



Make **THIS**  
*your*  
Best Year

*Ever*

Proven 7-Step System  
to Turn Your Resolutions  
into Results

Donna Partow



## **Welcome to An Exciting Adventure**

Welcome to a powerful 21-day journey. If you fully engage in this course material, you will never be the same.

Please do not share your course material with anyone else. Instead, encourage them to enroll and take the journey, as well.

Your first step should be joining the Facebook Group to participate in the Discussion.

I look forward to meeting you!

Love & Prayers,

Donna



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# Day 1: Introduction

## Key Verse:

*You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives. Genesis 50:20*

## 7-Step System for Transformation

**Step 1:** Clarify your VISION.

**Step 2:** PLAN based on your priorities.

**Step 3:** Create a MEASURING SYSTEM to track your progress.

**Step 4:** Establish ACCOUNTABILITY.

**Step 5:** MONITOR your Milestones.

**Step 6:** CELEBRATE your achievements and ensure they are rewarded.

**Step 7:** IMPART your gifts to IMPACT the world.

## Key Points:

- \* Results Don't Lie.
- \* The Greatest Management Principle in the World is this: "Behavior that gets rewarded, gets repeated."
- \* Our thoughts and words can deceive us. We can tell ourselves and others "Oh yes, I'm going to....." But what we actually DO tells the tale.
- \* Our results reveal our true intentions, even if they are not our best intentions.

- \* Our lives are often governed by our worst intentions: to comfort, cope or escape. Or even to control others.
- \* If we're going to succeed, we must identify and conquer the competing intentions that war against the fulfillment of our best intentions.
- \* The journey to Live Your Best Life begins with identifying competing intentions. That's what we will be doing over the next several days.
- \* Your life is worth the time and effort to create your Vision & Your Plan. We're going to do it together.
- \* Play the Perfect Game. During these 21 days, no matter what happens, declare it perfect. Because it's either something wonderful....or it's an opportunity for God to perfect your character.
- \* He will bring people and situations into your life during this class that are specifically designed to reveal those deep-rooted issues that need to be resolved in order for you to Live Your Best Life.

## Step One: Clarify Your Vision

### #1 - Begin With a Powerful Vision of the Ultimate You

This is The Ultimate You. Take pen and paper and write this sentence: "I see a person who....." Then proceed to describe the Ultimate You in vivid detail. Cover every area of your life, each time beginning anew with the words, "I see a person who..."

#### Example:

**Spiritually** — "I see a person who....knows she is profoundly and unconditionally loved by God; who walks with her head held high, knowing she is fully forgiven, fully free. I see a person of prayer and wisdom who walks daily in the gifts, fruit and power of God, practicing His presence moment by moment."

**Financially** — "I see a person who....is financially free through multiple streams of internet income, able to travel the world in service to God and humanity."

**Physically** — "I see a person who stays physically fit by eating God's foods and exercising daily, who takes on new adventures and tough challenges (like climbing mountains!) to stay vibrant throughout her lifetime."

And so on, with each area of your life: finances, career, health, relationships, etc.



***It's your turn:***

I see a person who...

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I see a person who...

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I see a person who...

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I see a person who...

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I see a person who...

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I see a person who...

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**#2 - Envision Your Ultimate Day**

Now you know what you want your life to look like...what kind of person you want to be. But your life is comprised of a collection of days. So now, paint a vivid picture of your Ultimate Day. Again with pen and paper (not on a computer keyboard, because research has shown far more brain activity occurs when pen and paper intersect), finish this sentence, "On My Ultimate Day, I....." Then walk through every detail of your day, including vivid descriptions

of your surroundings.

**Example:**

On My Ultimate Day, I awake to watch the sunrise from my deck overlooking the ocean. Then I enjoy a lovely breakfast of fresh fruit, lean protein and whole carbohydrates before spending two or more hours enjoying my Quiet Time with God.

On My Ultimate Day, I enjoy a vigorous swim in the ocean, followed by a long walk on the beach. I'll do a more intense workout later in the day because I'm training to climb Mt. Kilimanjaro in Tanzania.

On My Ultimate Day, I devote four focused hours to writing books and preparing training modules for [Women's Empowerment University](#). The exercise of my gifts in service to others is a top priority. I focus on those tasks above all others, using cutting- edge technology to deliver the best possible content in the most effective way for my clients.

**It's your turn:**

In my Ultimate Life, I...

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In my Ultimate Life, I...

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In my Ultimate Life, I...

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In my Ultimate Life, I...

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In my Ultimate Life, I...

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## Day 2: Bringing it to Life

### #3 - Record the Vision in Pictures and Audio

Buy a poster board and either draw a picture of the Ultimate You or cut out pictures that represent it. Then record the vision using your smartphone or online recording tools like Audacity. You believe your own voice more than any other. Listen to the recording every day, at least once a day and preferably more often.

#### **Example:**

I recorded my Ultimate Day Vision using the VoiceNotes feature on my iPhone. The first thing I do on my daily walk is press play to get inspired to give it all I've got. I return feeling energized in both mind and body.

#### **It's your turn:**

Note what resource you will use to record your vision and when you'll listen to it each day.

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*Where there is no vision, the people perish. Proverbs 29:18*

## #4 - Turn your Vision into a Personal Mission Statement<sup>1</sup>

The simplest and most powerful tool I've found for writing a Personal Mission Statement is found in the remarkable book, *The Success Principles* by Jack Canfield.

1. List two of your unique personal qualities. (What do people remark about you?)
2. List one or two ways you enjoy expressing those qualities when interacting with others.
3. Assume you are living in the Ultimate World. In the Ultimate World, what is everybody doing?

### **Example:**

1. My two qualities are: powerful and energetic communicator
2. The two ways I enjoy using those gifts: writing and teaching
3. In the Ultimate World, everyone is using their gifts to serve God and humanity.

My mission statement is to use my powerful, energetic communication style to write and speak messages that equip people to use their gifts to serve God and humanity.

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<sup>1</sup> adapted from *The Success Principles* by Mark Victor Hanson

***It's your turn:***

1. List two of your unique personal qualities (what do people remark about you?):

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2. List one or two ways you enjoy expressing those qualities when interacting with others:

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3. Assume you are living in the Ultimate World. In the Ultimate World, what is everybody doing?

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Combine your 3 responses into one Personal Mission Statement:

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**Day 3: Goal-Storming**

Let's begin creating your Vision with a Goal Storm. Move quickly. Throw out everything that springs to mind that you would like to Be, Do or Have. Fill in all 100 lines, even if it's hard. This is your life and it matters!

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
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100. \_\_\_\_\_

Now go back and mark each item as Be, Do or Have. Next, list your Top 10 in each category.

**Top 10 BE**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_

**Top 10 Do**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_

7. \_\_\_\_\_

8. \_\_\_\_\_

9. \_\_\_\_\_

10. \_\_\_\_\_

**Top 10 Have**

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

6. \_\_\_\_\_

7. \_\_\_\_\_

8. \_\_\_\_\_

9. \_\_\_\_\_

10. \_\_\_\_\_

The next step in this process is narrowing it down to your Top 5 in each category. Here's an example:

<b>Be</b>	<b>Do</b>	<b>Have</b>
spiritually powerful	see the world	personal trainer
Soul-control: mentally sharp; emotionally solid & practically disciplined	cruise the mediterranean	household staff to handle all routine stuff
Professionally polished life coach	build the Kingdom in a significant way	financial freedom
Relationally - bless my family w/ wisdom & joy	Live abroad for extended periods: Turkey, Colombia, etc	time freedom
Physically fit & fabulous	Create Top internet site	fabulous size 6 wardrobe

Now create your own Be Do Have Chart:

Be	Do	Have

Next reflect upon the process you've just completed. What did you learn about WHO you want to be, HOW you want to live your life (what you want to do) and WHAT you want to have. Paint the picture in paragraph form completing these three sentences:

*(you can see my example below)*

I'm a person who wants to be....

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I'm a person who wants to do...

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I'm a person who wants to have....

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**Example:**

I'm a person who wants to be spiritually-powerful, meaning that I'm using my gifts as a prophetic discerner with spot-on accuracy.

I'm a person who wants to see the world, including a Mediterranean cruise. I want to build the Kingdom in a significant way by traveling internationally and even living overseas for extended periods of time, beginning with the nations of Colombia and Turkey. To make that happen, I'll need to build one of the top online training programs on the internet.

I'm a person who wants to have time and financial freedom to live the life of my dreams. I want to have a personal trainer and household staff to handle routine stuff so I can focus on staying fit and healthy, while using my gifts to bless the world. I want to have a fabulous size 6 wardrobe.



