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FUEL

FUEL

Igniting Secondary Leaders for Excellence in Ministry

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INTRODUCTION

THE ART OF EXCELLENCE

Yes, you read that correctly. Excellence is an “art”. It is not just to be described as the “spirit” of excellence but there is an art and there is a responsibility to learn the art. Excellence is the quality of being outstanding or extremely good. Excellence is a quality that people really appreciate because it's so hard to find. Excellence is the quality of excelling, of being truly the best at something. Getting an A+ shows excellence. Michael Jordan's basketball career was filled with excellence. We love Picasso and Shakespeare for their excellence. When you see excellence, you should appreciate the work that went into it. So much in the world falls short of excellence.

The examples you just read are ones who understand the art of excellence. An art is a superior skill that you can learn by study and practice and observation. Therefore, there is a system and structure that is required for your excellence in ministry to be completed as an art. From how the greeters in your church communicate, interact, and love on each person that enters to how the musicians have practiced every note, chord progression and transition for one song. It all comes from a practice,

system or structure that leads to excellence. Continual practice, structure and systems help develop the art of excellence.

The art of excellence in church leadership encompasses various principles and practices that can help pastors, ministers, and other church leaders effectively serve their congregations and communities. Here are some key aspects of developing and cultivating the art of excellence in your church:

SPIRITUAL FORMATION

Church leaders should prioritize their own spiritual growth and personal relationship with God. This involves praying daily, studying scripture, and seeking guidance through the Holy Spirit. By nurturing their own faith, leaders can set an example for others and lead with integrity.

You must be willing to become a sponge to the teaching of your pastor. To serve the local church wholeheartedly, you must have the spirit of your leader and grow through their teachings. To obtain that, you cannot allow any person, situation or distraction to contaminate your perception of your leader. An old proverb says, “no one is as deaf as the man who will not listen.” Protecting your ear gates is vitally important as a

leader and worker in the local church. Allowing your view and hearing of your pastor will taint your desire and ability to receive from them. You cannot receive from someone you perceive incorrectly.

Growth and spiritual formation hinges upon that ability to hear.

VISION AND MISSION

A leader needs to articulate a clear vision and mission for the church. This involves discerning God's direction and communicating it effectively to the congregation. A compelling vision inspires and motivates people to actively participate in the church's activities and outreach.

Excellence in presentation is imperative to the survival and forward movement of your church. Habakkuk 2:2, the Lord says, “write the vision”. But that is not all, because after writing, it will be impossible to see from fruition if those who are reading it cannot understand it. So, the scripture continues and says, “make it plain”.

To develop the art of excellence the visionary must be strategic in making the presentation of the vision palatable for the runners' comprehension and digestion.

SERVANT LEADERSHIP

Following the example of Jesus Christ, church leaders are called to serve others. This means prioritizing the needs of the congregation, listening to their concerns, and providing guidance and support. A servant leader empowers others, fosters a culture of collaboration, and encourages the development of their team members.

Servant leadership is a leadership model developed by Robert K. Greenleaf. Servant leaders display characteristics such as strong listening skills, empathy, self-awareness, and the desire to create a healthy work environment.

Servant leadership is a leadership approach that puts serving others above all other priorities. Rather than managing for results, a servant leader focuses on creating an environment in which their team can thrive and get their highest-impact work done.

It requires a *person of character*. A servant leader is someone who maintains integrity, makes decisions based on ethics and principles, displays humility and serves to achieve a higher purpose in the organization.

The servant must be one that *puts people first*. A servant leader demonstrates care and concern for others and

helps employees meet their goals and grow within the organization.

There is a strong need to be a *skilled communicator*. Communication skills are integral to servant leadership, and you will need to ensure you can effectively listen to and speak with your employees, while also inviting feedback.

To effectively be a servant leader, you must embrace being a *compassionate collaborator*. To be a strong servant leader, you'll need to consistently work with others and work to strengthen relationships, support diversity, equity, and inclusion, and navigate conflict in the workplace.

