV* And I said: "I pray, Lord God of heaven, O great and awesome God, You who keep Your covenant and mercy with those who love You and observe Your commandments.

### Five steps to activate a miracle:

1. Realize what the problem is.
2. Recognize who God is—Great and Awesome
3. Repent of your sin.
4. Remind God of His promises—pray God's promises back to Him.
5. Request God's Favor.

**Psalms 139:23** *NKJV* Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me, and know my anxieties;

### **Ephesians 3:20** *NKJV*

Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us,

Where do you need a miracle today? Ask God what the problem is and the real reason for the problem!

Did you experience a **conviction**, **challenge** or a **commitment** you need to make from this devotion?

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# Hidden Principles of Favor with God and Those Over You

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**Nehemiah 2:5,** *NKJV*

*Then the king said to me, "What do you request?" So, I prayed to the God of heaven. And I said to the king, "If it pleases the king, and if your servant has found favor in your sight, I ask that you send me to Judah, to the city of my fathers' tombs, that I may rebuild it."*

**Nehemiah 2:8b** *NKJV* *And the king granted them to me according to the good hand of my God upon me.*

Our attitude and action releases the favor of God and those in authority over us.

### Positive Attitude People

What most people call a problem, positive attitude people often see as opportunities. They will attempt things that others will not. They will make decisions based on who God is—not what He is doing. They will attract and influence others to go further faster than they ever dreamed.

We can't expect the blessings of God until we express an attitude of gratitude.

**Prayer + Planning + Performance = Privilege, Promotion, and Progress (Favor of God and others)**

Where do you need the favor of God in your life? What could you do or stop doing to bring the favor of God upon your life?

Did you experience a **conviction**, **challenge** or a **commitment** you need to make from this devotion?

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### Opposition to Opportunity

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**Ester 4:13** *NKJV* he sent back this answer: "Do not think that because you are in the king's house you alone of all the Jews will escape.

**Esther 4:14** *NKJV* "For if you remain completely silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's house will perish. Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"

We can have God's provisions and protection and still have opposition. Opposition is from the devil trying to discourage and defeat you. God wants to take opposition and drive it into the greatest opportunity in your life.

When we change our perspective on who God is instead of the opposition we get God's divine destiny, power, purpose, protection and provision for our life. Who knew what you see as **opposition** is nothing more than God giving you the greatest **opportunity** of your life?

What opposition are you facing that might be God's opportunity to use you? God has you where you are to be used for such a time as this!

Did you experience a **conviction**, **challenge** or a **commitment** you need to make from this devotion?

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### Identity Crisis

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**Nehemiah 4:1-2** *NLT* Sanballat was very angry when he learned that we were rebuilding the wall. He flew into a rage and mocked the Jews, saying in front of his friends and the Samaritan army officers, "What does this bunch of poor, feeble Jews think they're doing? Do they think they can build the wall in a single day by just offering a few sacrifices? Do they actually think they can make something of stones from a rubbish heap—and charred ones at that?"

#### Sanballat Had an Identity Crisis

When people mock and make fun of others, they are having an identity crisis. They are trying to find their identity in being bad. They are trying to find identity in the people they are with. When people mock us, talk about us, make fun of us and we get upset and over react, we are having an "Identity Crisis"

**When we get our *identity* from Christ we don't make fun of others and we don't over react.**

Is there someone you have been making fun of that you need to ask God to forgive you? Are you upset because of what somebody said about you or the way you look?

P.S. Make sure you are more concerned about what God says about you than what others have to say about you!

Did you experience a **conviction**, **challenge** or a **commitment** you need to make from this devotion?

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## Vision

**Habakkuk 2:2-3** NIV *Then the Lord answered me and said: "Write the vision And make it plain on tablets, that he may run who reads it. For the vision is yet for an appointed time; But at the end it will speak, and it will not lie. Though it tarries, wait for it; Because it will surely come, It will not tarry"*

All visions start with a burden. Vision needs to be clear and written down—it has an end in mind. Without vision, you go back to your past. Vision gives you the discipline/restraint to keep going.

### Vision Requires

- Teamwork - Teamwork makes the dream work!
- More effort halfway.
- An awareness of weakness and vulnerability.
- Our refusal to be distracted.

What is your vision for your family, finances, and future? What are your spiritual goals? Did you experience a **conviction**, **challenge** or a **commitment** you need to make from this devotion?

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### A New Day of Mercy

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The greatest picture of **God's Mercy** is the day God sent His Son Jesus Christ to die for our sins. The **Greatest Miracle** is the day Jesus rose from the grave! If we stop covering our sins, we will prosper and God will show us mercy! If we ask forgiveness for our sins, God will forgive us instead of judgement! God's mercies are new every day!

**Proverbs 28:13** NKJV *"He who covers his sins will not prosper, but whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy."*

**Lamentations 3:22-24** NKJV *Through the Lord's mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not. **They are new every morning**; Great is Your faithfulness. "The Lord is my portion," says my soul, "Therefore I hope in Him!"*

Thank God for His mercy being new every morning! God wants to forgive us and give us a new start every morning!

Where do you need to start new today? Is there a sin you need to confess where you can begin to prosper?

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## Process of Miracles

To have a miracle in your life, you have to have a problem. You have to be willing to listen to those trying to help you. The right counsel will always encourage you to follow God's will, not your feelings or emotions.

You have to be willing to do something about your problem. If you don't move; God won't move. Without God, you cannot; without you, God will not.

Listen to God's Word and apply it.  
God will do a supernatural miracle in your life.