## Vision Statement

We are honing in on your Vision Statement. Narrow it down to one concise sentence or two, written in present tense (as if you were already living your ideal life):

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## Example: My Vision Statement

I'm a fit & fabulous, power-packed prophetic discerner and financially free internet-based teacher, traveling the world to advance the Kingdom, blessing my family with the gifts of wisdom, joy and provision.

## Day 4: Refining Your Vision

### Key Verses:

*Where there is no vision, the people perish. Proverbs 29:18*

*Write the vision and make it plain on tablets, that he may run who reads it. Habakkuk 2:2*

*May he give you the desire of your heart and make all your plans succeed. Psalm 20:4*

Let's make the Vision a little sharper. Begin by selecting your Top 5. In some cases, you can consolidate items. For example, I combined fit and fabulous (as in wardrobe); financially-free with internet-based teacher; world travel and advancing the Kingdom; blessing my family with joy & wisdom merged with provision.

### Example: My Top 5 Vision List

1. Fit & Fabulous
2. Prophetic Discerner
3. Travel the world, advancing the Kingdom
4. Financially-free internet-based life coach for women
5. Bless my family with wisdom, joy & provision

## Your Top 5 Vision List

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

## STEP 2: PLAN Based on Pre-Determined Priorities

### #5 - Turn your Ultimate You Vision and Personal Mission Statement into a Plan by Setting SMART Goals

#### Setting Smart Goals

**Specific** - We all have a million great ideas and grand intentions floating around in our head. It's time to get specific about the ONE THING you absolutely positively are going to focus on for 21 days.

**Measurable** - Higher-level aspirations like spiritual growth and improved relationships are sensational and certainly worthwhile. But for this class, it's important to choose something you can quantify and measure on a daily basis.

**Achievable** - This is extremely important. You want a goal that stretches you to the limit, but that can be achieved. If you're not sure, try a "gut check." Close your

eyes and think about pursuing your goal. How do you feel?

Too Big/Unachievable. If you feel afraid, filled with doubt or dread, then this goal is not achievable for you right now. It might be achievable for someone else or for you in the future. But if you don't believe you can do it, you can't.

Not Big Enough/Not Worth Achievable. If the feeling you get is "Ho Hum" then you need to aim higher.

Sweet Spot. If you feel filled with hope and expectation-- maybe nervous but excited--then you've found an Achievable Goal.

**Reward Attached** - Of course, achieving a worthwhile goal is a reward in and of itself. But the Greatest Management Principle in the World is this: Behavior that gets rewarded, gets repeated. So pick a tangible reward to compliment the intangible rewards you'll surely experience from a job well done.

The reward should match the achievement. If a Starbucks latte fits the bill, then your #1 Goal isn't lofty enough. It should be a significant enough goal that you're willing to reward it with an expenditure in the \$50-100 range (maybe more, depending upon your finances). Or a half-day of doing something you truly love to do.

Pick a reward that motivates you. Something you would NOT normally give yourself. If you get facials all the time, and you will get one whether or not you achieve your goal, then a facial is not the right reward.

In addition, we include a **Dire Consequence** if you fail to achieve your goal. That's because avoiding pain is an even more powerful human motivation than seeking pleasure.

### Important Note:

Fulfilling your own personal responsibilities does not qualify as a Dire Consequence. Cleaning your house is your responsibility; if you don't fulfill it, that's a separate issue for another class. But it does not qualify as a Dire Consequence. If you hate cleaning, then a Dire Consequence would be cleaning someone else's house. Or inviting people you respect to come tour the worst parts of your house.

In general, all humans fear public exposure or embarrassment and avoid unpleasant tasks. So pick something you absolutely dread doing....and then allow us to hold you accountable to suffer that consequence if you don't meet your goal. (More on that tomorrow)

**Target Date** - This one is obvious. The last day of class is your target date.

### Why Choose An Achievable Goal?

- \* Far better to succeed at a smaller goal then set yourself up for failure with an impossible one.
- \* Momentum is real. A body in motion tends to stay in motion. One small success leads to another small success. Soon you have the ball of success rolling! Whereas failure stops momentum and stops you dead in your tracks.
- \* Emotions are Contagious. If you spend 21 days operating in fear, doubt and dread, everyone around you will pick up those emotions. Your chances of

succeeding are then non-existent.

- \* Spiritual atmosphere is real. When you walk in dark emotions like fear, doubt and dread, you are walking in darkness. God is light and He has no fellowship with darkness. To put it bluntly, you'll be stepping onto the devil's playground.
- \* Satan is Beelzebub, the Lord of the Flies. Flies are attracted to death, including the death of your dreams. When you set yourself up for failure by taking on more than you can handle, you set yourself up for a type of emotional death that's very dangerous spiritually.
- \* We enter His gates with thanksgiving, His courts with praise and His throne room with confidence. If we want to draw near to God (and He will draw near to us), then we need to position ourselves so that our lives are filled with thanksgiving, praise and confidence. It just makes sense that succeeding at small goals is far more likely to fill us with these emotions than failure will.

### **Example Top 5 Smart Goals**

To convert your Top 5 Vision Goals into Smart Goals, go through your list and think of something specific you could achieve (even if it's part of a larger project) over the next 21 days.

1. Fit & Fabulous -> Lose 5 pounds
2. Prophetic Discerner -> Read 2 James Goll books
3. Travel the world -> Re-Do Lifestyle Freedom Webinar

4. Financially-free -> Prepare Soul @ Rest Class
5. Bless my family -> Write 21 Notes To Taraneh

### Your Top 5 Smart Goals

Now Create 5 Smart Goals of your own:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

### #6 - Prioritize!

Focus changes everything. One of my chief mottos is, "You can't wage battles on all fronts." You have your Ultimate You Vision and your Personal Mission Statement. You keep those always before you. But when it comes time to take action, it's critical to prioritize and turn your laser-focused attention on just one item at a time.

#### **Example:**

I wrote my #1 bestselling book, ***Becoming a Vessel God Can Use***, in just four days of totally-focused activity. During that timeframe, I wasn't trying to learn to speak a foreign language! Conversely, I did not attempt to write a book while training three hours a day for a Triathlon. By tackling projects one at a time, you can accomplish anything you set your mind to.

## Identifying Your #1 Priority

- \* We do this by a process of elimination. Each time comparing two items from your list and asking, "If I could only do ONE, which one would it be?"
- \* Look at the Top 5 list you just created. Ask yourself, in the next 21 days, if I could only accomplish #1 or #2...which would it be? The answer becomes the winner of the first round of elimination or #W1. So the winner become #W1.

If I could only accomplish #W1 or #3....which would it be? The winner becomes #W2

If I could only accomplish #W2 or #4 on my list.....which would it be? The winner becomes #W3.

Again. If I could only accomplish #W3 or #5....which would it be. The winner becomes #W4.

Okay! Now you have your FOCUS. #W4

### My Example:

My Top 5 list list right now.

1. Lose 5 pounds
2. Read 2 James Goll books
3. Re-do Lifestyle Freedom Webinar



#### 4. Prepare Soar Class

#### 5. Write 21 Notes to Taraneh

If I could only lose 5 pounds (#1) or read 2 James Goll books (#2), I would lose 5 pounds.

#W1 = Goal #1

If I could only lose 5 pounds (#W1) or Re-do Lifestyle Freedom Webinar (#3), I would lose 5 pounds.

#W2 = Goal #1

If I could only lose 5 pounds (#W2) or re-do Lifestyle Freedom Webinar (#4), I would still choose to lose the weight.

#W3 = Goal #1

If I could only lose the weight (#W3) or prepare the Soar class (#5), I would still choose to lose the weight.

#W4 = Goal #1

Okay! Now I have my total FOCUS. Goal #1. So right now, I am forgetting about all those other projects. I'm not even going to *think* about those things until I've lost the 5 pounds. Scattered energy is the enemy.

### **It's Your Turn**

Goal #1 or #2?

Winner of that...or Goal #3?

So on and so on.

Compare each goal to every other one, each time asking, "In the next 21 days, if I could only accomplish (or make great progress toward) ONE, which one would it be?"

List your goals in order now. (If you want, you can continue the rigorous ranking process by asking, “If I could only do \_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_”, you may do so. That why when you’ve finished #1, you know what to work on next)

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

### HERE’S THE BIG SECRET

Ignore #2, #3, #4 and #5. Don’t give them any thought or effort. Focus exclusively on your #1 goal.

Now, write a summary of why you believe that goal beat out all the others. What was your thought process?

