

Lord, I Choose Your Way

Today's Scripture Reading: Hebrews 3; Joshua 24:15 Key Verse: Joshua 24:15

If it seems evil to you to serve the Lord, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.

Egypt's most renowned wise men educated Moses as a prince of Egypt in Pharaoh's house, and he knew he had a divine call on his life. Yet he missed the mark because he was premature and tried to do things his own way. God had to move him out into the wilderness to deprogram him from the forty years he spent receiving the Egyptian mentality. It took God another forty years to implant a kingdom mentality in Moses!

God also led the children of Israel through the wilderness for forty years. He could have taken them the short way, but then they would not have been educated about the kingdom. God parted the sea, they went across on dry land, and then they saw their enemies drown. God led them by a pillar of fire by night and a pillar of cloud by day. He did everything to show them the kingdom, but they missed the mark because they were afraid, and they were too hardheaded and ignorant to receive kingdom or kingdom principles. In the end they got exactly what they asked for: they stayed in the wilderness, and God took their children in instead.

Now answer this question: Will you submit to the kingdom of God or will you continue to wander in the wilderness of your own way? You would never reject God or openly defy His commands, but there is that one area where you have not crossed the Jordan . . . Keep the covenant of God and enjoy freedom, blessings, and the fulfillment of divine destiny in your life. Anything else is disobedience, and that brings only a curse. As you probably know by now, the choice is yours.

Pray this prayer with me:

Heavenly Father, I am tired of my own way. I submit to You. I give in, I give up, and I give everything to You. I want Your way or no way. Take me all the way into Your perfect will, into Your kingdom, and into Your presence. In Jesus' name I pray, amen.

Who Put That River There?

Today's Scripture Reading: Genesis 12:1–3 Key Verse: Genesis 12:2

*I will make you a great nation;
I will bless you
And make your name great;
And you shall be a blessing.*

God commanded Abram to “get out” in Genesis 12:1. God’s commands rarely come with reasons, but they always include promises. After the command, the Lord told Abram that He would make him a great nation and bless him so he could become a blessing. Even God’s promise to Abram would ultimately test his faith because the Lord revealed only the first and the last step in the process. The rest of the way could be called “the journey of faith.”

Go back to the “holy ground experience” in which God spoke directly to your heart. He did not give a reason, did He? Yet there was some promise spoken or understood. Everything in His command and promise to you is calculated to test your faith—not your saving faith but your stretching faith.

God’s call always stretches you in new dimensions because He reveals Himself “from faith to faith.” He gives you enough to come after Him, and then He gives you enough for you to catch up to Him again for the next piece of the puzzle. Through it all, you grow and are “conformed to the image” of Christ (Rom. 8:29 nkjv).

God speaks to us in part, not in whole. He gives us just enough to get to Point B. But He rarely tells us in advance that the river Jordan separates Point A from Point B. The Jordan represents a death experience we must go through, a risk that we must take, a gamble that we go for. Faith reveals God. It allows us to move in a greater dimension and allows us to see God in a different way.

Are you in the middle of a faith journey today? Are you staring at the boiling waters of a river obstacle you never expected?

Pray this prayer with me:

Lord, I admit that I am confused and discouraged. I just did not expect this kind of trouble when I said yes to You. I am convinced in my heart that it does not matter because I know I heard Your voice, and I know I am going in the direction You told me to go. I trust You to lead me through and over every obstacle between where I was and where You want me to be. Blessed be Your name forever. In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.

It Is Time to Move, Not to Delay or Disobey

Today's Scripture Reading: Genesis 11:31–12:4 Key Verse: Genesis 12:4

*Abram departed as the Lord had spoken to him, and Lot went with him.
And Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran.*

This is the season to move, but count the cost before you do. Do not say you will follow Jesus “no matter what” if your love for someone is holding you back. You have some rethinking to do. God ordained that we have many loving relationships in this life, but He will not tolerate taking second place behind a man, a woman, children, a career, or things of any kind. Do not hang on so long that you force God into rearranging things for you.

At first Abram's response to God was partial and slow. God called him to leave his father's house at once and take only his immediate family. He did not move until after his father died, then he took his nephew, Lot. Eventually Abraham learned to obey God's commands immediately and fully.

God has a place for you to be, and His plans for your life are big. This is not the time to be partial or slow in your obedience by faith. It is the season to move.

Make this faith declaration with me today:

Jesus, I choose to follow You. I count the cost, and right now I let go of that relationship. Your plans are more important than anything else in this life. Thank You, Jesus, for including me in Your kingdom. I know that I can make a difference.

Get Out, Give Up, and See the Promise

Today's Scripture Reading: Genesis 12:1–3 Key Verse: Genesis 12:1

*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.”*

First came the command in verse 1, then the promise in verse 2: “I will make you a great nation” (Gen. 12:2 nkjv). God gave Abram a proposition. “If you do this, I will do this.” If he would leave his country, his family, and his father's house, God would show him a land.

Look closely at Genesis 12:1. God did not say He would give Abram something; He said that He would show him something.

You need faith to break camp without the promise of everything else. You need to be deep in love with God to do what He tells you without knowing for sure that you will be rewarded.

Now, do not confuse faith with mercy. Most of the time you do not have faith enough to get the job done; rather, God simply has mercy on you. Abram, though, moved in such a dynamic level of faith that God compensated him for the loss of his country. That is why God said He would make Abram great nation.

My friend, the blessings of God always make up for the cost of the things you leave behind to obey Him. The real question is this: Would you leave them even without any promise?