The servant leader must *have foresight*. As a servant leader, you will need to keep an eye on the future and anticipate anything that might impact the organization. You'll also need to have a strong vision for your organization and be the type of person who can take decisive action when needed.

The servant leader must be a *systems thinker*. Servant leaders need to be comfortable navigating complex environments and able to adapt to change. This type of leadership requires strategic thinking and the ability to effectively lead change in the organization.

The servant leader *leads with moral authority*. As a servant leader, it's important to establish trust and confidence in your workforce by establishing quality standards, accepting and delegating responsibility and fostering a culture that allows for accountability.

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

Good communication is essential for church leaders to convey their vision, teachings, and messages to the congregation. They should strive to communicate clearly, compassionately, and authentically. Active listening skills are also crucial to understand the needs and perspectives of others.

BIBLICAL TEACHING

Church leaders play a central role in providing biblical instruction and guidance. They should dedicate themselves to the study and interpretation of scripture, ensuring that their teachings are accurate, relevant, and applicable to people's lives. Effective preaching and teaching help foster spiritual growth and understanding within the congregation.

TEAM BUILDING

Church leaders should build and nurture a strong leadership team. This involves identifying and equipping individuals with different talents and gifts to fulfill various roles within the church. Empowering others and delegating responsibilities allows the leader to focus on their core areas of expertise and ensures a broader impact.

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Emotional intelligence is the ability to understand and manage one's emotions and those of others. Church leaders with high emotional intelligence can empathize with the struggles and challenges faced by their congregation members. They can provide support, encouragement, and pastoral care in a sensitive and compassionate manner.

LIFELONG LEARNING

Excellent church leaders are committed to ongoing personal and professional development. They engage in continuous learning through reading, attending conferences, networking with other leaders, and seeking mentorship. Staying current with theological

developments and trends in church leadership enables them to lead with wisdom and relevance.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND INTEGRITY

Church leaders should uphold high ethical standards and maintain accountability. This involves being transparent, honest, and responsible in their decision-making, financial management, and personal conduct. Leaders who demonstrate integrity gain the trust and respect of the congregation.

PRAYER AND DEPENDENCE ON GOD

Ultimately, church leadership should be grounded in prayer and dependence on God's guidance. Seeking God's will, wisdom, and strength through prayer is vital for effective leadership. Leaders should trust in God's provision and rely on His power to accomplish the work of the church.

By embodying these principles and practices, church leaders can strive for excellence in their service, leading to the spiritual growth and flourishing of their congregations.

CHAPTER 1

FUEL FOR SPEED

A big issue many pastors and leaders battle with as it pertains to the progression and forward movement of the local church is speed. Many churches are moving at a slow pace. The speed of execution for church leaders refers to their ability to initiate and implement actions and decisions efficiently and effectively.

Operating at a slow pace causes the possibilities of momentum to die. People lose interest because of systems and processes that are not readily productive and progressing. When momentum dies, passion dies. Passion fuels the work ethic of a productive and efficient church. The local church does not need passion and excitement crushed by the weight of slow processes and productivity.

Operating at a slow pace gives excuses an excuse to be predominant to assignment. Even while reading this, there may be excuses going through your mind that are allowing rationalization of your pace in transition and advancing with your church.

What is it that keeps you operating at a slow pace? Could it be a failure to expand, learn more, and become a student no matter your years of successful execution? Could it be failure to delegate assignments? Could it be failure to care about failure? “Failing is not the problem.

Failing and feeling fine about failing is the problem.” -
Veda McNair

Many studies and research as well as findings in the book, *SPEED* by John H. Zenger and Joseph R. Folkman reveal *eight companion behaviors for leadership speed*. “The pace of the leader becomes the pace of the overall organization.” Lee Iacocca

1. Innovating – Are there tools and processes we use daily that if we learned them better we could save time and energy?
2. Exhibiting strategic perspective – Provide absolute clarity about strategy and vision.
3. Displaying courage – Take a risk to move faster and ask others to move fast with you.
4. Setting stretch goals – Reinforce the need for speed and achieve results you didn’t think were possible.
5. Communicating powerfully – Keeping others informed enables them to execute faster and more efficiently.
6. Bringing external focus – Look outside your own world to realize speed opportunities.
7. Taking initiative – Most opportunities are not perfect and hidden.