### Example

My # Goal for the next 21 days is: #1 = lose 5 pounds

This is the one I’m focusing on first because protecting my physical health by exercising and eating right (which is what it will take to lose that much) unlocks the door to everything else I want to do. When I’m healthy and filled with energy, it’s easy to read books (#2) and re-do the webinar (#3). The Soar Class can wait until March (#4) and February is a better time to write 21 notes to

Taraneh since it's the month of Valentine's Day and words of affirmation are her love language — I'll give it to her as a gift (#5)

Write your thought process here:

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**Question to Ponder**

1. Are you willing to "play along" with The Perfect Game for 21 days? Are you "all in" for whatever God wants to show you about what's been holding you back? Journal your thoughts:

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## **Day 5: Charting Your Course**

### **Step Three: Create a MEASURING SYSTEM to Chart Your Progress**

#### **#7 - Focus on Implementation Rather than Information**

Now that you have your Focus, let me predict the next thing that will happen. You'll be tempted to gather information...which is okay to a certain point. The problem is this. You probably already know a simple strategy that will enable you to achieve your objective. So what you are really doing is avoiding the hard emotional work involved with putting yourself out there, taking your best shot at it.

Instead, you gather more information. Then some more. You will spend endless hours in the Ready and Aim stages of Ready, Aim, Fire.

Don't do it! Ready, Aim, FIRE FIRE FIRE!!!

Let your motto be this: An ounce of implementation is worth a pound of information gathering. Better to pick one aspect of your project and fully implement it, rather than reading enough books to fill a library and searching enough websites to single-handedly keep Google busy.

Enough! If your goal is to lose weight, go put on a pair of sneakers and take a walk around the block. You don't need to spend hours searching the internet, then going to Barnes & Noble to buy three more weight loss and fitness books. Eat less and exercise more.

Keep it simple. Implementation beats information gathering!

## **# 8 - Break Plans into Projects to Tackle and/or Habits to Develop**

Take a look at the focus item you selected; your #1 SMART Goal. Is it a one-time project to complete? Or does it represent a new habit you'd like to incorporate? For example, this ebook is a one-time project but it also represents the habit of creating new content for the internet. Your focus Smart Goal might be to lose 20 pounds in 90 days. That's a project, but clearly, you will be developing new habits you'll need to carry forward to sustain the accomplishment.

Describe the project you plan to tackle:

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Now make note of the habits that will be required to accomplish it on time...and which of those habits you'd like to carry forward:

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***Example:***

Writing this ebook has required me to develop the habit of writing at least 1-2 hours a day. I've developed a routine of sitting on my back patio with my laptop and a tall glass of an all-natural energy drink, with my cats, dog and a never-ending array of local birds keeping me company. (We had a visiting turtle today.)

This is a habit (writing web content for an hour a day) that I'd like to carry forward even after completion of the project.

***It's Your Turn:***

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## # 9 - Use Measuring Tools to Monitor Forward Progress

Now I am revealing one of my Top Secret weapons! I'm passionate about the process of Charting my Course then Measuring My Progress. This can be accomplished a variety of ways and I have used many different methods:

- \* Break the Project into blocks on a poster board. Put check marks (or color in the blocks) upon completion. For example, I could have drawn 21 blocks on a poster board and each time I finished one of the 21 sections in this ebook, check it off or color it in. I'm a very visual person, so I love this approach. Seeing my progress spurs me on.
  
- \* Outline the project, in list format, in a Word document. As each item is completed, either delete the line so the document becomes shorter and shorter or highlight so the page becomes brighter and brighter. Again, I have used both approaches to great effect.
  
- \* Print the aforementioned document and pin it to a cork board above your desk. Take it down each day and use a highlighter pen to showcase the work you completed so far. (I've done this with several of my books, which I rarely write in order. I outline them in great detail, down to sub-chapters, then just write whatever portion feels like it's flowing.)
  
- \* Stickies on a Mac are a recent discovery. I like to use the disappearing outline approach with this tool. The less text on the Sticker, the more progress I know I'm making.



- \* Google Documents are my current favorite, especially if my goal involves doing something every day (i.e. workouts). I create a spreadsheet with daily objectives then use the paint bucket feature to brightly color in days when the goal is achieved and turn missed days black. With a glance, I can see how things are progressing and whether I need to step up my game.
  
- \* White Board. I used to be a white board fanatic until my teenager snatched them all and put them in her room. She is truly obsessed and probably needs professional care. (Joking, of course!) You can chart your course using various colored markers, then erase or check off completed items.

## **Day 6: Staying Accountable**

### **Step Four: Establish ACCOUNTABILITY**

#### **#10 - Pursue Accountability Relationships**

Successful people pro-actively pursue relationships that empower and propel them onward. One of the primary reasons I founded [Women's Empowerment University](#) was to create an environment where women with a strong sense of mission could come to be empowered through teaching *coupled with* accountability.

Perhaps the most significant problem in many of our lives is the vast chasm between what we know and how we live. Our commitment is to walk with you, motivating you step-by-step, until you reach the pinnacle of personal and professional achievement. My motto is this: *I'll be your coach, not your friend.*

If you really want to **Make This Your Best Year Ever**, you've got to be intentional about seeking out accountability.

#### ***It's Your Turn:***

Who holds you accountable?

## #11 - Have These Four People in Your Life

### ***Cheerleader:***

We all need an upbeat encouraging person who will celebrate our successes. They'll even cheer for us when we fall short. This is the person who thinks it's amazing that you showed up and gave it a try.

Who is the cheerleader in your life?

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### ***Accountability Partner:***

It's also vital to have someone who is reaching for goals, so you can spur one another on. There's nothing like an exercise partner to help you get fit or a business partner to challenge you to reach for the next level. The key is updating one another on a routine basis. Daily is ideal, but at least weekly, depending on your schedule and level of commitment.

Who will be your Accountability Partner as your work together your #1 Smart Goal?

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### ***Mentor:***

This person is above the level of success you desire, whether that success is spiritual, relational, financial or personal. A great place to look for a mentor is your local church or business networking meeting, because it should be someone you can meet with face-to-face on a routine

basis.

Who can you ask to Mentor you as you pursue your Goal?

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***Coach:***

This is a paid professional who can bring an objective perspective and empower you to reach your goals. Your coach is not your friend!!! And don't expect a friend to be your coach.

If you are serious about making a real change in your life, be sure to check out the coaching options available through [Women's Empowerment University](#).

***It's Your Turn:***

Who coaches you?

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## #12 - Don't Hide From Hard Questions or Painful Truths

The role of accountability is essential to empower you to **Make This Your Best Year Ever**. But it will not work if you refuse to give anyone permission to ask hard questions. Or if you run away any time someone speaks painful truth into your life.

Of course, we all need balance. If you give the whole world permission to waltz into your life and tell you everything that's wrong with you and every area they think you need to change, you'll have a nervous breakdown in a week.

But if no one is permitted in, you'll never change...unless it's a change for the worse.

What hard questions do you need someone to ask you on a routine basis? Make a list...then give it to someone with full permission to ask you at any time.

### **Example:**

I have two women who can ask me, any time: Are you taking care of yourself in spirit, soul and body?

### **It's Your Turn:**

What questions do you need to give 1 or 2 people permission to ask you:

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Accountability only works if you commit yourself to honesty and perseverance. If you are not honest...or if you walk away when you stumble...then you were never really accountable in your heart. Commit now: show up every day, report honestly, and stay the course through to completion.

## **Day 7: Why Weekly Reflection Matters**

### **Step Five : MONITOR YOUR MILESTONES**

#### **#13 - Know Your Milestones**

Change never happens overnight, but it does happen every day. Every day, we're either moving closer to or further from the change we want to see in our lives.

When I trained for a Marathon, I knew I wasn't going to be able to run 26.2 miles on Day 1. But I also knew that I had better be able to run at least 20 miles one week before the scheduled event. So I worked with a coach and we identified the major Milestones along the way.

#### ***Example:***

My goal was to complete a 5k within the first month. Then I moved on to training for and competing in a 10k. Next was a half-marathon. Then we moved on to the longer runs: 16 miles, then 18 miles. We knew that as long as I hit these Milestones on time, I had a very strong chance of achieving my ultimate goal.

So in addition to tracking my daily training activity, I Monitored the Milestones along the way.

### ***It's Your Turn:***

What are some significant Milestones to aim for to Make This Your Best Year Ever

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### **#14 - Chart Your Progress**

Every once in awhile a tool comes along that's a real game changer in the area of personal management and self-mastery. Google Forms is such a tool.

You can quantify your Milestones (projects, goals, habits, etc) then Monitor them on an Annual, Quarterly, Weekly and Daily basis. Google Forms' powerful analytical tools enable you to literally chart and see your progress over the course of time.

You can access your chart from your laptop, smart phone or any other device that connects with Google Drive. Best of



all, you can grant your Accountability Partner(s) full permission to check on your diligence at any time, day or night.

## #15 - Take Time for Reflection

**Monitor:** (verb) to listen to transmitted signals on a receiving set in order to check the quality of the transmission; to keep tuned in.