Pray this prayer with me:

Thank You, Lord, for all the things You have done and for all the things You have promised to do. Above all, thank You for being You—the almighty God who was, and is, and always shall be. You are worthy of praise, worship, honor, and obedience simply because You are the only true God. I bless You in Jesus' name. Amen.

We Will Be in One Accord Once We All Die

Today's Scripture Reading: Acts 2:1–4 Key Verse: Acts 2:1

*When the Day of Pentecost had fully come,
they were all with one accord in one place.*

There is something fascinating about the New Testament passage that describes the group of about 120 believers who were waiting in the upper room on the day of pentecost. Jesus had already risen from the dead and returned to His place of glory in heaven. The Bible says the people “were all with one accord,” or in divine order.

This is more than just nice. It is miraculous. Remember that there were 120 people in that place. Just how do you get 120 people in one accord? You do it the same way you get twenty thousand in one accord! Everyone must die to self. The 120 were in agreement because they had no agenda—all that mattered to them at that point was obeying the Word of God.

The church must come to the point where it drops all its own agendas. If someone in the church sins, can the people set aside all personal feelings and say, “What does the Word of God say about it?” Can they deal with that sin according to what God reveals in the Bible?

God is looking for individuals who will rise up in every situation and say, “I do not have an opinion. I do not have a personal grudge. I do not have a personal agenda. I am not seeking to acquire any power or status. I just want to determine what the Word of God says and then do it.” You have “one accord” when everyone agrees with God without asserting personal opinions. Are you prepared to die today? (And tomorrow . . . and the day after that?)

Pray with me:

Dear Father, You are my God, my only God, and my source of all wisdom, power, and guidance. Your Word is a lamp unto my feet, and I know I will not stumble as long as I obey Your commands. Lord Jesus, in obedience to Your Word, I take up my cross again today. I deny myself and die to self, and I will faithfully follow You step-by-step in unity with my brothers and sisters in the kingdom. Amen.

I Have the Kingdom on My Mind

Today's Scripture Reading: Matthew 6 Key Verse: Matthew 6:33

Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness.

God wants us to seek and think about His kingdom in virtually everything we do. Since He always looks at the motives of the heart, He knows whether or not you are thinking primarily about yourself when you pray, "God, give me that promotion," or "God, give me a car."

Remember that God blesses you so you can be a blessing to others, and He knows whether or not this principle is rooted in your heart and life. Understand that He gives you all His blessings so you can give them away in many ways. Some things you are to pass down to your children and their children after them. Other things you are to give away to others. God has given you everything you have and everything you are so you can bring others into the kingdom.

When you have the kingdom in your heart and on your mind, you can pray, "Father, give me a new car," or "God, give me that promotion," with proper motives and great effect. Why? You know that you can use those blessings as tools to share the gospel of your risen Savior with those who are under your authority or who work with you. They can create a platform and an open door for you to activate kingdom principles and lead someone into the kingdom through those blessings.

Once you understand that everything God gives you essentially belongs to someone else, He will start giving you more! Those blessings belong to Him, and He invests them in you so you can bless someone else. If He gives you a whole house full of new furniture, do not sell the old at a yard sale and do not call people to ask if they want to buy it. Give away the old furniture and do it in Jesus' name! Tell them God told you to bless them because He blessed you! Then you will enjoy good reaping seasons for the kingdom.

My Father in heaven, my life is not my own; my children and my spouse are not my own; and none of my possessions, abilities, or gifts belongs to me. Everything comes from and belongs to You, and that is the way it should be. Use me to glorify Your name, and show me where to sow my seed for a great harvest of giving, healing, salvation, restoration, grace, and mercy in the lives of others! In Jesus' name I will give, believe, and build the kingdom. Amen.

**You Will Bless Everyone Around
You from Your Overflow!**

Today's Scripture Reading: Malachi 3:10; Key Verse: Matthew 25:21
Matthew 25:14–30

*His lord said to him, "Well done, good and faithful servant;
you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler
over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord."*

In the book of Matthew, Jesus revealed the kingdom principle that God will bless the faithful with more and remove whatever He had placed in the care of the unfaithful.

If all you have is a one-room house with an outhouse, God will give you more if you are a good steward over that possession. Faithfulness is the great leveler in the kingdom. God is essentially saying, "If you understand that whatever you have is to be used for the kingdom, then I will bless you and give you even more. But if you do not understand that, or if you choose to keep things for yourself anyway, then what you have I will take away and give to someone else who is faithful."

God declared in Malachi, "Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, / That there may be food in My house, / And try Me now in this,' / Says the Lord of hosts, / 'If I will not open for you the windows of heaven /And pour out for you such blessing / That there will not be room enough to receive it'"(Mal. 3:10 nkjv, emphasis mine).

Why would God waste His blessings by pouring out so much that we cannot hold it? He is not a wasteful God. When Jesus fed the five thousand in Matthew 14:20–21, He had the disciples collect the remaining bread in twelve baskets. Another time He fed four thousand, and the disciples gathered up seven baskets of food (see Matt. 15:37–38).

What He is saying through the prophet Malachi is this: "I am going to bless you so much that everybody around you gets to be blessed." If you are faithful with what you have, God will bless you so much that you will bless people with your overflow! Now that is kingdom economics in action.

It is time to change. It is time to take up His cross, deny yourself, and follow Him. It makes all the difference.

Pray this prayer with me:

Father, I believe Your Word and trust Your promises. In Your grace, I will be faithful to carefully steward and multiply those things You entrust to me. Make me a blessing to those around me in Jesus' name, amen.

Make Sure You Deal with the Enemy in the Mirror

Today's Scripture Reading: Hebrews 12:5–17 Key Verse: Hebrews 12:13

*Make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be dislocated,
but rather be healed.*

God has written a script for your life that the devil cannot alter. No matter what the adversary throws against you, he cannot change your destiny. Nor can he keep you from reaching the end of your story.