8. Possessing knowledge and expertise – Lacking knowledge slows people down.

Here are some considerations regarding the speed of execution for church leaders:

DISCERNMENT AND DECISION-MAKING

Church leaders must strike a balance between thoughtful discernment and timely decision-making. While it is important to seek God's guidance and wisdom before making significant decisions, leaders should also be aware of the need to act promptly when necessary. Praying for discernment and seeking wise counsel can help leaders make sound decisions without unnecessary delay.

DELEGATION AND EMPOWERMENT

Effective church leaders understand the importance of delegating tasks and responsibilities to capable individuals within the congregation. By empowering others and trusting their abilities, leaders can distribute the workload, accelerate progress, and foster a sense of ownership and involvement among the church members. This allows for quicker execution of various initiatives and projects.

STREAMLINING PROCESSES

Leaders should continuously evaluate and streamline the administrative and operational processes within the

church. By eliminating unnecessary bureaucracy, reducing redundant tasks, and optimizing workflows, leaders can enhance efficiency and speed up the execution of church activities and initiatives. This includes areas such as event planning, volunteer coordination, and resource allocation.

AGILE DECISION-MAKING

In a rapidly changing world, church leaders need to be agile and adaptable in their decision-making. This requires the ability to gather information quickly, assess the situation, and make informed decisions in a timely manner. Embracing flexibility and being open to adjustments as circumstances evolve can help leaders respond promptly to emerging needs and opportunities.

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

Efficient execution is often contingent upon clear and timely communication. Church leaders should prioritize effective communication channels and methods to ensure that information, instructions, and updates reach the appropriate individuals or teams promptly. This can be achieved through regular communication platforms, such as meetings, emails, newsletters, or digital tools.

PRIORITIZATION AND FOCUS

Effective leaders understand the importance of prioritizing tasks and initiatives based on their significance and urgency. By focusing on high-priority

activities and avoiding unnecessary distractions, leaders can optimize their time and resources. This allows them to execute essential actions promptly, rather than getting overwhelmed with a multitude of tasks that might hinder progress.

RISK MANAGEMENT

While it is important to be decisive and swift in execution, church leaders should also consider potential risks and consequences associated with their actions. They need to strike a balance between speed and careful evaluation to ensure that decisions are well-informed and aligned with the church's mission and values. Taking calculated risks can be beneficial, but hasty or ill-considered actions may have negative repercussions.

CONTINUOUS EVALUATION AND LEARNING

Church leaders should regularly evaluate the effectiveness of their actions and initiatives. By reviewing outcomes and seeking feedback from the congregation and other stakeholders, leaders can identify areas for improvement and adjust their approach accordingly. This cycle of evaluation and learning enables leaders to refine their execution strategies over time.

It's important to note that the speed of execution should never compromise the quality of decision-making or the spiritual well-being of the congregation. Church leaders must maintain a balance between prompt action and

thoughtful consideration, always seeking God's guidance in the process.

The speed of execution for church leaders refers to their ability to implement decisions, initiatives, and plans in a timely and efficient manner.

Applying these principles should give you fuel to speed up! The local church needs your speed to execute vision and maximize the opportunity in the “now”.

CHAPTER 2

FUEL FOR SPOTTERS

“Ministry” is from the Greek word diakoneo, meaning “to serve” or douleuo, meaning “to serve as a slave”. In the New Testament, ministry is seen as service to God and to other people in His name. Jesus provided the pattern for Christian ministry—He came, not to receive service, but to give it.

Leaders should do ministry by meeting people's needs with love and humility on Christ's behalf. Christians are to minister to others out of their devotion to Christ and their love for others, whether the other people are believers or unbelievers. Ministry to others should be impartial and unconditional, always seeking to help others as Jesus would.