- \* Tuning into God. That's what it's all about. Something we should certainly do daily. But at least once a week, make sure your not getting a lot of static; that you haven't changed the channel.
- \* Monitor your life because "the unreflected life is not worth living."
- \* People over the age of 90 were surveyed about how they would live their life differently. The top 3 answers: "I would risk more, reflect more and do more significant things."
- \* Monitor Your Life with careful reflection: Annually, Quarterly and Weekly.

### **It's Your Turn:**

Make a list of questions you need to ask yourself during a time of quiet reflection once per week. Questions that will empower you to tune in to God, tune into your life, and course correct as needed each week, rather than waiting until you are at the end of your life to realize: I was on the wrong track all along.

Once you've compiled your list, be sure to turn it into a Google Form.

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gratitude empowers the angelic. Grumbling empowers the demonic.

## **Day 8: How to Reward Yourself in a Rewarding Way**

### **Step Six: CELEBRATE Your Achievements**

#### **#16 - Embrace the Greatest Management Principle in the World**

The Greatest Management Principle in the world is this: "Behavior that gets rewarded, gets repeated." It's also the greatest self-management principle. Unfortunately, many of us reward all the wrong behaviors...and often with all the wrong rewards.

#### ***Example:***

You work from home in your own business and woke up with a specific list of tasks to tackle. But rather than getting things accomplished, you wasted the day on pointless phone calls, Facebooking and idle internet surfing. At the end of the day, you're frustrated. So you treat yourself to ice cream to cheer yourself up and make yourself feel better.

What did you just do? You rewarded yourself for all the wrong behavior. And behavior that gets rewarded, gets repeated. That's how the habit of wasting endless days internet surfing develops. Not only that, you rewarded yourself with something that, unless you are ultra ultra fit, is probably the last thing you need!

One of the cornerstones of [Women's Empowerment University](#) is training people to identify and reward the right behavior...with rewards that are truly rewarding and genuinely good for you.

### **#17 - Plan Your Rewards**

In order to make this principle work for you, rather than against you, it's important to identify the key behaviors that are absolutely critical to your success. Then decide, in advance, how and when you will reward yourself for consistently engaging in those behaviors.

#### ***Example:***

As an author and founder of Women's Empowerment University, few things are more critical to my success. The key behavior I need to reward is writing; specifically, finishing writing projects. (Lots of people have reams of paper or hard drives filled with unfinished writing projects; that's of no use!) So that's the behavior I absolutely need to reward so it will repeat.

Then I need to decide what rewards I would most enjoy; that would truly motivate me. Pampering is my favorite. So my reward will be a pedicure. My second favorite thing is travel. So I've purchased a travel book that I'm not allowed to touch until I'm kicking back, enjoying my pedicure. I'm in serious need of a pedicure. (You really don't want to see my feet at this moment and it's June in Florida -- folks, this is a problem!) And I am just dying to sneak a peek at this new travel guide. I am motivated!

### ***It's Your Turn:***

List the key behaviors you need to reward so they will be repeated:

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### **Key Points:**

- \* The size of the reward must match the size of the achievement.
- \* Monetary value should be \$50-100, or more.
- \* Time value: half-day to a weekend.
- \* If the goal you've set isn't large enough to merit a reward that large (or larger), the solution isn't selecting a smaller reward. The solution is choosing a larger goal.
- \* Pick a reward that seriously motivates you. Something you would NOT normally give yourself. If you get facials all the time, and you will get one whether or not you achieve your goal, then a facial is not the right reward. If you have a vacation planned, and you're going whether or not you achieve your goal, then the vacation doesn't count as your reward. (Of course, you can do something extra special during the vacation as a reward.)

## **Consider Your Love Language When Planning Your Reward**

Take the 5 Love languages free assessment tool:

<http://www.5lovelanguages.com/profile/>

### **Words of Affirmation**

If your love language is Words of Affirmation, make sure your reward includes a platform for public affirmation. (Just don't let the nay-sayers get you down.)

### **Quality Time**

Your reward should feature time away from the daily routine, eye-to-eye with someone you love spending time with.

### **Receiving Gifts**

This is probably the easiest one to reward. You can give yourself a special gift. Or give someone you love a list of 10 gifts to choose from when you complete your goal, so you can enjoy the element of surprise.

### **Acts of Service**

Have a loved one ease the burden of responsibility for a day, a weekend or to tackle a special project alongside of you.

### **Physical Touch**

Your reward should feature physical touch, whether a facial, massage or pedicure. Or you can ask a loved one to agree to reward you with x number of foot rubs or long walks holding hands.

## **Is it okay to Celebrate our accomplishments and Reward ourselves?**

The word celebrate occurs 88 times in the Bible!

### **Key Verses:**

*Moses posted the calendar for the annual appointed feasts of God which Israel was to celebrate. Leviticus 23:44*

*You are to celebrate in the Presence of God, your God, all the things you've been able to accomplish. Deuteronomy 12:18*

*Rejoice at your festival....for seven days at the place God designates. God, your God, has been blessing you in your harvest and in all your work, so make a day of it—really celebrate!*

*Deuteronomy 16:1*

*All Israel celebrated magnificently. 1 Sam 11:15 Bring gifts and celebrate. Psalm 96:8*

### **God Is a Rewarder**

*But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. Hebrews 11:6*

*After this, the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision: 'Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your very great reward.' Genesis 15:1*

God knows how we are made. He knows that if we don't take time to celebrate and don't pro-actively reward ourselves for a job well done, we will turn to self-comfort. We will reward all the wrong behaviors....and often with all the wrong rewards.

Now make a list of good-for-you rewards you enjoy:

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The key is this. Only reward good behavior. And only reward good behavior with rewards that are good for you!



## Day 9: Make Yourself Nervous

### #18 - Plot Dire Consequences

We've talked about the power of rewards. And they are powerful. But humans are often even more motivated by the fear of loss than the hope of gain; more driven to avoid pain even than to seek pleasure!

Here's how to put that to work for you: Think of something you hate to do...then, if you fail to achieve your Smart Goal on time, go do it for someone else.

Can't stand washing your car? Great, your Dire Consequence will be to wash five cars in your neighborhood on one Saturday afternoon. Dislike house cleaning? Volunteer to spend a day scrubbing the bathrooms at a homeless shelter. Dislike cooking? Doing dishes? That's what Soup Kitchens are for! You'll be spending a full day at one.

Public humiliation is another great motivator. Would you be mortified to be seen in public in a bathing suit at your current weight? The perfect Dire Consequence might be posting a photo of yourself in a swimsuit on Facebook if you don't lose the weight you commit to losing within the planned timeframe.

You get the idea! My students claim I have the "Dire Consequence Anointing" because I'm great at coming up with things they absolutely, positively do NOT want to do. And frankly, that's often a bigger motivation than the planned reward.

**Example:**

**One of my recent Dire Consequences:** If I didn't finish my ebook on time, I had to post a horrifying photo of my make-up-less face on Facebook. Yes, I already had the photo and it was truly dreadful. It's all the motivation I needed, trust me. I met the goal.

In addition to Rewards, we include a **Dire Consequence** if you fail to achieve your goal. That's because avoiding pain is an even more powerful human motivation than seeking pleasure.

- \* Fulfilling your own personal responsibilities does not qualify as a Dire Consequence.
- \* Cleaning your house is your responsibility; if you don't fulfill it, that's a separate issue for another class. But it does not qualify as a Dire Consequence.
- \* If you hate cleaning, then a Dire Consequence would be cleaning someone else's house. Or inviting people you respect to come tour the worst parts of your house.
- \* In general, all humans fear public exposure or embarrassment and avoid unpleasant tasks. So pick something you absolutely dread doing....and then allow us to hold you accountable to suffer than consequence if you don't meet your goal.

***It's Your Turn:***

List some things that would constitute Dire Consequences for you!

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## **Day 10: Live For Eternity**

### **Step Seven: IMPART Your Gifts to Impact The World**

#### **#19 - Live for the Last Day of Your Life**

There's no higher level of personal fulfillment on earth that reaching a position in life where you know you have something of great value to contribute to the world--and you are joyfully making that contribution.

A life of contribution is one we can all celebrate. Imagine you have come to the end of your days, and people from every facet of your life are gathered around you...what do you want each of them to say in tribute to your life.

#### **It's Your Turn:**

Family:

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Friends:

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Church:

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Community:

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Career:

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## **#20 - Look for Opportunities Every Day**

It's not enough to think about the last day of your life, hoping for the best. You have to live in such a way that you will be remembered as you hope to be. Use this exercise as a lifelong planning tool. Aim for Your Best Year Ever every year and you'll live the Ultimate Life!

### ***Example:***

I wrote that I want my daughters to say, "Our mom put us first. She never lost sight of what matters most. She taught us to love and live with passion--to love God and serve others." I want my friends and members of my church and community to say, "Donna treated everyone with love and generosity. She was gracious at all times, even under pressure."