### 2 Kings 5:1-3 NKJV

*Now Naaman, commander of the army of the king of Syria, was a great and honorable man in the eyes of his master, because by him the Lord had given victory to Syria. He was also a mighty man of valor, but a leper. And the Syrians had gone out on raids, and had brought back captive a young girl from the land of Israel. She waited on Naaman's wife. Then she said to her mistress, "If only my master were with the prophet who is in Samaria! For he would heal him of his leprosy."*

**2 Kings 5:10** NKJV *And Elisha sent a messenger to him, saying, "Go and wash in the Jordan seven times, and your flesh shall be restored to you, and you shall be clean."*

What problem do you need God to turn into a miracle? Is there something God is asking you to stop doing or start doing? Did you experience a **conviction**, **challenge** or a **commitment** you need to

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# Don't be Miserable Enjoy God's Mercy

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## Steps to Enjoy God's Mercy

1. Keep recalling/reminding yourself what mercy is. Mercy is undeserved forgiveness and unearned kindness. Mercy is being pardoned from the punishment we deserve.
2. Practice receiving and giving mercy or we will be miserable.

Jesus did not come to **condone** sin or **condemn** the sinner—He came to **change** the sinner! Satan uses condemnation to drive us away from God. Mercy brings us back to God.

## Benefits of God:

1. Salvation
2. Mercies of God – Practice the mercies of God.
3. Hope
4. Abundant Life
5. God's Mercies will always outweigh your sin.

**Romans 12:2** *KJV* "and do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind that you may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God."

Have you been allowing Satan to make you feel condemned? Where do you need to give and receive God's mercy? Did you experience a **conviction**, **challenge** or a **commitment** you need to make from this devotion?

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## We Need God's Mercy When We Mess Up

**Genesis 13:8-9** NKJV *"So Abram said to Lot, 'Please let there be no strife between you and me, and between my herdsmen and your herdsmen; for we are brethren. Is not the whole land before you? Please separate from me. If you take the left, then I will go to the right; or, if you go to the right, then I will go to the left.'"*

The hardest people to show mercy to is those closest to you. The most mature person is the first one to **acknowledge** and take **action** when there is a problem. Lot was looking at earthly **opportunity** instead of **obedience**. How you deal with disagreements with those closest to you will determine the relationship you have with them.

The first sign of immaturity is when you think you are smarter than God. Problems we encounter sometimes are nothing more than a process God allows to teach us to handle His promises. **Prosperity** without **process** equals **pride**.

What person did God bring to your mind that you might need to show mercy to? Is there someone close to you that you need to forgive or ask forgiveness? Did you experience a **conviction**, **challenge** or a **commitment** you need to make from this devotion?

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### From Backsliding to Boldness

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**Our purpose will greatly determine our priorities in life**

**Matthew 4:19** *NKJV* "Then He said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men."

**Matthew 14:27-32** *NKJV* "But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, "Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid. "And Peter answered Him and said, "Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water." So, He said, "Come." And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus. But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, "Lord, save me!" And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him, and said to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?" And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased.

#### **Lessons to Learn from the Storms of Life**

Storms will come. Jesus is always with you. Focusing only on having our needs met is nothing more than camouflage by the enemy for us to live in the chaos. Acknowledging our weakness in the storm is the first step to true strength.

#### **Our Purpose in Life**

##### **Matthew 16:24**

"Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me."

- Love God
- Spread His Word (*must be in and under the Word*)
- Further His Kingdom.

**When we don't know our purpose,  
we are fearful and unfaithful.**

Do you feel you know God's purpose for your life? Do you feel you are a follower of Christ? Did you experience a ***conviction***, ***challenge*** or a ***commitment*** you need to make from this devotion?

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# We Need God's Mercy & Miracles When We Mess Up. Don't Faint When You Can Have Faith!

**John 5:5-6** TLB *"One of the men lying there had been sick for thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him, and knew how long he had been ill, He asked him, 'Would you like to be well?'"*

Conforming to what we believe we can't do, instead of believing what God says about us limits the power of God in our life. When we believe what God says about us, we live in His blessings instead of the burdens we brought on ourselves. Limited expectation on ourselves and God limits God instead of releasing Him in our lives.

God can radically change and cure, not simply comfort, us when we surrender to Him. Transformation takes place in participation.

Would you like God to heal \_\_\_\_\_ in your life? Are you limiting what God wants to do in your life? Did you experience a **conviction**, **challenge** or a **commitment** you need to make from this devotion?

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## Misery to Mercy

### Lamentations 3:21-23 NKJV

*This I recall to my mind, Therefore I have hope. Through the Lord's mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness.*

Mercy is the manifestation of God actively on behalf of His people freeing us from slavery, guilt, and punishment. Divine mercy of God is the unchangeable character of God—by which He does not take pleasure in the death of the wicked. Feelings of hopelessness and helplessness brings discouragement.

God's Word never lies and there is hope in the Lord. The devil will remind you of what you've done and condemnation will drive you from God. However, God wants to give us a fresh start every day. God's mercies will always outlast our sins. Without God's mercies, we will miss out on His miracles and our life will be miserable.

**Psalm 51:1** NKJV *To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David when Nathan the prophet went to him, after he had gone in to Bathsheba. Have mercy upon me, O God, According to Your lovingkindness; According to the multitude of Your tender mercies, Blot out my transgressions.*

**Sin brings guilt, MERCY brings freedom from that guilt!**

Do you have areas of guilt that you need freedom in? Would you ask God to forgive you and show you mercy in \_\_\_\_\_ area of my life? Did you experience a **conviction**, **challenge** or a **commitment** you need to make from this devotion?