The content of ministry seems to prioritize ministering in spiritual things, not just practical things. Ministry should certainly place emphasis on sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ with others so they can come to know Him and receive Him as their personal Savior, go on to experience Him as Lord of their life, and go even further to know Christ as the essence of their life.

Ministry can, and should, include ministering to the physical, emotional, mental, vocational, and financial needs of others. Jesus did, and so should we!

In II Timothy 4:1-5, Paul challenged Timothy to “make full proof” of his ministry. It would not be the same as Paul's was, but that wasn't the point. Timothy was to fulfill everything that God had for him to do. What a great challenge, not only to Timothy, but to you today as well. Every one of us wants to have a good ministry. One that is pleasing in the Lord's sight, one that accomplishes much for the Glory of God. However, it is all too easy for us to get off course. We begin to drift at times without realizing that we are moving off-center. Tonight, I want to challenge you to make “full proof” of your ministry. In other words, keep the assignment, get the job.

Every leader must remember that as it pertains to the assignment God has put in our hands, we do not own it. We are stewards over it. Ownership causes you to handle what you have possession of in a horrible manner. Ownership makes you feel like you have a right to call shots, procrastinate, not do. (Example: Car, House)

When many church members hear the word “stewardship”, one idea pops into their minds: capital campaigns. They think about building projects and fundraisers. They can't help it. That's how stewardship has been defined in churches for years. It's become part of our Christian culture.

But stewardship—and being a steward—really isn't a Christian idea at all. It's an Old English concept drawn from the days of castles and realms and the people who ran them. In those days (think Braveheart), people lived

in realms—areas of land approximately the size of three counties today. In the middle of that realm was a castle, where the lord of the realm lived.

Now, the lord owned everything in the realm. He owned all the land, all the farms, all the buildings, and all the commerce. Everything was under his control and authority. Of course, the lord's castle was the nicest home in the realm, but another house nearby was nice as well. That's where the lord's steward lived. The steward didn't own anything, but he took care of everything that belonged to the lord. He managed the crop rotations, the labor force, the taxes, the banking, the commerce, and any of the lord's other interests.

That's what stewardship was all about—asset management. So, in the early 1600s when the translators of the King James Bible needed a word to describe how God wants believers to handle money, the idea of stewards and stewardship was a natural fit.

On one hand, God is the Lord. Psalm 24:1 says, "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof." He owns it all. On the other hand, we are responsible to manage his stuff for his glory. That makes us stewards—or managers—of his resources. And just like the Old English lord held the steward responsible for his stewardship, we are going to give an account of how we manage God's ministry, church and the assignment he has given us. (1 Corinthians 4:2). One thing that is required of such servants is that they be faithful to their master.

Leaders must remember that when we understand our responsibility as asset managers, we can gratefully receive what God passes to us and enjoy what he has entrusted to us. But if we start thinking of ourselves as owners, it becomes much harder for us to open our hands (and our hearts) to use our gifts and motives for the glory of God.

In the text in Numbers 11, Moses needs help. He is leading this large body of people and he needs help. The suggestion of the text is “Moses, if you don’t get help then you are going to stretch yourself too much, you are going to stress yourself out! You cannot serve too great of a people by yourself. Moses, you need help.”

Any assignment you have received in the local church, you were afforded the privilege and opportunity to work in that area because your pastor needs help. The vision that God has given the local church is not at all confined to what you currently see, it’s not determined by the current membership number or the current level of influence in the city. God will never give opportunity to inactivity and if there is a desire for the vision to come to pass then leaders have to be well equipped and humbled to help the pastor lead “this great of a people”.

Placement and elevation is depended upon the pastor’s need. It doesn’t matter how qualified you think you are. If pastor doesn’t have a “need”, there is no mandate for placement or elevation.

We have made a mistake as the church with the progressive elevation model. This mentality and model

suggests that ministry is a scale, and everybody is supposed to move up the scale. We think as if we're supposed to move from "Deacon" to "Minister" to "Elder" to "Pastor" to "Bishop" to "Apostle". However, if there is no need, then there is no mandate for placement or elevation. To then take elevation without there being a need means you have created a need and that need is self-satisfaction.