The devil cannot change what God has set into place. No one can change what God has established in your life—except you! You are the only one who can stop you from experiencing what God has planned for you. You literally determine your destiny.

How? You determine your destiny by your obedience. Check your obedience level right now. Do you want to accomplish God's kingdom purpose in your life? Then release every area of disobedience or "lameness" to which you cling. Do not be a worse enemy to yourself than the devil already is!

Pray this prayer with me today:

Lord, I receive Your loving correction and repent of every sin against You and against other people. Forgive me for loving things, appetites, comforts, and my own will more than I have loved You. I offer You my life anew. Thank You for giving me a new beginning today and for placing my feet back on the path of obedience to Your perfect will. In Jesus' name I pray, amen.

**Think Transgenerationally: Why Start
over with Each Generation?**

Today's Scripture Reading: Exodus 34:6–7; Proverbs 13:22; Key Verse: Ezekiel 44:30,
Luke 19:13; Ezekiel 44:30 emphasis mine

*The best of all firstfruits of any kind, and every sacrifice of any kind from
all your sacrifices, shall be the priest's; also you shall give to the priest the
first of your ground meal, to cause a blessing to rest on your house.*

When this verse says “your house,” it does not just mean your physical house or dwelling. Usually in the Old Testament, when the Bible speaks of a person's house, it is referring to his entire family at the time as well as all his descendants throughout time. It is a generational word similar to seed.

God wants us to think about more than ourselves when we do things, plan things, and pray. God is a generational God, the Bible is a generational book, and the Lord has called us to be a generational people—but we are not. We do not pass down generational wealth, and we do not pass along generational knowledge, insights, or skills either. In other words, we do not operate in the principles of God.

Many ethnic groups have operated on generational principles for hundreds or thousands of years. They combine a strong work ethic with generational principles to protect the future and wealth of the family.

Unlike many children of wealthy American business owners, children from generational cultures know they have an obligation and responsibility to work hard, study hard, and carefully guard and increase the things they receive from their fathers. The result is that the family's wealth, power, and influence grow significantly from generation to generation.

Why is the church not doing this? These are more biblical than ethnic or cultural principles. We essentially start over again with every new generation. Even the world would say we are not thinking smart. Are you ready to build the kingdom with the future in mind?

Heavenly Father, I am new at this but You are not. Guide me and teach me to plan and live with future generations on my mind. Regardless of when Jesus returns, I know You have commanded us to “occupy” until He comes. Show me how to plant eternity and righteousness in the hearts of my children for Your glory. In Jesus' name I pray, amen.

I Will Bless the Families of the Earth Through You

Today's Scripture Reading: Galatians 3:26–29; Genesis 12:1–7 Key Verses: Genesis 12:1–3

*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.*

Abraham was more than a man whom God greatly blessed. He also was a blessing to others because of God's promise: "I will make you a great nation; / I will bless you / And make your name great; / And you shall be a blessing." What did God do to Abraham in this verse? He identified the call and purpose of Abram with His call and purpose according to His own schedule and agenda. It would not happen because Abram wanted it to happen; it came to pass God's way.

God still wants to bless all the families of the earth through His kingdom. For that reason, He has to remove us from the familiar to prepare us for the unthinkable and the miraculous.

Most of us in the church are disjointed from the corporate move of God. The truth is that if your vision does not identify with God's overall plan, then it is a "wish-ion." Many are still stuck in the rut of Genesis 12:1—they have not left the "home" of the familiar and the comfortable, and they refuse to separate from the trappings of the past. Others are stuck in Genesis 12:2; they constantly remind us how God is blessing them long before we see any fruit in their lives. Very few reach the heart of the matter in Genesis 12:3, where they understand that everything happens because God has an overall plan for the salvation of the world—and He wants to demonstrate it through our physical and spiritual families.

Think about it in perspective: you are the beginning of a divine plan and eternal kingdom that does not stop at your grave! It flows through your physical and spiritual bloodline on an eternal journey of glory and wonder.

What an awesome privilege we have in Jesus Christ!

Pray this prayer with me:

Holy Father, thank You for including me in the inheritance of the kingdom through Jesus Christ. Now I can pass along the anointing, blessing, and destiny of the call to my children and my children's children. Thank You, Father. Amen.

Miracles Start Where the “Bless Me” Mentality Ends

Today’s Scripture Reading: Ezekiel 43:1–5, 44:1–4 Key Verse: Ezekiel 44:4

*I looked, and behold, the glory of the Lord filled
the house of the Lord; and I fell on my face.*

Do you know what the missing element is in church? God asked me that one day, but I did not know the answer. He said, “The missing element in the church is that My glory is not being manifested.” Somehow I get the feeling that when God’s glory fills a place, everyone in the vicinity knows it.

Is that not amazing? Most of us have to admit that we go to church to get blessed. We come to “consume” instead of to give God glory. That is why we do not see the demonstrations of power that should be common in a truly supernatural church.

We do not seem to understand what God is about. Why are we not saving the world the way we should? Why does the unsaved population continue to grow at an overwhelming rate while the church seems to shrink? The unsaved are not seeing the demonstration of power that we claim should be happening. They do not see God showing up in our meetings, so they follow the devil. They are looking for power, and they will latch on to any kind of spiritual experience in the process.

It is time for the church to be supernaturally alive instead of unnaturally dead. Miracles should be part of our everyday experience instead of religious hypocrisy, hype, and pretense. Once the unsaved see the real thing, once the hurting see evidence that God is alive and well and still working miracles among us, we will not be able to handle the crush of hungry souls at our doors!