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# Crisis to Calmness

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## 2 Kings 4:1-7 TLB

*Now the wife of the son of one of the men who tell what will happen in the future cried out to Elisha, "Your servant, my husband, is dead. You know that your servant honored the Lord with fear. But the man to whom he owed money has come to take my two children to make them serve him." Elisha said to her, "What can I do for you? Tell me, what do you have in the house?" And she said, "Your woman servant has nothing in the house except a jar of oil." Then he said, "Go around and get jars from all your neighbors. Get empty jars, many of them. Then go in and shut the door behind you and your sons. Pour the oil into all these jars, and set aside each one that is full." So she went from him and shut the door behind her and her sons. They took the jars to her, and she poured. When the jars were full, she said to her son, "Bring me another jar." And he said to her, "There is not one jar left." Then the oil stopped flowing. She came and told the man of God. And he said, "Go and sell the oil and pay what you owe. You and your sons can live on the rest."*

Everybody experiences crisis, but not everybody knows the steps to being calm during the crisis.

### Crisis + Choices = Calmness or Chaos

Crisis is a concealed camouflaged miracle waiting for us to obey God. The greatest problem with crisis is we look to human solutions for spiritual problems. Explore biblical principles to apply to the problem.

What we are doing before the crisis comes matters; serving and loving the Lord before the crisis will determine the outcome. Many times, it takes a crisis to prepare our hearts to hear from God.

### Steps to Overcoming the Crisis

- Fix our eyes on the Rock—cry out to God.
- Quickly choose to humble ourselves to the mighty hand of God.
- Believe God is bigger than our crisis.

What crisis have you faced this year? How can you better handle the next crisis you face? Did you experience a **conviction**, **challenge** or a **commitment** you need to make from this devotion?

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### Raising the Bar on Relationships

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**Luke 7:36-38** *"Now one of the Pharisees invited Jesus to have dinner with him, so he went to the Pharisee's house and reclined at the table. When a woman who had lived a sinful life in that town learned that Jesus was eating at the Pharisee's house, she brought an alabaster jar of perfume, and as she stood behind him at his feet weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears. Then she wiped them with her hair, kissed them and poured perfume on them."*

When people see you, what Jesus do they see?

- Be an imitators of Jesus.
- Follow His example.
- Walk continuously in love.
- Value one another.
- Practice empathy and compassion.

Our relationship with God is the foundation that every other relationship is built on. Relationship with Jesus starts with brokenness and desperation and ends with forgiveness. No matter what someone has done, Christ welcomes them. At this time we take the person Jesus to those who are hurting, broken and lost who need a SAVIOR.

Who do you know that is hurting that might need Jesus?

Did you experience a **conviction**, **challenge** or a **commitment** you need to make from this devotion?

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### Finding our Purpose

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**Matthew 28:18-20** KJV *"And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."*

Finding our purpose decreases stress and increases the power and presence of God.

Find God's purpose by doing life God's way and experience God's presence and power. Put aside our own selfish desires. Don't just go to church, ***Be the Church.***

**Ephesians 6:12** NIV *"For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places."*

**The only real power Satan  
has over us is believing His lies.**

The real enemy in our life is a spiritual battle.

**Acts 1:8** NKJV *"But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."*

God's purpose for our life is to have Godly confidence and unbelievable courage. When we have that it will become contagious.

Where do you need God's power in your life today? Why does God give us this power? Did you experience a ***conviction, challenge*** or a ***commitment*** you need to make from this devotion?

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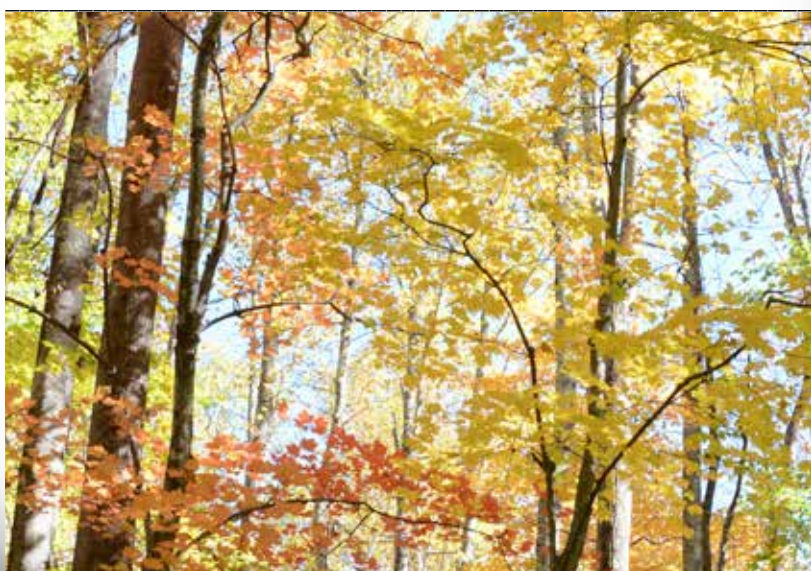
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### Raising the Bar on “Focus”

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**Luke 9:1-2** *NKJV* “Then He (Jesus) called His twelve disciples together and gave them power and authority over all demons, and to cure diseases. He sent them to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick.”

We are to be a witness for Christ everywhere we go. The devil wants us to keep Christ quiet to prevent the Gospel from going forward. God wants to keep us talking!

**Our FOCUS determines our direction.**

If we focus on how big our God is, our focus will go from:

- **Jealousy** to **Jesus**.
- **Crisis** to **Christ**.
- Our **mess** to our **Messiah**.
- **Stress** to **Blessed**.