A major issue that is overlooked is that many leaders suffer from low self-esteem. The reason so many people are title hungry and will kill you to get promotion, step over you, or disconnect from you and join them is because Church has become the easiest place to receive elevation and promotion. Therefore, people with low self-esteem issues jump in church leadership and become hungry for titles and ranks that bring glory and attention to them instead of God. The motive behind their work is to appease their fleshly cravings to feel like they are somebody. The duration of ministerial tenure does not determine the mandate for placement or elevation. The need in the local church determines a mandate for placement or elevation.

Wherever you are privileged to be placed or elevated in ministry, your job is to fulfill the need. You're being called to serve. Luke 12:48 says, "To whom much is given much is required." You are trusted with a position, title or rank but it only means fill more basins with water, wash more feet, humble yourself even the more and serve.

Numbers 11:16-17 refers to a specific context in the Bible where Moses, the leader of the Israelites, was feeling overwhelmed with the responsibility of leading the people. In this passage, Moses shares his burden with God, and God instructs him to gather seventy elders to help share the load of leadership. Let's explore how the concept of being a weightlifter can be related to this passage:

SHARING THE BURDEN

Like a weightlifter who lifts heavy loads, Moses was carrying the weight of leadership for the entire nation. However, God recognized that this burden was too much for one person to bear alone. By appointing seventy elders, God enabled Moses to distribute the weight of leadership, lightening his load.

TEAMWORK AND SUPPORT

In weightlifting, having a spotter or a training partner is essential for safety, encouragement, and achieving optimal results. Similarly, the appointment of the seventy elders provided Moses with a team of individuals who could support and assist him in leading the Israelites effectively. They could provide guidance, offer different perspectives, and share in the responsibilities.

SKILL AND EXPERIENCE

Weightlifters develop their strength and technique through training and experience. Similarly, the seventy elders selected by Moses were chosen based on their

wisdom and experience. Their collective knowledge and insights would contribute to the effective governance of the community.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Weightlifting requires discipline, perseverance, and continual growth. Similarly, the appointment of the seventy elders served as an opportunity for leadership development. By sharing leadership responsibilities, Moses not only lightened his load but also allowed others to grow in their leadership abilities, fostering a sense of shared ownership and empowerment among the elders.

TRUSTING IN GOD'S GUIDANCE

Just as weightlifters trust in their training and follow the guidance of coaches, Moses trusted in God's direction to appoint the seventy elders. This reliance on God's wisdom and guidance ensured that the right individuals were chosen to help carry the load of leadership.

In summary, the concept of being a weightlifter in relation to Numbers 11:16-17 highlights the importance of sharing the burdens of leadership, promoting teamwork, developing leadership skills, and trusting in God's guidance. By distributing responsibilities and fostering a collective approach to leadership, Moses was able to effectively lead the Israelites with the support of the appointed elders.

I work out weekly with a trainer at Planet Fitness. My trainer puts me through rigorous drills and exercises to make me stronger. When I am on the bench press, he is there to assist me in case the weight gets too heavy. In weightlifting, his position then is called a “spotter”. He is there to help when the weight is too heavy.

Every pastor needs spotters. Following the principles provided in this chapter will give you fuel to be an efficient spotter for your pastor and local church. Bear the weight!

CHAPTER 3

FUEL FOR RESURGENCE

The Bible has a lot to say about our motives. A motive is the underlying reason for any action. Proverbs 16:2 says, “All a person’s ways seem pure to them, but motives are weighed by the LORD.” Because the human heart is very deceitful (Jeremiah 17:9), we can easily fool ourselves about our own motives. We can pretend that we are choosing certain actions for God or the benefit of others, when in reality we have selfish reasons. God is not fooled by our selfishness and is “a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart” (Hebrews 4:12).

Jesus spoke to this issue in Matthew 6:1 when He said, “Be careful not to practice your righteousness in front of others to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven.” Those involved in ministry must stay alert to this tendency toward selfishness, because ministry begun for pure reasons can quickly devolve into selfish ambition if we do not guard our hearts (Proverbs 4:23).