The miracles start where the “bless me” mentality ends (because that is when God shows up). Go to church to bless the Lord and expect to see Him show up in His power and glory.

Pray this prayer with me:

Lord Jesus, You are the King of glory. Reveal Yourself to the world through Your people. Begin with Your ability to change me from a religious person into a radically changed and motivated kingdom person. Help me exercise the faith to expect miracles every day of my life and in every place You lead me!

It Is Time to Bless and Be a Blessing

Today's Scripture Reading: The book of Esther Key Verse: Esther 4:14

Who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?

Queen Esther had no idea that her choices and sacrifice would determine the fate of her people, but they did. When Mordecai spoke this prophetic word to her, he gave us a timeless word as well that applies in a special way because we are the millennium generation. I believe that you and I are living in our season of promise. Every generation that has witnessed a millennial change also has been a strategic generation. We need to think, plan, and act with strategic discernment and accuracy as never before. Now is the time to hear God's voice, move in obedience, and make things happen.

If you are not where you are supposed to be, quickly repent, make all the necessary changes, and follow God. Go where He tells you to go and put yourself in the proper place. This is the season for divine appointments and careful movements under the orchestration of God Himself. We cannot afford to be out of position in this season of transition.

Why? God is positioning you for a blessing. Even more important, He is putting you in place to reign in the kingdom so that you, in turn, can be a blessing. You can void the blessings of God and miss your eternal purpose if you do not understand the crucial truth that you are being blessed to be a blessing to others. It is that serious.

Pray this prayer with me:

Lord Jesus, help me to lift my eyes and see beyond my own needs, desires, and limitations. I know I came to Your kingdom for an eternal purpose and that Your blessings are given to me so that I can give them away in Your name. Guide my steps today as I enter my world bearing Your gifts in my heart and on my lips.

Are You an Armani Dresser but a Bargain-Basement Giver?

Today's Scripture Reading: 2 Corinthians 9:5–11 Key Verse: 2 Corinthians 9:6

*This I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly,
and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.*

It is easy to discern whom you really love. All you have to do is look at where you put your money and time. (You are right—this devotional might get a little rough for a while.)

Think about it: do you spend more money on your clothes than you give to God? Do you dress with Armani style but give to God bargain-basement style? If you do, then you love yourself more than you love God. In reality, you are your own Jehovah-Jireh (“the God who provides”). We may not like it, but we cannot hide the truth. It is plain for everyone to see.

It gets worse when we teach our children to grow up the same way. Despite our best efforts, our children—the next generation—will copy what we do more than what we say. If we live extravagantly but save poorly, our children will tend to take things one step further in their adult years. They will ultimately ditch the giving part altogether and bring a greater curse upon themselves and later generations.

God has a plan to make men and nations operate more effectively and efficiently. It is rooted in the law of sowing and reaping. It requires us to see beyond the now and anticipate what must be done for the generations to come. This is the very heart of kingdom living.

God planned for His Son to invade our world and lay down His life even before He created the earth—He made provision for us before we ever existed. What are you passing on to your children and your children's children? Are you teaching them how to be blessed so they can be a blessing, or are you teaching them how to live and acquire goods to live selfishly in this life, while making no provision for the generations to come? Consider your ways and make provision for tomorrow's generation in the kingdom.

Pray this prayer with me:

Holy Father, I repent for my nearsighted ways in the area of giving and sowing seeds for tomorrow. In Jesus' name, I will be a bountiful and joyful giver. In Your grace, I will teach my children by example how to give bountifully and reap joyfully while sowing precious seed into Your kingdom. Amen.

Is Your Life a Determined Declaration or Just a Cheap Bumper Sticker?

Today's Scripture Reading: Philippians 1:19–30 Key Verse: Philippians 1:29

*To you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only
to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake.*

Perhaps you have noticed that the church today lacks staying power. This passage from Paul's epistle to the Philippians must be one of the least-quoted verses in the Bible. The gospel message of the first century echoed Paul's determined statement, "To me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain" (Phil. 1:21). The gospel message preached today sounds like a cheap bumper sticker on a luxury car: "Just be happy." Christians obviously believe—and practice—the philosophy: "If you are not happy in one place, then go somewhere else." It is clear that the devil continues to perpetuate tricks and schemes against us despite thousands of years of advance warning in God's Word.

God gets interested when you get down to the real stuff—feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, and visiting the sick. Why? That is kingdom gospel. It is what God ordained for us do in His Word. Real Christians should declare the Word and demonstrate the works of God equally well. James the apostle put it this way: "Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works" (James 2:18 nkjv).

We do not want to hear about doing, touching, sharing, and stretching for others. We prefer to hear about faith, believing, getting, and moving. We really hate to hear God ask us to make the ultimate sacrifice so that our children's children can be warriors and walk as kings and queens on this earth.

He has called you to make a sacrifice. Lay down what you want in order to do what He requires. That is just another way of saying, "Seek first the kingdom of God . . . and all these things shall be added to you" (Matt. 6:33 nkjv).

Pray this prayer with me:

Lord Jesus, deliver me from flesh-friendly appetites and bumper-sticker Christianity. Teach me how to stand and keep on standing for You and the kingdom. Holy Spirit, help me to declare and demonstrate the true works of the kingdom today. In Jesus' name I pray, amen.

Just Go Forward and Watch What I Will Do

Today's Scripture Reading: Exodus 14:13–18 Key Verse: Exodus 14:15

*The Lord said to Moses, "Why do you cry to Me?
Tell the children of Israel to go forward."*

When the children of Israel stood trapped between the Red Sea and the Egyptian army, they did not see their salvation or deliverance outwardly until they had the faith and obedience to comply with the divine order of God.