Don't allow our **lack** to get us off **track**! If Jesus calls us and sends us He will equip us! When we **keep our focus**—we will not only come to church, we will **“Be the Church.”**

**Anticipation + Participation = Expectations Met**

**Matthew 14:17-20** *NKJV* “And they said to Him, “We have here only five loaves and two fish. “He said, “Bring them here to Me.” Then He commanded the multitudes to sit down on the grass. And He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, He blessed and broke and gave the loaves to the disciples; and the disciples gave to the multitudes. So, they all ate and were filled, and they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments that remained.

Where do you need to change your focus? Do you have a mess where you need God to turn it into a miracle? Did you experience a **conviction**, **challenge** or a **commitment** you need to make from this devotion?

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# Raising the Bar on Manhood

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**1 Corinthians 16:13-14** TLB *"Keep your eyes open for spiritual danger; stand true to the Lord; act like men; be strong; and whatever you do, do it with kindness and love."*

## P's of Men Who Have Not Raised the Bar on Manhood

- Passive - allows wife to do everything; Adam was passive.
- Persuaded - easily persuaded by the enemy and others; God has little persuasive power of them.

## Godly Manhood

- **Protector** - protects your family against the enemy; you **spot evil** and **stop evil**.
- **Provider** - provide guidance, direction, and wisdom.
- **Tuff** and **tender** at the same time.
- Stand true to God.
- If you never make a stand to protect and provide it will lead to rebellion.

If you're a man, which area do you need to work on the most? Passive, Persuaded, Protector or Provider? If you're a woman, which area are you trying to be the man instead of the woman? Are you trying to be the Protector & Provider? Did you experience a **conviction**, **challenge** or a **commitment** you need to make from this devotion?

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## Raising the Bar on Wholeness

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### 1 Thessalonians 5:23 MSG

*"May God himself, the God who makes everything holy and whole, make you holy and whole, put you together—spirit, soul, and body—and keep you fit for the coming of our Master, Jesus Christ. The One who called you is completely dependable. If he said it, he'll do it!"*

### **Two Things that Cause Us to Lack Wholeness**

1. We treat the effect and not the cause. We have to treat the root.
2. Worry – makes us feel worthless.

Our worthiness does not come from what we have done or have not done. Our worthiness comes from what Jesus did for us. We worry so much about tomorrow we miss the miracles and blessings for today. Focusing on tomorrow keeps our focus on the world instead of the Word.

Until you know you're not whole, you cannot be made whole. Wholeness can only come from God. Refocus on God's word and promises, you will be filled, full, and whole. Be willing to ask God what is the root problem in our life.

Do you understand what the root of your problem is? Many times, the root problem comes from genes and environment. What root problem could you have that come from gene's and environment? Did you experience a **conviction**, **challenge** or a **commitment** you need to make from this devotion?

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### From Broke to Blessed

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**Luke 5:1-7** NKJV *"So it was, as the multitude pressed about Him to hear the word of God, that He stood by the Lake of Gennesaret, and saw two boats standing by the lake; but the fishermen had gone from them and were washing their nets. Then He got into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and asked him to put out a little from the land. And He sat down and taught the multitudes from the boat. When He had stopped speaking, He said to Simon, "Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch." But Simon answered and said to Him, "Master, we have toiled all night and caught nothing; nevertheless, at Your word I will let down the net." And when they had done this, they caught a great number of fish, and their net was breaking. So, they signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink."*

#### **To go from broke to blessed:**

You have to get Jesus in the boat and use what you have. Don't miss the blessings of God because you are not allowing Him to use what you do have. He will ask us to do something contrary to what we believe. Are we going to live like the world or by the Word? Jesus is trying to prove to us that His way is always better than our way. It is not what He wants from us, it's what Jesus wants for us. Obey what Jesus says, not simply listen to what He ask.

**James 1:22** NKJV *"But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves."*

**When God is about to do a great work in our life,  
Satan will try to discourage us.**

Do you have Jesus in the boat with you? Your life and problems? Is God asking you to do something is contrary to what you believe but based on God's word? Did you experience a **conviction**, **challenge** or a **commitment** you need to make from this devotion?

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### Guard Your Heart

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**3 John 1:2** *AMP* "Beloved, I pray that in every way you may succeed and prosper and be in good health [physically], just as [I know] your soul prospers [spiritually]."

**Matthew 5:8** *AMP* "Blessed [anticipating God's presence, spiritually mature] are the pure in heart [those with integrity, moral courage, and godly character], for they will see God."

**Proverbs 4:23** *NIV*

*"Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it."*

Our success and prosperity are determined by the condition of our heart, not our circumstances. The condition of our heart controls our life. It is most important to guard our heart.

**When our hearts are not pure,  
it limits the power of God in our lives.**

**1 John 1:9** *NIV* "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."

**Ephesians 4:31** *NKJV* "Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice."

Ask for forgiveness and learn to forgive. Un-forgiveness leads to hatred, jealousy, hard hearts bad attitudes and anger. Guard your heart and let the power of God be plentiful in your life.

What condition do you feel your heart is in today? What could you do to better guard your heart? Did you experience a **conviction**, **challenge** or a **commitment** you need to make from this devotion?

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# Forgiveness

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Forgiveness does **not** represent **weakness**. It is the portal (way) to power.

Forgiveness does not always mean **reconciliation**.

**Romans 12:18** *"If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men."*

Forgiving does not always mean forgetting. Regret is when God uses what you've done so that you will not do it again. Guilt comes as conviction of sin, but stays with you as a result of not asking for forgiveness of sin. When living in a state of guilt and pity, we miss the power of God. Forgiveness does not always mean trusting the person again. Don't keep bringing up past hurt to hurt the one that hurt you—don't keep bringing up past hurts to continue to hurt yourself.

**John 8:32** NKJV

*"And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."*

Is there someone you need to forgive? Do you need to forgive yourself? Did you experience a ***conviction, challenge*** or a ***commitment*** you need to make from this devotion?