So, what is the right motivation? First Thessalonians 2:4 says, “Our purpose is to please God, not people. He alone examines the motives of our hearts” (NLT). God is interested in our motives even more than our actions. First Corinthians 4:5 says that, when Jesus comes again, “he will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and

will expose the motives of the heart. At that time each will receive their praise from God.” God wants us to know that He sees what no one else sees. He knows why we do what we do and desires to reward those whose hearts are right toward Him. We can keep our motives pure by continually surrendering every part of our hearts to the control of the Holy Spirit.

Our motives can be contaminated when we allow people, situations, or time to cause us to become familiar with God, the pastor and the church. Familiarity with God is a disease of the heart and a dangerous spirit that must be avoided in our lives and the Church. We cannot treat God as nothing and at the same time expect Him to do something for us.

The spirit of familiarity is a spirit that causes people who are close to someone to become lax and depreciative of a connection or relationship with someone. It often comes into play with people who are close to those around them who have great anointing. People may be close to their Pastor or mentor so much so that they see their flaws. As a result of this, they stop seeing the spiritual side of the man or woman of God.

Flaws become the doorway to familiarity. You learn his flaws and begin to question the authority and no longer honor the way they use to. We have got to be careful of walking in the path of familiarity. It is detrimental and will restrict the blessing and effectiveness of the local church in your life. Curses came upon those for disobeying and dishonoring the man or women of God just like Moses’ sister, Mariam. This includes honoring

and respecting His messengers whom He speaks through.

Don't become so familiar with your pastor's voice and style of preaching that you cannot hear what God is saying to you through them. The danger with familiarity is it reduces the person to being common. Things that are common to us, we take for granted, we reduce their importance, and we even disregard their input until we need them.

When a pastor becomes common, there is a tendency to lose respect. This creates a barrier between you and the anointing on that gift. The result is that unbelief is fostered, faith is diminished, and miracles are hindered. Familiarity also breeds contention. As a result of seeing the man/woman of God as common, you feel authorized to question their authority, criticize their decisions, and negate the vision that God gives them. This attitude drains the life out of a body of believers and eventually leads to strife and division. This is foolishness and the book of Proverbs 6: 15-18 warns against that.

The spirit of familiarity in church leadership can give rise to several potential dangers that can hinder the effectiveness and impact of leaders. Here are some specific dangers to be aware of:

LOSS OF REVERENCE

When leaders and congregants become too familiar with each other, there is a risk of losing the sense of reverence

and respect that should be present in the relationship. This can lead to a casual or complacent attitude towards spiritual matters and diminish the reverence for God's presence and authority.

LACK OF ACCOUNTABILITY

Familiarity can breed a sense of entitlement or exemption from accountability. Church leaders may be less inclined to receive constructive feedback or correction, and congregants may hesitate to hold leaders accountable for their actions or decisions. This lack of accountability can lead to unchecked behavior and potential misuse of power.

RESISTANCE TO CHANGE

Familiarity can foster resistance to change and innovation within the church. When leaders and congregants are comfortable with the status quo, they may resist new ideas, methods, or initiatives that could bring growth and revitalization. This resistance can hinder progress and prevent the church from effectively adapting to evolving needs and opportunities.

STAGNATION AND LACK OF GROWTH

The spirit of familiarity can lead to a stagnant or complacent environment where there is little room for growth and development. Leaders may become content with maintaining existing programs and structures without seeking fresh insights or pursuing new avenues for ministry. As a result, the church may struggle to

engage and reach new members or address changing societal needs.

LOSS OF VISION AND PASSION

Over time, familiarity can erode the original vision and passion that once propelled church leaders forward. When leaders and congregants grow accustomed to routine and familiarity, the fire and enthusiasm for God's mission may wane. This can result in a lack of motivation and a diminished sense of purpose, which can hinder effective leadership and impact.

REDUCED EFFECTIVENESS IN MINISTRY

The spirit of familiarity can hinder leaders' ability to connect deeply with their congregation and effectively address their spiritual needs. When leaders become overly familiar, they may struggle to empathize, engage, and minister to individuals on a personal level. This can limit the impact of pastoral care, discipleship, and mentoring within the church.