Obviously, if I expect people to say those things, I'm going to have to live them out first. That will require prayer, planning and action. I'll have to routinely substitute what I know I should do for what I "feel like" doing.

## It's Your Turn:

If the tributes you've just written are to be spoken from the heart by those you've touched, you'll have to do the same. You'll have to live each day with the end in mind. Take a moment to think of just one small thing you can do on a daily (or at least weekly basis) that will make a difference in each area. Keep it simple. Make sure it's measurable.

Family:

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Friends:

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Church:

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Community:

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Career:

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## **#21 - Be Intentional About Continuous Personal and Professional Development**

If you want to **Make EVERY Year a Great Year**, one of the most vital decisions you can ever make is a decision I'd like to invite you to make right now:

Decide to commit yourself to continuous personal and professional development.

## Day 11: God Wants To Bless You with Responsibility

### Key Passage:

*It's also like a man going off on an extended trip. He called his servants together and delegated responsibilities. To one he gave five thousand dollars, to another two thousand, to a third one thousand, depending on their abilities. Then he left. Right off, the first servant went to work and doubled his master's investment.*

*The second did the same. But the man with the single thousand dug a hole and carefully buried his master's money.*

*After a long absence, the master of those three servants came back and settled up with them. The one given five thousand dollars showed him how he had doubled his investment. His master commended him: 'Good work! You did your job well. From now on be my partner.'*

*The servant with the two thousand showed how he also had doubled his master's investment. His master commended him: 'Good work! You did your job well. From now on be my partner.'*

*The servant given one thousand said, 'Master, I know you have high standards and hate careless ways, that you demand the best and make no allowances for error. I was afraid I might disappoint you, so I found a good hiding place and secured your money. Here it is, safe and sound down to the last cent.'*

*The master was furious. 'That's a terrible way to live! It's criminal to live cautiously like that! If you knew I was after the best, why did you do less than the least? The least you*



*could have done would have been to invest the sum with the bankers, where at least I would have gotten a little interest.*

*Take the thousand and give it to the one who risked the most. And get rid of this "play-it-safe" who won't go out on a limb.*

*Throw him out into utter darkness.'* Matthew 25:14-30

### **Key Points:**

- \* God commends risk. The voice that says, "Play it safe" is not God's voice.
- \* God is looking for results. While it's true that God sees our heart, he also sees our results.
- \* God applauds diligence in the Old and New Testament.
- \* *Lazy hands make for poverty, but diligent hands bring wealth.* Proverbs 10:4
- \* *The plans of the diligent lead to profit as surely as haste leads to poverty.* Proverbs 21:5
- \* Faithfulness results in promotion. Notice God made the faithful servants his business partner. That's quite a promotion!
- \* *For promotion comes neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But God is the judge: he puts down one, and sets up another.* Psalm 75:6-7
- \* Promotion always leads to greater responsibility.
- \* *The master said, 'Well done, my good and faithful servant. You have been faithful in handling this small amount, so now I will give you many more*

*responsibilities. Let's celebrate together!* Matthew 25:23 (NLT)

- \* "Hard work beats talent when talent won't work hard"- Tim Tebow

## Clarifying What's Our Responsibility & What's Not

God CANNOT promote you and give you greater responsibility in His Kingdom if you are bogged down handling other people's responsibilities.

- \* *Bear one another's burdens.* Galatians 6:2
- \* Baros = Crushing weight.
- \* *For every man shall bear his own burden.* Galatians 6:5
- \* Phortion = "the expected amount of weight every soldier was required to carry in his backpack" It's talking about basic life responsibilities.

**Clue:** If a person is facing a long-term, on-going problem (more than a couple months), then it likely falls into the category of *Phortion*. No matter how difficult, that person has to step up and learn a new way of living with *God's help*...not yours.

## WARNING!

None of us should be doing for anyone something they should be doing for themselves. Why? Because while we are busy carrying other people's basic responsibilities, two things are happening:

### **First, we are robbing that person of a blessing.**

God honors and rewards those who behave responsibly. So we are literally blocking the blessings of God from

flowing into their lives. We are also preventing the work of perfecting character that's a necessary part of Christian maturity.

Remember: "Adult children" is an oxymoron.

**Second, when we are carrying other people's responsibilities, we have no time or energy left for those things God has entrusted to us.**

God has not anointed you and he will not empower you to do something he hasn't called you to do.

God wants you to work hard. But he wants you to work hard at what HE has called you to do.

Where God calls; God equips.

**Finally, God says those who don't accept responsibility will be thrown into "utter darkness."**

It was referring to that place outside the city gates where the lions prowled around in the darkness, eating the garbage that was thrown outside the walls.

You'll end up in a dark place of regret, self-pity and bitter envy. You don't want to go there.

Far better to be diligent, develop your ability, take responsibility and GET RESULTS. Far better to Live Your Best Life.



# Day 12: Energy Management - Drain, Gain & Pain

## ENERGY DRAINS

We all have things we are responsible for that drain our energy. What to do about them?

### Delegate:

- \* Technology
- \* Mother's helpers
- \* Playgroups or Mother's Co-ops
- \* Family members
- \* Ultimate Delegation is Duplication/Discipleship. We can multiply our effectiveness by empowering others to work on our behalf, whether family members, volunteers, business partners or affiliates.

### Eliminate:

- \* Relationships that don't uplift you
- \* Friends who aren't really friends
- \* Organizations
- \* Commitments you never should have agreed to in the first place
- \* Commitments that have run their course; don't "re-enlist"

- \* CLUTTER is a huge energy drain! Eliminate all the stuff!!!
- \* Simplify your life.
- \* Simplify your schedule.
- \* Simplify your wardrobe.
- \* Eliminate food items and food groups that have a negative impact on your body.

### **Concentrate:**

- \* Do everything you hate (chores & routine obligations) in one day. It will be the worst day of the week, but reward yourself and enjoy the rest of the week.
- \* Do bills one day a month.
- \* Grocery shop twice a month.
- \* Concentrate for an extended period of time to get projects where they need to be.
- \* Put an income stream on autopilot. Do the hard work in one concentrated season of effort, then kick-back and enjoy it.

### **ENERGY GAINS**

- \* Focus on your Best Life.
- \* Operate in your gift and call.
- \* Build on your strengths. Stop trying so hard to overcome your weaknesses. (I'm not referring to sinful behaviors, of course.)

- \* Use a TO DO List. Tackle the MOST IMPORTANT THING FIRST and feel the energy it releases.
- \* Do things that bother you early in the day and be done with them (exercise, household chores, etc.)
- \* Change of scene and society.

## **Day 13: Establish Policies & Procedures**

### **For The Ultimate You Inc.**

Make once-for-all decisions and quit exhausting yourself by re-deciding things.

#### **Some of my Policies include:**

I never lend money. If I can meet a need, I give the money and don't expect repayment.

I never lend my car.

I never babysit a child unless it's a relative and then only if I offer...and I never accept payment.

I never counsel women about their marriage unless I know them incredibly well, and even then, I tread carefully.

I never answer the phone if I don't recognize the phone number.

I don't buy size 10 clothing. I'd like to wear a 6. I usually wear an 8. I will never buy size 10. Period. It's already decided.

I never go to a movie without consulting Plugged In.

I always reward myself for a job well done.

I don't reward bad behavior in myself or others.



## What are your never policies for Ultimate You Inc?

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- \* \_\_\_\_\_
- \* \_\_\_\_\_
- \* \_\_\_\_\_
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## Procedures (Routines)

- \* Routines are your best friend.
- \* Routines run your life on autopilot and remove the exhausting agony of decision for small matters, thus conserving energy for larger issues.
- \* Do things on certain days of the week or month.
- \* Tackle specific tasks at certain times of day following a consistent system.

## Some of my Procedures:

- \* Wake up before or at the alarm. Don't hit snooze.
- \* Start my day with protein, usually a shake.
- \* Limit myself to one cup of coffee (or less).



# Day 14: How to Get More Energy

## ENERGY-IMPACTING QUESTIONS

### Disempowering Questions

Focus on things beyond your control

Usually begin with the word *why*...

Why things happened in the past..

Why things *always* happen to you...

Why someone isn't helping you...

Leave you feeling frustrated, angry, resentful...exhausted.

### Empowering Questions

Focus on things completely within your control....

They are about *what* you can do next and *how* you can make a change.

What's the best way....

Who are the people who can help me move forward...

What are the smartest resources I can use...

How can I improve....

Write out empowering questions before bed and delegate it to your brain.

Pray about it and watch for GOD to bring the answer.