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### Little Faith Can Produce Great Results

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**FALSE:** You can't have joy and peace in suffering.

In Acts 9, Jesus changed Saul to Paul and his calling was to suffer and go through affliction for Christ. Jesus suffered. He suffered and enjoyed the results that happened.

**Matthew 5:10** NKJV *"Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."*

**You can have joy in the midst of suffering. We will all suffer it just depends on how you handle suffering.**

**Deut. 29:29** NKJV *"The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but those things which are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law."*

**TRUTH:** The cause of all suffering is Satan and sin.

**Romans 5:12**

*Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned—*

#### **6 Types of Suffering**

1. Betrayal of someone you love.
2. Physical Pain and Suffering.
3. Financial loss.
4. Disappoint in our loved ones that brings suffering.
5. Suffering for doing what's right.
6. The greatest suffering is loss of a loved one – child or grandchild.

We never truly understand this suffering. There is some suffering and pain you will never completely get over it. Put your trust in Jesus Christ you will get through it.

**Suffering can be so great we get stuck in the suffering.  
Satan wants us to curse God when we suffer.**

## **6 Things We Can Do with Our Suffering and Pain**

1. When suffering comes, don't blame God and run from God; run to HIM and trust Him.  
**Proverbs 3:5** *NKJV* "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding"
2. Ask God to remove the suffering.
3. Ask God to give us strength and comfort during the suffering.  
**2 Corinthians 1:3-4** *NKJV* "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, 4 who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any [a]trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God."
4. Pray God's will be done and God be glorified.  
**Matthew 26:39** *NKJV* "He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, "O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will."
5. Don't worship the suffering -Worship the Savior.
6. Remember this is not your home. We are only here for one reason, to further the kingdom of God.

Are you suffering today? What could you do that could help you find comfort and peace today? Did you experience a **conviction**, **challenge** or a **commitment** you need to make from this devotion?

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# Rejection

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The root of all rejection is misplaced identity. God wants to take your rejection and turn it into redirection. Trusting in God protects us.

**Proverbs 29:25** *NKJV* "Fear of man will prove to be a snare, but whoever trusts in the Lord is kept safe.

Learning to handle rejection gives us an unmeasurable amount of peace. Peacemakers love those who reject them and make an effort to reconcile.

**Matthew 5:9** *NKJV*  
*"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.*

People who reject you are actually rejecting the Prince of Peace not you. The key to overcoming rejection is to solve your own identity problem. Don't allow rejection to hurt you let it help you by learning to define and redefine who you really are in Christ.

Do you feel rejected? Do you really know who you are in Christ? Did you experience a **conviction**, **challenge** or a **commitment** you need to make from this devotion?

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# Your Calling or Craving

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## 1 Samuel 3:1-6 NKJV

*"Now the boy Samuel ministered to the Lord before Eli. And the word of the Lord was rare in those days; there was no widespread revelation. And it came to pass at that time, while Eli was lying down in his place, and when his eyes had begun to grow so dim that he could not see, and before the lamp of God went out in the tabernacle of the Lord where the ark of God was, and while Samuel was lying down, 4 that the Lord called Samuel. And he answered, "Here I am!" So, he ran to Eli and said, "Here I am, for you called me." And he said, "I did not call; lie down again." And he went and lay down. Then the Lord called yet again, "Samuel!" So, Samuel arose and went to Eli, and said, "Here I am, for you called me." He answered, "I did not call, my son; lie down again."*

How do I know if I'm following my craving or God's Calling? The work of the flesh is ***your craving***.

## God's Calling

When following your calling, you will have joy and peace. We are saved, called, anointed and appointed as children of God. When we are called, we don't walk, we run. Hearing from God, and not going through the process, we will never be used greatly by God. We will miss our calling because we are drawn to our craving—we can see physically well, but can't perceive what God wants them to do. We need to humble ourselves and hear from older, mature mentors and listen to what God has called us to do.

Do you feel that you are following God's call or your craving?

**God's calling will bring fulfillment;  
while your craving will lead to emptiness.**

What is God calling you to do? Did you experience a ***conviction***, ***challenge*** or a ***commitment*** you need to make from this devotion?

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### Raising the Bar on "Problems"

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**Our problems are a simple matter in the sight of the Lord.**

**2 Kings 3:18** NKJV *"And this is a simple matter in the sight of the Lord; He will also deliver the Moabites into your hand."*

If we are not spiritually prepared to handle problems, we will be defeated and discouraged.

**John 15:5** NIV

*"I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing."*

**John 15:7** NKJV

*"If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you."*

Many times, we blame God for our problems, we need to see Him as the answer to our problems.

Need to reverse your problem?

1. You have to know you have a problem.
2. Willing to admit you are part of the problem.
3. Dive into the Word and obey the Word.

The beginning of the answer to your problems is a need for a Word from God.

What's your greatest problem today? What's God's promise say about that problem? Are you willing to meet the condition of the promise? If you find the promise and meet the condition of the promise in time God will give you the provision you need! Did you experience a **conviction**, **challenge** or a **commitment** you need to make from this devotion?

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### Holy Shift

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**The longer something exist the easier it is to shift from the original intent, meaning or purpose.**

When we learn God's purpose in a matter and act on it, we get God's presence and power in the matter. We are a walking stick of dynamite when we walk in the power of the Holy Spirit.

**Philippians 4:13** NKJV

*"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."*

Satan wants us to shift away from the original purpose of the Church. Jesus paid the price for us to have a relationship with God. This was the greatest shifting power in history. We no longer have to live in fear we can be fearless.