Resurgence is the answer to familiarity. Resurgence is a process in which something starts to grow, develop, or become successful again. A new increase of activity or interest in a particular subject or idea that had been forgotten for some time. Many leaders need a moment of resurgence.

Our motives for ministry must remain pure and authentic. When we become familiar with what God has

given us, we lose respect for it, our own agenda creeps in and purpose is lost. Therefore, resurgence is necessary. A fresh look at our God, our pastor, our local church, and our assignment. Then allow God to lead us in being on fire again.

To combat the dangers of the spirit of familiarity, church leaders should cultivate an atmosphere of reverence, humility, and openness. Regularly seeking God's guidance, inviting accountability, embracing change, and continually renewing their passion and vision can help leaders and congregants break free from the trappings of familiarity and foster a vibrant and impactful church community.

Pray for God to give you a moment of resurgence. Pray this prayer:

Father God in the name of Jesus, refresh me! I ask now for a moment of resurgence. I have become too familiar with you, your voice, your church, my assignment and I need resurgence. I say a lamentation of David, "create in me a clean heart and renew in me the right spirit." I want to love you afresh. I want to see my pastor from a pure place. I want to serve my church with the proper motives. Cleanse me Lord from whatever caused familiarity to set in. Clean my heart from hurt. Clear my mind from what I have heard and seen. Clear my thought life and give me another opportunity to serve you. I love you and ask for this moment of resurgence.

In Jesus name, AMEN.

CHAPTER 4

FUEL FOR ASSIGNMENT

I feel a part of my kingdom assignment is to pull out of people everything that God has destined for them to become. No matter the level of fear, insecurity, doubt or how low the confidence is, I am one that will keep pulling on you until you become. There is not one individual that has submitted to me that has not at some point been mad with me to a certain degree. But what matters is answering the question of “what does God desire you to become?”

Many times, we say don't leave this earth having not completed what God called you to do but more severe or imperative, don't go through life knowing what God has called you to do and failing to move forward in it. What a waste for God to create you for a specific purpose and you live but never “become”. You reading this book is my act of pulling on you to “become”. Your pastor needs you to become. Your church needs you to become. “You” need you to become.

Become, which means to begin to be. To come into existence. What if I told you that you don't really exist until you begin to “BE” what you exist for?

I was imparting into some leaders about my intent for elevation in 2021 and I was sharing with them the

importance and significance of “titles”. Much like many in my generation I had the mentality and with some purity, that I don’t need a title, I will just do the work. Then God began to deal with me because many people are sitting on certain callings and anointed positioning that they are to be operating under but allowed false humility to cause them to insult God. It is an insult to God for Him to ordain you to be something you don’t want to be called.

Because of the contamination of titles within the church, we have moved in effort not to be categorized as unauthentic and we suppressed an assignment that was God-given. Not accepting a title gives you the convenience of operation. If I don’t have the title, I’m not bound to the responsibility.

Then there is the component of the natural and spiritual warfare that comes with said title. Some deny elevation because it makes you more visible and the more visible you are the more you can’t hide your flaws. Elevation will either mature you or expose you.

Whenever God calls you to be something and you say “No” what you say to God is “you don’t know what you’re doing”. He knew you before He called you.

Allow me to challenge you. You are reading this and have been saved but still have not yet “become”. You’re living on the surface of what God desires from you. Many have failed to “become” because of different inward battles and contaminated surroundings that you have used as an excuse to fail. On the other hand, many have not

“become” because you have been boxed into what people think you should be. You must be careful not to become content because you will become who/what all people want you to become and never become who God designed you to become and thereby fulfill a false mandate and please a god you created in people and their expectations instead of pleasing the God who created you and gave you an ordained expectation!

Whatever God has called you to be, you must break out of the expectations of those who want to control the narrative of your anointing. You are more than a singer. You are more than usher. You are more than a money counter! There is more to you and you must become all God destined for you to become.