## Want more energy?

### TAKE MASSIVE ACTION !!!

- \* Satis: Latin for enough
- \* Satis-f-ACTION
- \* When we take enough **action**, we will experience **satisfaction**.

### Key Verse:

*Share each other's burdens, and in this way obey the law of Christ. If you think you are too important to help someone, you are only fooling yourself. You are not that important. Pay careful attention to your own work, for then you will get the satisfaction of a job well done, and you won't need to compare yourself to anyone else. For we are each responsible for our own conduct.*  
Galatians 6:2-5 (NLT)

### Key Points:

- \* If you take enough action in the area of YOUR responsibilities, you will be energized by the satisfaction of a job well done.
- \* Pick your pain. The pain of discipline (now) or the pain of regret (later).

## Day 15: Escaping the Great Escape

### Engage fully in the battle for your destiny

- \* Learning to monitor your behavior on a daily basis is one of the most powerful life skills being presented in this module of WEU.
- \* How you do one thing is how you do everything. So change the way you do one thing.

### Stay in the present moment

- \* Resist the temptation to dwell on the past.
- \* Don't get swept up in worry about the future.
- \* Be fully present.
- \* Monitor your behavior: when, exactly, are you tempted to escape?
- \* Be alert to your pitfalls and pro-actively plan how to respond.
- \* There are some things all of us need to be at our best:
  - fresh air
  - correct diet
  - daily walk
  - uncluttered clean home
  - time with friends
- \* If you're not meeting your basic needs, don't be surprised when you want to escape from your life.

- \* We cannot live our Best Life unless we, ourselves, are at our very best.

### Capture Your Current Reality

- \* Take photos of your life. Ask yourself, “Would the average woman want to jump into the photo and live this life....or would she want to run away?”
- \* A picture is worth a thousand words. Have we solved the mystery of why you’ve been escaping?

### Key Passage:

*In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. And the Lord delivered Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, along with some of the articles from the temple of God. These he carried off to the temple of his god in Babylonia and put in the treasure house of his god.*

*Then the king ordered Ashpenaz, chief of his court officials, to bring into the king’s service some of the Israelites from the royal family and the nobility— young men without any physical defect, handsome, showing aptitude for every kind of learning, well informed, quick to understand, and qualified to serve in the king’s palace. He was to teach them the language and literature of the Babylonians. The king assigned them a daily amount of food and wine from the king’s table. They were to be trained for three years, and after that they were to enter the king’s service.*

*Among those who were chosen were some from Judah: Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. The chief official*

*gave them new names: to Daniel, the name Belteshazzar; to Hananiah, Shadrach; to Mishael, Meshach; and to Azariah, Abednego.*

*But Daniel resolved not to defile himself with the royal food and wine, and he asked the chief official for permission not to defile himself this way. Now God had caused the official to show favor and compassion to Daniel. Daniel 1: 1-9*

### **Key Points:**

- \* A major shift is happening. Away from David “everybody blows it all the time, so my sins are no big deal” to Daniel “everyone is watching all the time, so we need to bring our A Game” every day.
- \* 24/7 access to every aspect of our daily lives means sloppy haphazard living is no longer an option for the woman who wants to take her message to the world.
- \* Daniel survived four kings (Nebuchadnezzar II, Belshazzar, Darius and Cyrus) representing three empires: Babylonians, Medes and Persians.
- \* He lived his entire life in captivity but he was never held captive. He was a slave but he was never enslaved.
- \* Faced with difficult circumstances, Daniel chose to show up in a big way. He came up with a strategy to ensure he would be in top form to meet the challenge and resist the pressure to conform.
- \* Don’t conform; show up in top form!

## **Armed for Battle & on Assignment**

God gives us favor that leads to promotion when we choose not to escape but to show up in a big way ready for battle. How do we do that?

War with worship.

War in prayer.

War with decrees.

Rather than escaping, *"Daniel so distinguished himself among the administrators and the satraps by his exceptional qualities that the king planned to set him over the whole kingdom."* Daniel 6:3

### **Daniel show up Armed & Dangerous.**

- \* He understood that Living His Best Life, staying in Alignment with the Assignment; showing up Armed for Battle was a full-time job.
- \* He understood that, because he lived in a fishbowl, his public platform could never rise higher than his personal life.
- \* In this new age of the all-seeing eye of social media (not to mention the government), we need to be armed for battle and on assignment 24/7.
- \* Not even his enemies could bring a charge against his integrity. He walked the walk, he didn't just talk the talk: *"At this, the administrators and the satraps tried to find grounds for charges against Daniel in his conduct of government affairs, but they were unable to do so. They could find no corruption in him, because he was trustworthy and neither corrupt nor negligent. Finally these men said, We will never find any basis for charges against this man Daniel unless*



*it has something to do with the law of his God.”*  
Daniel 6:4-5

- \* When we see something in the Old and New Testament, we need to pay extra close attention: *“Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.”* 1 Peter 2:12

### **Daniel walked CONSISTENTLY.**

*Now when Daniel learned that the decree had been published, he went home to his upstairs room where the windows opened toward Jerusalem. Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to his God, just as he had done before. Then these men went as a group and found Daniel praying and asking God for help.*  
Daniel 6:10-11

### **Challenge Questions:**

1. If people showed up at your house, at three random moments throughout your day...where would they find you?
2. Would they find you Living Your Best Life? Or escaping? Or indulging one of your other Competing Intentions?
3. Does your honest answer to that question... answer any questions or solve any mysteries about your life?

## **Daniel thrived in a situation 99% of people would want to escape.**

- \* His circumstances said, "You've lost it all. You're a slave now." But his spirit and soul rose up and declared, "I was born to rule and reign."
- \* He didn't focus on all he had lost and everything that was against him.
- \* Daniel lived and died in service to those who destroyed his nation and dragged him away in chains...but no one would look at his life and say he had been defeated.
- \* Kingdoms rose and fell around him, but no one could strip Daniel of his position or his authority, because he stayed in alignment with the assignment upon his life.

### **Challenge questions:**

1. What are you trying to escape?
2. Wouldn't it be better to rise up and live victoriously in the midst of a situation where the easiest thing to do would be to play the victim?

### **Time to get radically armed and dangerous:**

*Therefore, since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God. 2 Cor. 7:1*

## People around you, shape you.

- \* Daniel surrounded himself with the right people. His closest friends were people who refused to bow (Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego). They preferred to face the fiery furnace rather than turn their back on God.
- \* These were people who stretched him, who challenged him by their example to be more and do more.
- \* If you escape from every person (and circumstance) God wants to use to mold your character, don't be surprised at your lack of progress.

### Key Points:

- \* We try to escape from every person and circumstance God sends to sharpen us, then we wonder why our lives are dull.
- \* We're envious of others who have the life we want, even though we were not willing to pay the price required to live it.

### Questions to Ponder:

1. Who are you accountable to?
2. Who challenges you?
3. Do you try to escape people who challenge you?
4. Do you surround yourself with people who tell you what you NEED to hear...or only what you want to hear?

## Enjoy the journey

Even when life's journey takes you places you'd rather not go, learn to make the best of it. Notice that in the midst of all his losses, in the midst of incredibly difficult circumstances, Daniel still enjoyed his life. He still had:

Good food

Good friends

Good routines

Good connection to God

## How about you?

Ask God to show you one thing you've been trying to escape. Then ask Him for the power to rise to the occasion. If you do, then you -- like Daniel-- will be ready for:

- \* FAVOR
- \* PROMOTION
- \* KINGDOM IMPACT

## Day 16: The Unescapeables

### Key Passage:

*The Lord gave this message to Jonah son of Amittai: "Get up and go to the great city of Nineveh. Announce my judgment against it because I have seen how wicked its people are."*

*But Jonah got up and went in the opposite direction to get away from the Lord. He went down to the port of Joppa, where he found a ship leaving for Tarshish. He bought a ticket and went on board, hoping to escape from the Lord by sailing to Tarshish.*

But the Lord hurled a powerful wind over the sea, causing a violent storm that threatened to break the ship apart. Fearing for their lives, the desperate sailors shouted to their gods for help and threw the cargo overboard to lighten the ship.

But all this time Jonah was sound asleep down in the hold. So the captain went down after him. "How can you sleep at a time like this?" he shouted. "Get up and pray to your god! Maybe he will pay attention to us and spare our lives."

Then the crew cast lots to see which of them had offended the gods and caused the terrible storm. When they did this, the lots identified Jonah as the culprit. "Why has this awful storm come down on us?" they demanded. "Who are you? What is your line of work? What country are you from? What is your nationality?"

Jonah answered, "I am a Hebrew, and I worship the Lord, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the land."