**2 Timothy 1:7** NKJV *"For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind."*

The shift from coming to church to **"Being the Church"** brings favor with God and people. Holy Shift is a small change to make a significant impact! Before the Holy Shift, it was all about our purpose—after the Holy Shift, it's about God's purpose.

**Acts 2:46** NKJV *"So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart"*

Where do you feel powerless? What shift do you need to make to experience God's power and purpose in your life? Did you experience a **conviction**, **challenge** or a **commitment** you need to make from this devotion?



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### Holy Shift in Boldness

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**Acts 4:13** *NKJV* "Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marveled. And they realized that they had been with Jesus."

#### **Boldness is:**

1. Taking advantage or creating opportunities to stand up for Christ.
2. Learning to address your biggest fear.
3. Deciding to say something when it would be easier to say nothing.
4. Bold application and confident assurance of who Christ is and who we are.
5. Proof that Jesus can take ordinary people and make extraordinary things.
6. Not about educated or non-educated, it's about being in the right position with the right person where it results in the right power.

**We have the answers everyone is looking for.**

We know Christ who can deliver, save and wants what is best for us. We need to stop being wimpy and be warriors for Christ. Everyone on this side of heaven owes everyone this side of hell an opportunity to go to heaven.

Where do you need to be bold? What fear do you need to address? Who do you need to tell about Jesus? Did you experience a **conviction**, **challenge** or a **commitment** you need to make from this

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### Holy Shift in Prayer

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The longer something exist the easier it is to miss or shift away from the original intent, meaning, and purpose.

#### **Acts 4:29-31** NKJV

*"Now, Lord, look on their threats, and grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your word, by stretching out Your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of Your Holy Servant Jesus. "And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness."*

When the Holy Shift took place, we shifted from the Old Testament (laws and animal sacrifices) to the New Testament (Jesus paid the Ultimate Sacrifice). We shifted from limited power to unlimited power by the power of the Holy Spirit. Part of prayer is to shift from our benefit to being bold.

#### **Prayer:**

- Is we will start praying with boldness, speaking God's Word with boldness.
- Is not getting God to give us what we want, it's getting God to give us what we need.
- Is not for God to remove our problems, hurts, and suffering, but to give us the power in the problem. The results give honor and glory to God in the problem. If we don't know that, we miss the power, presence and peace in the problem.

God is not worried about what we don't have. He wants us to use what we do have. The greatest shift in prayer is to understand that it's not always God's will to remove the problem and suffering, but to give us the power and presence to go through it to bring honor and glory to God.

Where do you need Gods power and presents today? When is the last time you spoke God's word with boldness? Did you experience a **conviction**, **challenge** or a **commitment** you need to make from this devotion?

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### Holy Shift in Power

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**Acts 3:19-20** NKJV

*"Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before,"*

Unbelievable power of the Holy Spirit gives us the power to walk through our problems. Only Jesus can meet the needs in our lives. We cannot commit something to God and not obey. Sin will cost us.

How uncomfortable do we have to become with sin before we are willing to change and do what God has called us to do?

When we keep back from God, it limits the power and joy in our life. One of the ways to enter into the joy of the Lord is what we do with our talent, time, and money. What is it we need to be afraid of? Missing out on all that God has for us.

The worst thing we can 'keep back' from God is our heart. God did not just save us from Hell he saved us to heaven and he wants us to bring heaven down to earth. There is only one purpose you are here, to further the Kingdom of God.

How is God using you to further His Kingdom? Do you need to refreshing of God upon your life? Repentance often brings refreshing! Is there something you need to repent of? Did you experience a **conviction**, **challenge** or a **commitment** you need to make from this devotion?

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## Holy Shift in Opposition

**Proverbs 28:13** *NKJV He who covers his sins will not prosper, but whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy.*

What you bury will be exposed. God will use the wind of the Holy Spirit to uncover the opposition and pain you have been running from and set you free. When opposition presses you, whatever is in you will come out of you.

As believers, the fruit of the spirit should come out when pressed with opposition. (Galatians 5:22-23) We are to use the Bible as a mirror to see ourselves through the Word of God, not a window to look at others through. Is there anything in your heart, mind, words or behavior that might be opposing God's movement?

We are to pursue transformation over tradition. Tradition will not bring about change, only Jesus Christ will bring change.

**Romans 12:2** *NKJV And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*

What area do you need to renew your mind? What area have you conformed to this world?

**Freedom or bondage greatly depends  
on what we allow our mind to think on!**

Did you experience a **conviction**, **challenge** or a **commitment** you need to make from this devotion?

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### Holy Shift in The Holy Land

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It's not our location, land or even what we learn that brings joy!

**Joy is a journey of seeking Jesus!**

It was not the land; it was not even what we had learned that brought Joy! It was Love, Jesus' love for me and you and love for God the Father.

**Mark 12:30-31** NKJV

*and you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' This is the first commandment. And the second, like it, is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."*

**Proverbs 8:17** NCV

*I love those who love me, and those who seek me find me.*

Who and what you love you will **seek after!** Joy is not a matter of where you live, where you travel, or what you have. It's a matter of seeking Jesus and finding Him where ever you go and whatever you do!

**Proverbs 8:18**

*"Riches and honor are mine to give. So are wealth and lasting success."*

We often seek riches believing they can bring what only right relations can bring. When we have a right relationship with Jesus and right relationship with our love ones we have Joy! Joy is a by-product of seeking Jesus and having a right relationship with Him!

Where does joy come from? How can you find joy where you are right now? Did you experience a **conviction, challenge** or a **commitment** you need to make from this devotion?

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### Holy Shift in The Holy Land – Part 2

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**Matthew 28:18-20** *NKJV* “And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen.