The Israelites had to exercise enough faith to obey before they could receive their deliverance. God basically said, "I know the sea is there; just go on. When you do, look back so you can see Me destroy your enemy."

God had explained everything earlier to Moses. His only requirement was that the Israelites be obedient and act on His word. They had to see their joyous escape in the spirit before God would let them see it in the natural.

Do not look at your circumstances without faith. Just be obedient to God's word to you and keep moving forward. Then watch those situations part before you!

Pray this prayer with me:

Lord, I see Your salvation by faith! I see Your answer to my problem, and I am going to keep moving forward. That obstacle is not a problem anymore; I see it now as a victory about to come forth!

Avoid Those False Pursuits

Today's Scripture Reading: Genesis 12:1–3; Mark 10:17–31 Key Verse: Genesis 12:2

*I will make you a great nation;
I will bless you
And make your name great;
And you shall be a blessing.*

God promised Abram, “I will make your name great”—if he would leave his father’s house and enter into a new house with a new name. Abram moved in such a dynamic realm of faith and personal sacrifice that most of the known world knew his name. He always pursued the vision God gave him, even though he made mistakes and sinned from time to time. The Lord blessed Abram in the same measure that Abram sacrificed his will for God’s.

In the book of Mark, Jesus talked about giving up things for the sake of the gospel. Sacrifices are involved wherever you find the genuine vision of God. Too many of us have “wish-ions” (a wish with a God twist) instead of visions. Most “wish-ions” are based on something spiritual we see in another person’s life, which helps explain all the jealousy and backbiting in the church. (People who do not know where they are supposed to be feel a need to protect what they think they have.)

Check your faith. If you have a “wish-ion” and not a vision, do not bother to make a sacrifice. God is not obligated to reward you a hundredfold for pursuing something He never told you to do.

Return to the genuine vision and make whatever sacrifices necessary to fulfill it. God will joyfully reward you beyond your every dream.

Pray this prayer with me today:

Lord Jesus, I lay aside every plan, desire, and project that You never told me to pursue. Please forgive me for my presumption and set my life back on the track of destiny. I set my eyes on the pure vision You gave me, the vision that is too great for me to accomplish alone. By Your grace and provision, I will see Your vision for my life come to pass to Your glory.

We Have Too Much to Do to Whine About the Past

Today's Scripture Reading: Numbers 11; Luke 9:62 Key Verse: Luke 9:62

Jesus said to him, "No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."

God is not impressed with people who are not thankful for what they have. In fact, I have noticed that these people tend to slip into sin faster than most.

When the children of Israel did not get what they wanted, they tended to whine about what they left behind back in "good ol' Egypt." It was a classic case of slip-sliding into sin. It happens when people complain to God about how their lives were "better" back in the situation where they came from. Trouble starts quickly when we begin resenting our move into the kingdom.

The children of Israel failed to realize that while they were complaining about not getting new shoes, their old shoes had not worn out. They whined for a new wardrobe while wearing clothes that were still whole! They were in the middle of miraculous provision and were too blind to perceive it.

Do not slip back to the bondage of Egypt. Adopt an attitude of gratitude and praise God for what He has given you. That qualifies you for even more blessings and abundant provision. Anything less qualifies you to handle life on your own without God's blessings, favor, provision, protection, or guidance. After a while, He will just lift His hand from your life and let you enjoy all the blessings of your "Egypt," including the bondage, brutality, and other "benefits" of life apart from God's provision.

Trust me: your worst day in the kingdom is far better than the best day outside the kingdom. Guard your tongue and be thankful for what you have so you will be qualified to receive God's best for your life. He entrusts His treasures only with the trustworthy and the thankful.

Pray this prayer with me:

Lord Jesus, thank You. Thank You for life, hope, freedom, and an incredible reason to live—Your kingdom. I have no interest in returning to the past. I have set my face toward Your throne and the building of Your kingdom. I have too much to do to whine about something I used to have. All that is only garbage to me compared to what I have in You.

Learn to Be Content

Today's Scripture Reading: Proverbs 10:21; Key Verses: Philippians 4:12–13
Philippians 4:12–13

I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

Are you harboring a well-hidden grudge against God? Perhaps you live in a nice home but you are upset with God because you want a bigger house.

You know that God will give you everything you need, but you are still secretly upset with Him because He has not supplied you with a bigger house. You feel that He has failed you, so you constantly battle thoughts of resentment bordering on bitterness.

Tell me this: how many houses can you live in at one time? Paul summed up the kingdom attitude about wealth and possessions when he said, "I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content" (Phil. 4:11 nkjv).

Too many of us have yielded to the driving compulsion of the world to reach for far more than we need and to lust for what we seemingly cannot have. Satan makes sure that no matter how much money, fame, or stuff we accumulate, it will never, ever be enough! We need deliverance from this consuming mentality.

God wants to multiply your wealth and bless you so you can be a blessing to others. Settle this in your spirit and remember that God's kingdom has no room for selfishness. As long as we act and live like a people constantly consumed, God will not entrust us with great riches or power in the earthly realm. He knows we will just spend it on ourselves or use it for our own gain. God does not want us to live in poverty; however, it is even worse to live in bondage to the love of money! The book of Proverbs says, "Better is a little with the fear of the Lord, / Than great treasure with trouble" (Prov. 15:16 nkjv).

Pray this prayer with me:

Heavenly Father, deliver me from the lust of the world for more stuff. I repent of my consumer mentality. Holy Spirit, teach me how to be content in whatever state I find myself so I can be blessed to be a blessing; in Jesus' name, amen.