The sailors were terrified when they heard this, for he had already told them he was running away from the Lord. "Oh, why did you do it?" they groaned. Jonah 1:1-10

Now the Lord had arranged for a great fish to swallow Jonah. And Jonah was inside the fish for three days and three nights. Jonah 1:17

Now the Lord had arranged for a great fish to swallow Jonah. And Jonah was inside the fish for three days and three nights. Then the Lord spoke to Jonah a second time: "Get up and go to the great city of Nineveh, and deliver the message I have given you." Jonah 2:1-2

Then the Lord said, "You feel sorry about the plant, though you did nothing to put it there. It came quickly and died quickly. But Nineveh has more than 120,000 people living in spiritual darkness, not to mention all the animals. Shouldn't I feel sorry for such a great city?" Jonah 4:10-11

**There are some things we can NEVER escape even if we want to and no matter how hard we try.**

### **1. You can't escape your own body.**

Love it or hate it, you can't escape it.

It's the only vehicle you have to travel thru life in, so make peace with it.

### **2. You can't escape the lessons God is determined to teach you.**

God arranges. Did you notice that throughout the story

of Jonah?

God keeps arranging lessons until we finally master them.

You can often determine what lesson God is trying to teach you by looking at the emotions/reactions that are stirred in you...in place of the fruit God desires to see.

Hate/self hate -----> love unconditionally  
 sadness -----> joy in spite of circumstances  
 chaos -----> peace that passes understanding  
 irritation -----> patience  
 offended by rude people -----> kindness  
 short-tempered response -----> gentleness  
 self-indulgent -----> self-control

Anyone can walk in the fruit of the Holy Spirit when life is going their way, the test is to walk in it when everything is against us.

### **3. You can't escape the unfairness of life.**

Life is unfair. But so is God.

If we will trust and obey him, He will give us an unfair advantage called favor.

It was unfair of God to ask Jonah to do things he didn't want to do.

It was equally unfair for God to promote Daniel above everyone else in Iraq.

Don't focus on fair. Focus on obedience.

Will we let unfair situations harden our hearts and make us angry, resentful and alone....or will we allow

them to give us God's heart of compassion?

#### **4. You can't escape the role YOU are playing in course of events surrounding you.**

Even those events beyond your direct control are often indirectly connected to your choices.

Jonah was the indirect cause of the storm. And the fish. And the withered vine. He was the indirect cause of all of that.

No, he didn't create the storm or send the fish or wither the vine. God arranged all of that, but why? Because of Jonah's actions and attitudes. His actions and attitudes set the wheels in motion.

You are the indirect cause of almost everything in your life because of your choices and the choices of those you allowed on board the ship of your life.

Maybe those sailors should have asked a few more questions about Jonah *before* letting him sail with them!

#### **5. You can't escape your own attitude.**

Jonah could have looked at the call of God upon his life as a great adventure and a challenge worth rising to; he chose not to.

Jonah and Daniel both ended up in Iraq, but Daniel's circumstances were far worse!

Jonah was sent for a voluntary short visit to Iraq; Daniel was dragged away in chains against his will with no hope of escape. He was going to live and die in Iraq.



Jonah was just passing through with a message then going back to his life.

Yet Daniel had a great attitude and as a result, made a great life for himself.

Daniel and Jonah are all the proof we need that it's not about our circumstances; it's about our attitude.

## **6. We can't escape the big decision.**

We get to choose and we choose every hour of the day. We can choose to create a great life as Daniel did....or sit and be miserable feeling sorry for ourselves like Jonah.

We think escaping will make us happy, but it's a lie.

Joy is found in living, loving, serving. It's found in making the most of our lives and opportunities.

Jonah tried to escape and was miserable. Daniel stepped up, lived his Best Lives, lived his life to the fullest and was happy.

### **Challenge Question:**

Is spending a day with you like spending a day with Daniel...or Jonah?

### **Key takeaway:**

Daniel took an awful situation and turned it into an amazing opportunity; Jonah took an amazing opportunity and turned it into an awful situation. Are you a Daniel...or a Jonah?

That's the Big Unescapable Decision.

## Day 17: A Life Beyond Ourselves

### Key Passage:

*When I heard this, I sat down and wept. In fact, for days I mourned, fasted, and prayed to the God of heaven. Then I said, "O Lord, God of heaven, the great and awesome God who keeps his covenant of unfailing love with those who love him and obey his commands, listen to my prayer! Look down and see me praying night and day for your people Israel.*

I confess that we have sinned against you. Yes, even my own family and I have sinned! We have sinned terribly by not obeying the commands, decrees, and regulations that you gave us through your servant Moses.

"Please remember what you told your servant Moses: 'If you are unfaithful to me, I will scatter you among the nations. But if you return to me and obey my commands and live by them, then even if you are exiled to the ends of the earth, I will bring you back to the place I have chosen for my name to be honored.'

"The people you rescued by your great power and strong hand are your servants. O Lord, please hear my prayer! Listen to the prayers of those of us 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.

Nehemiah 1:4-11

## Key Points:

- \*The Book of Nehemiah reminds us of the foundations of our faith, challenging us to build/rebuild in the areas of personal and spiritual discipline.
- \*His life challenges us to build with the bricks already at our disposal: prayer, fasting, and the study of God's Word.
- \*Nehemiah goes through multiple seasons of life and several career changes. From a rather mundane job that requires fierce loyalty and protective instincts (cup bearer) to general contractor of a massive project. He then becomes a political leader...then back to serving the King.
- \*Through all these challenges and changes, one thing remains the same: Nehemiah's integrity.
- \*Whatever he finds to do, he does it with all his heart and he does it as if God himself were his employer.
- \*Nehemiah was both a thoughtful man of prayer and a passionate man of action.
- \*His Best Life was not about himself. His Best Life was about other people: he was moved with compassion by their need.
- \*Nehemiah not only recognized the problem, he was willing to be part of the solution, even though it meant uprooting his entire life, walking away from an influential government position to live in a dangerous city.
- \*He understood that the king had the power and the resources to solve the problem.
- \*Our King has the power and resources to solve every

problem we see in our own lives and in our world.

\*God isn't just the God of the church.

\*If your Best Life is about building outside the church walls, God still has all power and authority and can give you what you need.

## Day 18: 7 Principles For Achieving a Lasting Impact

**Principle #1.** Our true Best Life begins, not in our own heart, but in the heart of God.

*What my God had put on my heart to do... Nehemiah 2:12*

**Principle #2.** Before we step into our Best Life, there's often an extended season of quiet preparation and planning. For Nehemiah, it was 4 months. For many others in the Bible, the waiting period was decades long.

**Principle #3.** Preparation begins with prayer but it doesn't stop there. During Nehemiah's waiting period, it's clear The King was revealing a number of key things as evidenced by his conversation with the king (lowercase!) God wants to show you:

1. Realistic timeframe
2. Possible obstacles
3. Key people/gatekeepers you will need approval/backing from
4. Resources & supplies
5. Expect the unexpected

**Principle #4.** You can be very bold when you've spent time with God and are confident you've heard from Him. Nehemiah not only asked for supplies to rebuild the temple and the city wall, but for his own house! It's okay to ask for what you need to be at your best in order to achieve your Best Life.

**Principle #5.** Nehemiah invited people to partner with him. He knew better than to behave as the proverbial bull in a china shop. He recruited others and got them fully on board before moving forward.

**Principle #6.** Building (or rebuilding) something, even with God as the architect, doesn't mean you won't face opposition. But when you have prayed, prepared and recruited others who believe in your Best Life, you'll have the courage of your convictions and the strength to keep going in the face of ridicule.

**Principle #7.** Nehemiah acknowledged God's favor as the key to achieving his Best Life.

## Day 19: Dealing with Opposition

What should we do when we are pursuing our Best Life...and things don't exactly go smoothly? In fact, we start hitting roadblocks, obstacles and opposition?

### Key Verses:

*When Sanballat heard that we were rebuilding the wall, he became angry and was greatly incensed. He ridiculed the Jews... Tobiah the Ammonite, who was at his side, said, "What they are building—even a fox climbing up on it would break down their wall of stones!" Nehemiah 4:1,3*

*But when Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabs, the Ammonites and the people of Ashdod heard that the repairs to Jerusalem's walls had gone ahead and that the gaps were being closed, they were very angry. They all plotted together to come and fight against Jerusalem and stir up trouble against it. Nehemiah 4:7-8*

When word came to Sanballat, Tobiah, Geshem the Arab and the rest of our enemies that I had rebuilt the wall and not a gap was left in it— though up to that time I had not set the doors in the gates— Sanballat and Geshem sent me this message: "Come, let us meet together in one of the villages on the plain of Ono."

But they were scheming to harm me; so I sent messengers to them with this reply: "I am carrying on a great project and cannot go down. Why should the work stop while I leave it and go down to you?" Four times they sent me the same message, and each time I gave them the same answer.