#### **When we were in the Holy Land we realized:**

- The Jesus made a difference in the world in such a small geographical area.
- Jesus made a difference where He was not where He wanted to be.

Do you feel you're making a difference right where God has you?

If you're not happy and making a difference where you are, you won't be when you go elsewhere. **Jesus made a huge impact in such a short amount of time.** Jesus' earthly ministry began around the age of 30 when He was baptized. (Luke 3:21-23 *NKJV*) The people Jesus used to help change the world were mainly just ordinary people to do extraordinary things.

**Acts 4:13** *CEV* *The officials were amazed to see how brave Peter and John were, and they knew that these two apostles were only ordinary men and not well educated. The officials were certain that these men had been with Jesus.*

Who our faith and confidence is in will determine how you enjoy life! There is no greater experience or adventure in life than the one Jesus Christ brings us on. Jesus is the All-Powerful one and He is transferring that power to us. He is with us wherever we go.

Are you willing to help change the world where you are not where you want to be?

**You are where you are on purpose with a purpose.**

What small geographical area is God giving you to influence to change the Kingdom of God? Did you experience a **conviction**, **challenge** or a **commitment** you need to make from this devotion?

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### Holy Shift in Deacons

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**Acts 6:1-4** *NKJV* Now in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying, there arose a complaint against the Hebrews by the Hellenists, because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution. Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, "It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables. Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business; but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word."

The original intent of the deacons is the same as every member of the church: to be ministers.

Deacons are to be servants. They are to care for the widows in the church. Deacons are to free pastors and leaders so they could give themselves to prayer, teaching and preaching.

The deacon ministry started out as a Biblical principle and turned into unbiblical tradition. Traditions are not bad unless they become unbiblical. How and where are you serving today? I believe every member is a minister!

**Ephesians 4:11-12** *NKJV*

*And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ,*

Who is to do the work of the ministry? Did you experience a **conviction**, **challenge** or a **commitment** you need to make from this devotion?

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# God's Original Intent, Purpose, and Plan for our lives and the Church

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**When we learn God's purpose and plan for our life, we get to experience the power to carry it out.**

### Genesis 1:26-28

*Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." So, God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. Then **God blessed them**, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth."*

The Church is not a building, it's people. The church is not an organization, it's an organism. We are to "Be the Church"—spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ. When the church is united for the purpose of God, nothing is impossible for Him.

God's original intent and purpose for our lives and the Church has not changed! God's original intent and purpose was for God to bless us, then for you to take the blessing and be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth and subdue it.

How are you fulfilling God's original intent and purpose for your life? Did you experience a **conviction**, **challenge** or a **commitment** you need to make from this devotion?

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### Half-time

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**Luke 6:38** NKJV

*Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you."*

**What you give out will come back to you.**

**Matthew 6:33** NKJV *"But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you."*

**Luke 16:19** NKJV *"There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day."*

What you have here on earth, apart from Jesus as savior, will not matter when you leave the earth.

**Luke 16:22-23** NKJV *So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried. And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.*

What you see here on earth is not always what we will get when we die! If you are not careful you will focus on your life (all about self) instead of God's purpose for you. No matter how far behind you are in your life with Jesus Christ as your Savior you can come back! Everyone this side of heaven owes everybody this side of hell an opportunity to go to heaven.

How has your focus been? More on what you have now or what you will have in heaven? Do you know someone that needs to know Jesus as savior? Do you have a burden for those that don't know Jesus Christ? Did you experience a **conviction**, **challenge** or a **commitment** you need to make from this devotion?

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## Don't Quit

### Life is a Process

**Proverbs 21:31** *NKJV* *The horse is prepared for the day of battle, but deliverance is of the Lord."*

If you want the last half of your life to be the best half, you have to be prepared to work through the stages of life.

### The Stages of Life

- **Prepared Heart** – Be prepared for the conflict, but know victory comes from God.
- **Praying Heart** – When you do pray let your prayers be on God's character not yours.
- **Persistent Heart** – Prepare ahead of time to push through regardless what comes against you.

**Galatians 6:9** *NKJV* *"And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart."*

How prepared do you think you are for the battles and conflict you will face? How can you be better prepared? Did you experience a **conviction**, **challenge** or a **commitment** you need to make from this devotion?

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### The Process

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**Philippians 2:13** TLB *"For God is at work within you, helping you want to obey him, and then helping you do what he wants."*

**God is working in your life, molding your life.**

**Isaiah 64:8** NKJV *"But now, O Lord, You are our Father; We are the clay, and You our potter; And all we are the work of Your hand."*

#### Understand the Process

Pain is part of the process before you're promoted to where God wants you in your life. Disappointment is part of the process of being developed so God can use and promote you in ways you have never been used before.

God is more concerned about your character more than your comfort. You will have storms, but if you build on God's Word you will stand. How you develop will greatly determine your destiny. Disappointment many times is nothing more than God allowing us to be developed.

Did you experience a **conviction**, **challenge** or a **commitment** you need to make from this devotion?

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## Step Up instead of Stepping Back

**Genesis 12:1-3** NKJV *"Now the Lord had said to Abram: "Get out of your country, from your family and from your father's house, to a land that I will show you. I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; And you shall be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."*

To step up we have to learn to move from the familiar and make friends with the unfamiliar. If we stay in the familiar we will miss what God is doing because we are called to be a part of changing the world.

**We have to be willing to embrace the unfamiliar.**

What do you feel God's trying to show you or get you to address in your family, job, and finances? Are you enjoying the blessings God has for you? Did you experience a **conviction**, **challenge** or a **commitment** you need to make from this devotion?