It Is Time to Go Back to Business School

Today's Scripture Reading: Luke 2:42–50 Key Verse: Luke 2:49

He said to them, "Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?"

Jesus asked, "Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?" If saints do not come to the understanding that God has set His kingdom up like a business, they will miss out. You must set up that same "family business" in your home and pass it down from generation to generation. (Some modern translators do not use the term business in this verse, but this does not bother me. The parable of the talents in Matthew 25:14–30 still proves my point: God set His kingdom up like a business.)

We have been mishandling the family business in recent generations because we have passed down some bad habits. Many of the families in the church have passed down a business ethic that sounds like this: "Get your paycheck Friday; be broke by Saturday. Buy, buy, buy!"

"That cannot be," you say. Just look at any of your children who work outside the home or do jobs for you. As soon as they get paid, they might buy those basketball shoes that cost ninety dollars or the latest fashion in casual slacks and outerwear at the mall. They will probably spend everything they earned because the culture and their peers (and maybe your example) have implanted it in them to be consumers and not producers. If this is not true of you and your home, then I applaud you. If you are guilty as charged, then I will go on just for you.

Consumer Christians support everybody else instead of having others buy from and work for them! They have nothing, and they continue to perpetuate their problem. They have mishandled the family business, which dooms them to be broke, busted, and disgusted. This needs to change. We need to learn how to conduct kingdom business God's way.

Pray with me:

Heavenly Father, I think I need to some business advice. Whatever I am doing with my family is not working. It is time to find out what You do and duplicate it. Holy Spirit, help me to unlearn the things that need to go and to learn the Father's way of doing kingdom business. In Jesus' name I pray, amen.

Put Your Money Where Your Heart Is

Today's Scripture Reading: Deuteronomy 28 Key Verse: Deuteronomy 28:13

The Lord will make you the head and not the tail; you shall be above only, and not be beneath, if you heed the commandments of the Lord your God, which I command you today, and are careful to observe them.

Did you know that you were to be a ruler? If you shook your head and mumbled “No,” then perhaps you have just illustrated why your community has not changed. God calls us the church—those called out to rule—but we do not manage or rule anything.

It is time to wake up. God called you to rule! When you say you belong to the church, you are saying that you are called to be a manager, a businessperson. You are someone who knows how to transact business and make an honest profit.

The church is supposed to be an army of rulers in the process of taking control of that which God ordained. You do not have to be a super-spiritual person to understand who really controls the nation. The world controls the economy because we do not understand economics. We are still living under the curse earned by Adam and Eve instead of the blessings won by Christ Jesus.

We are consumers instead of producers. As soon as our children make a dollar, they want to spend it on the latest basketball shoe manufactured in another country. Where is your investment? Compare the number of shoes in your children's closets with the number of books in their rooms. It is time to put your money where your heart is.

The world is profiting from our runaway appetite to consume, but this is not what God planned. We are to take rulership over all that God has called us to rule—including the wealth of the nations.

Pray this prayer with me:

Lord Jesus, I repent of living in a permanent slave mentality. It is time to shake off the chains of poverty, servitude, and lack in Your name. Today is the day I stand up in freedom and dare to take hold of my inheritance in You.

You Will Reign As You Give

Today's Scripture Reading: Deuteronomy 15:5–6 Key Verses: Deuteronomy 15:5–6

Carefully obey the voice of the Lord your God, to observe with care all these commandments which I command you today. For the Lord your God will bless you just as He promised you; you shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow; you shall reign over many nations, but they shall not reign over you.

God has called out and assembled the church, the ekklesia, to rule. That leadership mandate has not changed since Genesis. The Old Testament promise God made to Israel, the descendants of Abraham, in Deuteronomy 15 also applies to the church today through the finished work of Christ.

The local church is to play a primary part in the community where God places it. It must always make an impact locally before it goes abroad. Understand that capitalism is part of the system that God set up in this nation, and He has ordained for the church to have an impact on it. Tithes and giving are much more important than most of us perceive. Money, wealth, and economic influence are one of the major thrusts we must make in this world.

God's plan to change this world involves one thing: Him—His kingdom ways and principles. There is no other plan but "Him." He created this world, and He will change it through His people whom He calls the church, the ekklesia, the called-out rulers. This is the reason your giving is so important.

Pray this prayer with me:

Father, everything works together for good in Your economy. Even my faithful and liberal giving in tithes and offerings helps manifest Your kingdom on earth as it is in heaven. Grant me the grace and faith to increase my giving and my impact on my community in Jesus' name.

Stop. Sit. Wait. Hear.

Today's Scripture Reading: Matthew 26:36; Psalm 46:10 Key Verse: Psalm 46:10

*Be still, and know that I am God;
I will be exalted among the nations,
I will be exalted in the earth!*

Do you want to hear from God? Then you must quiet yourself. Go to a place where you can quiet your spirit. This means you need to find a place where there are no distractions—no phones, no beepers, no children, no spouse, no whatever. Then make yourself sit down and quiet your spirit before God.

(Note: It is good and proper to love our spouses and children, to spend time with them, and to do things for them. The worst error we can commit, however, is make them idols by putting them ahead of God in our priority list. Seek God first; then bless your spouse, your children, and your friends.)

We race a lot in this society. Have you noticed that when you sit down and become still, your thoughts are still spinning at high speed? That is because your soul is running. You are not sitting down on the inside. You must be still to hear from God, and the ability to hear from God is the greatest asset any saint can have! (It is also the asset most lacking in our lives.)