Then, the fifth time, Sanballat sent his aide to me with the same message, and in his hand was an unsealed letter...  
Nehemiah 6:1-5

## Three Types of Opposition:

### 1. Expected Opposition

- \*A certain number of obstacles are inevitable anytime you hop out of bed! It's called being human.
- \*When we set out to do anything great or to do things we've never done before (or do them better than ever), it's going to require hard work and overcoming obstacles we're not used to pushing past.
- \*We should expect that nothing is accomplished without some frustrating experiences, computer glitches, uncooperative people, distractions, inconvenience, etc.
- \*Use your season of preparation as a time to "think 10 steps ahead." (Refer back to Day 12's assignment.)
- \*Pay attention to yellow lights; don't wait until disaster is upon you...then blame the devil for your failure to plan!
- \*Let's be careful not to look for profound implications of the ordinary. There are enough real spiritual battles to wage, enough genuine opposition to overcome and difficult obstacles to surmount. Let's not make ourselves bonkers reading so much into every turn of events that we are immobilized and emotionally drained all the time.
- \*Very often the difficulties we encounter on the road to our



Best Life are simply evidence that we need to work on self-mastery and managing our lives more effectively.

- \*I know in my own life, a lot of what I've laid at the devil's door -- a lot of what I considered "the devil opposing me" or "God trying to tell me I'm going in the wrong direction" -- was really the fruit of not being a wise steward of my time and resources.
- \*Many problems are the result of spreading ourselves too thin. Or spending too much time indulging our coping and escape mechanisms.
- \*We must manage our lives well so we're not in a constant state of chaos, because chaos makes it very difficult to hear when God is speaking or to discern when there really is a spiritual attack coming against us.

## 2.Human Opposition

- \*Name any person in the Bible who did anything significant; you'll quickly be able to identify a person or group of people who adamantly opposed him/her
- \*"The assembly [2 million people] gathered in opposition to Moses and Aaron" (Numbers 16:42). And we think we're facing opposition!
- \*"Everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution" (2 Timothy 3:12)
- \*"Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart" (Hebrews 12:3) Paul. 1 cor 16:8-9

## Nehemiah Faces Relentless Opposition

- \*If the devil's NOT opposing you, there's only one reason. You're not doing anything worth opposing.
- \*The devil's never too busy to rock the cradle of a sleeping saint.
- \*Opposition is actually good news. It means you are doing something worthwhile and the devil is pitching a fit over it.
- \*The more effective you are, the more intense the opposition.
- \*The enemy almost always manages to find a human or two to work through.
- \*Nehemiah relied on God, but Nehemiah also armed all the people, who worked with one hand and held a weapon in the other.
- \*Let's not be naïve, but balanced. "But we prayed to our God AND posted a guard day and night to meet this threat" (Nehemiah 4:9)
- \*Pray knowing everything depends on God; work believing everything depends on you.
- \*In the story about Nehemiah living his Best Lives, three of the chapter headings are about opposition:

### **Opposition to the Rebuilding** (*Nehemiah 4:1*)

### **Further Opposition to the Rebuilding** (*Nehemiah 6:1*)

### **Opposition to the Completed Wall** (*Neh 6:16*)

\*Nehemiah faced opposition before he began, in the middle of rebuilding and even after the work was finished. It started early and it never ended.

\*What did Nehemiah do in the face of all this opposition? He kept right on working, he organized a team, he prayed...and worked. He used all his gifts and talents. He worked around the clock and got it done in an incredible 52 days.

\*He didn't sit around pondering: "Has God changed his mind? Am I doing something wrong?"

### **Here's our promise:**

*See, I am sending an angel ahead of you to guard you along the way and to bring you to the place I have prepared. If you listen carefully to what he says and do all that I say, I will be an enemy to your enemies and will oppose those who oppose you. Exodus 23:20-22*

## Day 20: Spiritual Opposition & Supernatural Provision

### Prayer:

Lord, I am determining in my heart today to jump into the bottom of the boat, grab an oar, and start rowing with all my might. Doing the minimum is never going to get me my Best Life, so right now, I am making the choice to put all my energies forward to achieve that Best Life. Help me to be faithful, steadfast, unmoving, and unflinching in the face of opposition. Help me to tell my flesh to be silent when it tries to scream out that I'm doing too much! I choose to crucify the flesh and press forward with all the strength You give me. As I do this, I believe You will make my Best Life come to pass! I pray this in Jesus name, Amen.

### 3 Types of Opposition (continued)

1. Expected Opposition
2. Human Opposition
3. Spiritual Opposition

### Key Verses:

*But God said to Balaam, "Do not go with them." Numbers 22:12*

*But God was very angry when he went, and the angel of the Lord stood in the road to oppose him. Balaam was riding on his donkey, and his two servants were with him. Numbers 22:22*

*The angel of the Lord asked him, "Why have you beaten*

*your donkey these three times? I have come here to oppose you because your path is a reckless one before me.*  
Numbers 22:32

*Balaam said to the angel of the Lord, "I have sinned. I did not realize you were standing in the road to oppose me. Now if you are displeased, I will go back."* Numbers 22:34

## Key Points:

### 3a. Spiritual Opposition Sometimes Comes From God Himself

- \*God actively opposed Pharaoh because of his pride and because he demanded the worship due only to God.
- \*God actively opposed Balaam because he blatantly disobeyed and was driven by pride and greed.
- \*If you are facing opposition, take a moment to recall where your journey began. When you set your Best Life, was it based on a clear word from God? Or did it begin when you looked at someone else's life and wanted what they had?
- \**"God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble."*  
James 4:6 and 1 Peter 5:5
- \*If pride is behind what you are doing, you are in a heap of trouble. God himself will bring opposition. *"For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder"*  
James 3:16
- \**For God is not a God of disorder but of peace.* 1  
Corinthians 14:33
- \*Be careful who you are yoked to in business and in life.

### **3b. Sometimes Spiritual Opposition Comes From the Enemy**

- \*He can only enter through doors and windows we leave open.
- \*The most common openings are unforgiveness, vows & judgements (I would never be like my mom...) and disobedience (especially defying authority).
- \*Any income you earn in defiance of your husband is ill-gotten gain and the devil has a legal right to take it from you.
- \*If you are single, God is your husband.
- \*Honor reasonable boundaries in your work and ministry. Then trust God to supernaturally multiple your efforts.
- \*Multiplication comes through favor and provision.
- \*Either you can make yourself crazy trying to provide for yourself (opening the door wide to spiritual opposition) or you can cooperate with God and enjoy Supernatural PROVISION.

## **Nehemiah enjoyed Supernatural Provision.**

When we work, we work.  
When we pray, God works.  
When we pray and work in a way that honors God,  
astonishing things happen that confound our enemies and  
we end up with a story worth telling.

Nehemiah rebuilt the city walls in 52 days. He accomplished more in about two months than had been done in that city over hundreds of years.

## **Spiritual Opposition Can Show Up in Bizarre Circumstances**

- \*Read Acts 27-28.
- \*Satan can work, not just through people, but through strange circumstances.
- \*Paul's series of bizarre circumstances included: church leaders begging him not to do what God had just told him to do; being arrested; no wind at all--boat at a standstill; fierce winds and a massive storm; a shipwreck; marooned on an island and bite by a deadly viper. All of which led people to conclude that *surely* God was working against him.
- \*Yet in the midst of it all, God's supernatural favor and provision were evident. Paul kept right on moving forward with his Best Life. He just shook the snake off --and that's what we need to do: shake the snake!
- \**"They honored us in many ways; and when we were ready to sail, they furnished us with the supplies we*

*needed*" (Acts 28:10)

\*Even when the enemy is fiercely opposing you, keep pressing on. God will grant you favor and supernatural provision.



## Day 21: The Secret to Provision

### Key Verses:

*Bring the full tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house; and thereby put me to the test, says the Lord of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you an overflowing blessing.*

Malachi 3:10 (RSV)

*The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must give as he has decided in his heart not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work.*

2 Corinthians 6-8 (ESV)

*And I tell you ask and it will be given to you, seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives. Luke 11:9*

*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing.*

Ephesians 1:3

### Key Points:

- \*You cannot out-give God
- \*Everything you have come from God and belongs to Him
- \*Jesus made the ultimate provision for us on the cross

\*God's economy never goes into recession

\*We are the managers; God is the owner

\*God gives a return on the amount given.

\*Invest a little, your return will be little.

**Decide:** make up your mind and stick to it. Write down your plan of action.

\*Enjoy giving! You tithe because you already have it, not because you want to get it. You give out of gratitude!

\*Grace in this 2 Corinthians verse refers to favor in financial and material needs.

\*God gives back so we can give more to others.

### **Prayer for provision:**

*Give us each day our daily bread. Luke 11:3*

**Write your prayer here**