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## Prioritize and Practice God's Presence

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**Exodus 33:14** NKJV

*"And He said, "My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest."*

### Four Reminders to Prioritize and Practice God's Presence

**#1 You are the greatest influence in your life. Philippians 4:8-9** NKJV

*Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things. The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.*

**#2 God will never leave you—whether you are good or bad. Genesis**

**28:15** NKJV *Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have spoken to you."*

**#3 God is your Helper. Hebrews 13:6** NKJV *So we may boldly say: "The*

*Lord is my helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me?"*

**#4 You do not have to be fearful. Romans 8:31** NKJV *What then shall*

*we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?*

Which of these four do you need to remind yourself of today? Did you experience a **conviction**, **challenge** or a **commitment** you need to make from this devotion?

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## Purpose and Passion

**Matthew 16:25** NKJV *"For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it."*

**Ephesians 2:10** AMP *For we are God's [own] handiwork (His workmanship), recreated in Christ Jesus, [born anew] that we may do those good works which God predestined (planned beforehand) for us [taking paths which He prepared ahead of time], that we should walk in them [living the good life which He prearranged and made ready for us to live].*

**Revelation 4:11** NKJV

*"You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; For You created all things, And by Your will they exist and were created."*

God has predestined us to live a good life. He has written your story for His Glory. When you try to live out your own agenda, it will lead to a mess. God's agenda for your life will lead to miracles.

God gives us purpose which fuels passion. Passion is an intense urgency to accomplish your God given calling. Passion gives us desire.

**Desire + Determination = Destiny**

What passion has God given you? Do you feel you walking in the good life God made ready for you? If not, why not? Did you experience a **conviction**, **challenge** or a **commitment** you need to make from this devotion?

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### God Wants to Bless You

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**John 14:20** NKJV *At that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.*

**Opposition has to go through God your Father  
and Jesus before it gets to you .**

**2 Corinthians 5:17** NKJV

*"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new."*

**Romans 8:37-39** NKJV

*Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who 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 created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

Safety starts with being in Christ. When you are in Christ, anyone has to go through Christ to get to you. The important thing to learn is to stay in the right relationship with Jesus where you have the protection of Christ in your life. As His Children when we are mistreated –God will protect and provide for us.

**Psalms 46:1** NKJV

*"God is our refuge and strength, A very present help in trouble."*

Do you need Gods help today? He wants to be your helper, refuge, and strength! Do you feel safe? Yes or No; Why or Why not? Did you experience a conviction, challenge, or a commitment you need to make from this devotion?

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## Honor and Glory to God

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### 5 Ways to Bring Honor and Glory to God

**#1 Finish what you start - Philippians 1:6** NKJV *"Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ."*

**#2 - Give - Jesus' very nature is to give - John 3:16** NKJV *For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.*

**#3 - Forgive** - We are most like God when we give and forgive  
**- Matthew 6:12** NKJV *"And forgive us our debts, As we forgive our debtors."*

**#4 - Live in Freedom** - The more we know and apply God's Word the more liberty or freedom we have. **2 Corinthians 3:17-18** NKJV *"Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord."*

**#5 - Make decisions based on wisdom not emotions**  
**Luke 2:52** NKJV *And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.*

**James 1:5** NKJV *"for any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him."*

Which area do you need to work on this week? Giving, Forgiving, or Finishing what you start? Are you making decisions based on wisdom or emotions? Did you experience a **conviction**, **challenge**, or a **commitment** you need to make from this devotion?

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## How to Have Peace

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**John 16:33** NKJV

*"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."*

Peace is the by-product of trusting God's promises, purpose and plan for your life. The first step to having peace is having Jesus Christ in us. Peace is not circumstantial, it's relational.

Apart from the right relationship with God, you cannot have harmony and peace. When you are in the right relationship with Christ, nothing can quench the Peace of God.

Where do you need peace in your life today? Did you experience a **conviction**, **challenge** or a **commitment** you need to make from this devotion?

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### Practicing Peace Leads to Peace

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**John 14:27** NKJV

*"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid."*

**2 Thessalonians 3:16** TLB *"May the Lord of peace himself give you his peace no matter what happens. The Lord be with you all."*

Practicing patience brings peace in the midst of turmoil. In the most difficult time we need to ask God what would He have us learn. God wants us to thrive not just survive. He wants us to triumph over our troubles. Lack of patience causes us to lose our peace.

God's will for our life is more about a behavioral change. Spiritual growth requires two things – problems and patience. We want comfort, God wants character. Peace is really an inward confidence that God is doing something good in our life in spite of the present circumstance.

Is there a behavioral change God is wanting you to make? Where are you looking for comfort that God might be trying to build character? Did you experience a **conviction**, **challenge**, or a **commitment** you need to make from this devotion?

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## The Abundant Life

**1 Corinthians 2:9** AMP *but just as it is written [in Scripture], "Things which the eye has not seen and the ear has not heard, And which have not entered the heart of man, All that God has prepared for those who love Him [who hold Him in affectionate reverence, who obey Him, and who gratefully recognize the benefits that He has bestowed]."*

**Joshua 1:8** NKJV *This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.*

### Read the Word

Spiritual growth is the only guarantee life will get better. God already has the abundant life stored up for you. Loving God will come as a result on meditating on all that God has done for you and your God.

### Obey the Word

You will not have the full abundant life without obeying Him in all areas of your life. The areas you promptly obey God in He begins to bless.

### Be Thankful for What He Has Already Done For You

A grateful heart deepens relationships.

Did you experience a **conviction**, **challenge**, or a **commitment** you need to make from this devotion?

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Jesus paid the ultimate price we may have an abundant life. We must prioritize spiritual growth by intentionally seeking a relationship with God through His Word and having a grateful heart!

**John 10:10** NKJV The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.



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