It amazes me to see how many books and manuals we have to help us hear the voice of God. When I was born, I had no problem discerning the voice of my daddy. Throughout my years in his domain, I knew my father's voice. I did not go to school to learn how to discern his voice, and I did not go to the library or buy books to learn how to recognize Daddy's voice. I knew my daddy's voice because I knew him.

If you want to know God's voice, all you have to do is know Him. And in knowing Him, you also will know when He is speaking to you. God says in His Word that you must quiet yourself to hear His voice. Slow down.

Pray this prayer with me:

Heavenly Father, forgive me for my foolish schedules and racing lifestyle. I need You too much to miss our appointments in stillness. I will stop, sit, and quiet myself before You because I want to hear what You have to say . . . and I have some things to say to You as well. I am waiting on You in Jesus' name. Amen.

Dare to Trust God

Today's Scripture Reading: Matthew 14:22–33 Key Verses: Matthew 14:28–29

*“Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water.”
So He said, “Come.”*

What has God been speaking to you? Wait, let me tell you. He has been talking about big things and great dreams. In fact, He may have directed you to go to some very uncomfortable arenas. Why?

God believes that you are qualified because you should have grown up enough to trust Him by now. He thinks that you know Him well enough to hear what He says and do something about it.

Are you debating with God? Do not argue, and do not sit around and talk about what you think He is saying. Please, do not say you have to “fast on it” for a while. You should be already “fasted up.” Do not make God change His mind.

I challenge you to hear and obey God. If you dare to trust Him, your life will never be the same!

Make this prayer declaration with me:

Lord Jesus, I am going to unplug my ears and hear what the Father is saying. I trust You to help me every step I take in obedience, and I thank You for it. Today, I decide to hear and obey!

It Takes God to Believe God

Today's Scripture Reading: Galatians 2:20; Philippians 2:13 Key Verse: Philippians 2:13

It is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.

It takes God to believe God. What does that mean? Perhaps you have not grasped the reality that God has been saying some big things to you. It is hard to take something great and run with it if you do not know about it. It may sound strange, but it takes something bigger than yourself to believe what God is saying. In other words, it takes God to believe God.

The "Christ in you" can grasp what God is telling you to do. That only happens, though, when you have been so crucified in yourself that it is no longer you who live, but Christ who lives in you. When the life you now live in the flesh is Christ living through you, the Christ in you answers God's challenge or assignment with a firm "Amen."

When there is nothing but Christ in you, there is nothing left in you to resist what God says. Then you can say, "I am going to do it because I believe God." At that point, nothing can stop you from living out your destiny.

Pray this prayer with me today:

Jesus, I want to believe what the Father is saying. Forgive me for not letting You in me answer God's call. With Paul, I say that I am crucified with You and it is You who lives through me! And I am going to do it because I believe God!

What Can You Do for Me?

Today's Scripture Reading: Psalm 50 Key Verses: Psalm 50:10–12

*Every beast of the forest is Mine,
And the cattle on a thousand hills.
I know all the birds of the mountains,
And the wild beasts of the field are Mine.
If I were hungry, I would not tell you;
For the world is Mine, and all its fullness.*

God has a question for you. Are you ready for it? “What do you think you can do for Me? With all that I have done and created—the very thing you are sitting on, the molecules in the clothes you wear, the galaxy, and all the stars—what do you think you can do for a God like Me?”

We are too arrogant in the church. We even have the nerve to sit up and be proud of “what we have done” for the kingdom.

There is one thing, and one thing only, that we can do for God: obey Him.

We must return to a holy and reverent fear of God. We have presumed too much, and we pretend that He needs us and all the things we do for Him. God does not need us, but He does want and love us.

He is our heavenly Father, but He is also the almighty God, Lord of heaven and earth. He has no interest in a “spiritual one-night stand” with people; He wants a lifetime commitment or nothing. Commitment in the form of obedience is the only thing we can offer Him. Obedience then takes the form of our prayers, praise, worship, and good deeds in obedience to the Spirit.

God is looking for an obedient people who will do what He asks without question. What can you do for God today? You know the answer.

Father, in Jesus' name I obey. Yes, Lord. Yes, Lord. Without question, without excuse, without delay, I will do whatever You say.

Why Are People Not Talking About You?

Today's Scripture Reading: Hebrews 11 Key Verses: Hebrews 11:7-9, 11

By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household . . .

By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance . . . By faith Sarah herself also received strength to conceive seed, and she bore a child when she was past the age.

Are you a comfortable saint who says, "I hear God and believe," but walk in unbelief? You are not alone, but answer this question: after going through everything you had to go through to get where you are, do you really want to watch your children to go through the messes, mistakes, and painful recovery you have endured?

The reason you have had to fight through so much hell in your life is because you had to start all over. In fact, you had to start out from a pit because you were forced to fight through some things in your bloodline that you had nothing to do with. You sweated and cried and crawled your way through a painful divorce, financial ruin, and crushing loneliness in the process, but God was faithful. How dare you stop short of the goal! Why are people not talking about you?

People talked about Abraham. That meant that they had to talk about Isaac and Jacob too, because of the impact Abraham had on his descendants. If you talk about Abraham, you literally have to talk about three generations! Will you have that kind of impact on the generations that follow you? Will people have to mention your children, your children's children, and their children after them if they start in on you?

Think about it. Do you have a grandfather or grandmother whom no one in the family can forget? Do family members say, "If it were not for Granddaddy So-and-so, we would not be where we are today! He was a man of such great faith that he moved mountains." When you open up your mouth, people can hear his kingdom wisdom and wealth in your words, covering three generations and working on a fourth.

Are you building an easy chair or a generational seat of authority? Are you impacting three generations, or will you take your seat in premature comfort and make the next generation start in a hole all over again? Pray with me:

Holy Father, I have come up short once again. I wanted to retire when You want me to refire. Lord, I will obey Your voice and put away my easy chair. Guide me as I work by faith to prepare the way for my future generations. In Jesus' name I pray, amen.

Do Not Fail to Pass the Baton

Today's Scripture Reading: Hebrews 12 Key Verse: Hebrews 12:1

*Since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses,
let us lay aside every weight . . . and let us run with
endurance the race that is set before us.*

I ran the second leg for a four-man relay team years ago. Several teams raced against each other in a single race, and everyone had to stay in his team's assigned lane. We could not hesitate in timed races, and we cannot hesitate in the kingdom race.

When I ran with the relay team, the first man started the race from the starting blocks. After he covered his allotted distance he handed the baton to me. I started running just before he arrived so we would have a smooth transfer and keep up our team momentum. In that moment of transfer, the person completing his course was nearly exhausted, yet he had to maintain his speed until he knew without doubt that I had a good grip on the baton. Once I received the baton, I ran my allotted course and handed off the baton to the third man on the team. The vision of my coach was for the fourth man to cross the finish line before anyone else. He simply expected the first, second, and third runners on the team to do what they had to do to help the fourth man cross the line first. I did not get to feel the ribbon break across my chest like the fourth man did, but I shared in the victory.

Abraham knew that he had the first leg of the race. Isaac took the second leg, and Jacob knew he was number three. It was Joseph who broke the ribbon across his chest when he crossed the finish line and won the favor of Pharaoh in Egypt. No one knew it except through prophetic word, but it was in Egypt that Abraham's descendants began to increase so dramatically.

You may not realize it, but when you got here, someone handed you a baton. Now you must run your course. Perhaps you do not get to jump up and down for a couple of generations. All you can do when you pass the baton to another generation is watch. The Bible says a great cloud of witnesses is watching you run this course (Heb. 12:1). You will join that crowd of witnesses after you pass on, but you must pass God's vision from generation to generation to generation. You are part of a team. Do not drop the baton.

Heavenly Father, guide my feet, strengthen my heart, and anoint me to fly. I have a race to win and a baton to pass on to my children and their children after them. This race will be won not by might, nor by power, but by Your Spirit. In Jesus' name I pray, amen.

I Will Finish This Race and Pass On the Baton!

Today's Scripture Reading: 2 Timothy 4:1–8 Key Verses: 2 Timothy 4:6–8

*The time of my departure is at hand. I have fought the good fight,
I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there
is laid up for me the crown of righteousness.*

Too many of us think life is just about “our season.” It is not. This kind of thinking causes many of us to drop the baton on the exchange in the relay of life. We get selfish. We have only a small window of time to pass on the baton, and timing is everything. If you come up to the next man too slowly, it forces him to decelerate. If you fail to prepare him and come too fast, you can lose all your momentum and team advantage. When I ran track and approached the next relay team member, I would say, “Go, go, go!” and he would start burning up the track. At that point it was my responsibility to give the baton to him.

The race goes not to the swift or the strong, but to the one who endures. You need a good burst of energy at the moment you pass on the baton to the next generation. The devil has destroyed many great men and women of God at the sunset of their lives. The enemy purposely tried to break up their generational handoff so he could make the work of their lives be in vain. If those men or women missed the exchange, the next generation had to start all over.

All of us need to repent for missing crucial exchanges in life. We need to endure so we will have the energy to hand off the kingdom baton to the next generation. Paul set a godly example for us all in his letter to young Timothy when he declared, “I have finished the race.”

Pray this prayer with me:

Heavenly Father, the years are flashing by, and destiny is waiting. I want to make sure I pass on the baton of kingdom faith, hope, trust, power, and wisdom to my children and the generations that follow them. Keep my feet light and my heart strong. Give me a vision of the generations that will follow me so I can keep them before me in prayer and faithful love. I want to fulfill all Your will for my life. By Your grace and power, I will finish this race, pass on the baton, and keep the faith. In Jesus' name I pray, amen.

Plant a Seed to Meet Your Great-Great-Grandchild's Need

Today's Scripture Reading: Genesis 17:1–19 Key Verse: Genesis 17:7

I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and your descendants after you.

A spirit of poverty, which we inherited from those who went before us, weighs down the modern church. Our predecessors loved God and accomplished much, but most of them knew how to tackle poverty and other issues only within the time frame of a single generation. The reason God has not answered many of our prayers is because they mostly center around the word me. We also suffer from a serious case of “one-generation” vision.

God is reluctant to bless you if you do not understand that you represent a blessing line of three generations. Why? He knows you will just waste it. When He blesses you, He is already thinking about how that blessing will touch your grandchild. He wants to change the mind-set of an entire family line, not just yours. But God will hold up everything until you understand that you need to bless the next two generations after you by passing on everything God gives you.

I am serving notice to you right now that you should have a greater love for your unborn children and grandchildren than you have for yourself! Make up your mind to walk out this thing the way God told you to do it.

Stop murmuring, dishonoring, and robbing God. Sow your seed selflessly; declare to yourself: “I realize e that I might not reap the full benefits, but I am sowing something for my son and grandson and granddaughter to walk in. I will spend eternity with them, and they will thank me for the good things I have put in store for them.” Change the future! Sow something today that will change the generations.

Pray with me:

Heavenly Father, You sowed divine promises, blessings, and Your only begotten Son to bless us long before we were ever born. Teach me how to sow seed today that will bless my great-great-grandchildren in the days when I am long gone from the earth. It blesses You when we bless our generations, and I will be obedient to do it. In Jesus' name I pray, amen.