Two perspectives to understand. I’m after two types of people. Reading this you can admit that YOU are the reason you have not become. You have come up with excuses, justifications, and tainted rationalizations as to why you are not all God has called and designed for you to be. Then, many are suffering and suffocating spiritually because people have a chokehold on them through their expectations of them.

A reality is that many are stuck in both categories because the reason they have doubted themselves, made excuses, slipped into fear is because for too long the wrong people have put them in a box and their limited exposure, set expectations for you that were so low that it has suffocated

the vastness of who you are! I want you to know you are graced for the assignment.

To be graced for something means to be approved, favored! Grace as we know it is the unmerited favor of God but deeper than that, Grace is the empowering presence of God enabling you to be who God has predestined you to become. You are graced for the assignment. Which means that, that which God has called you to, assigned to you, can be accomplished by you. If He called you to it, He has empowered you for it. If you are graced for something you cannot be caught up looking at what others are graced for and becoming jealous or intimidated.

They are graced for what they are graced for, and you are graced for what you are graced for. Stop denying what God has empowered you to do. When He created you, He set you apart for the assignment and equipped you for the assignment. Jeremiah 1:5 says, “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born, I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations.” That scripture applies to you as well.

Embrace what God has called you to do and stop suppressing the ability He has given you to become whom He has ordained you to be. That’s why He called you because He created you for the assignment! You must accept what He has called you to carry.

You can never give birth to what you are graced for if you are not willing to first take on the burden of what it is you

must carry. Mary shows us how to say “yes” for what you have been graced by God to become!

The angel, Gabriel, greeted Mary, “... the angel said to her, Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. But when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying...” Luke 1:28, 29. We can correctly understand the meaning of “greatly troubled” by our English words of “petrified” and “scared to death”.

I am sure when you consider your assignment, you can relate to the kind of fears that came to Mary’s mind:

THE FEAR OF CRITICISM

“What are people going to think? I haven’t been joined in marriage and I’ll be having a baby.” If you are going to work in the kingdom of God, you must be ready to be criticized. You cannot be afraid of what people have to say about what God has called you to do. I never get upset when people question my assignment. Why should I be disturbed about what people have to say about my assignment when it’s my assignment?

THE FEAR OF UNCERTAINTY

“What are all the things that will happen to me?” Our mistake is trying to rationalize our hesitation by paying too much attention what may happen to us while working our assignment. We are too busy trying to calculate everything that might take place, what might happen while doing our assignment. I may lose friends, money,

family, I'm going to have to give up some things. Here is the truth- there is a lot that's going to happen to you when you're working for Christ but you're working for Christ! If He called you to it, He will cover you while you work through it!

THE FEAR OF INADEQUACY

“Can I handle all of this?” Your gift may not be as strong as their gift and your anointing may not even be on the level of their anointing, but you have your anointing! If God created you for a purpose and you want to carry out your purpose in the same power and anointing as somebody else, then one of you must die. What God called them to He didn't need you to duplicate or copy. You need to operate and be confident operating where God has called you to operate.

THE FEAR OF CHANGE

“What changes will all this bring about?” The problem is change challenges our mind, change challenges our “current”, tradition, repetitive thought pattern. Change challenges what we have believed, been taught, and have followed. Whenever God wants to shift you, you must embrace change.

The same four fears can keep any one of us from being used by God. Mary gives us an example of three qualities that kept these things from controlling her and enabled her to be used by God:

- ❖ The desire to do God's will.

- ❖ The willingness to pay the cost
- ❖ The faith to trust God's promise

GOD USES PEOPLE WHO DESIRE TO DO HIS WILL

We must want to do God's will more than anything else. God has a definite purpose for what He wants us to be and what He wants us to do. But He will not make us do it. If we do not have a strong desire to do God's will, we will miss the purpose He has for our life.

There are three things about Mary that reveal she earnestly desired to know and do God's will.

1. She was joyful and enthusiastic about doing God's will. Luke 1:46, 47, "And my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior." Mary was not like some who say, "Well, I know God wants me to do so and so. That's not what I wanted to do, but I guess I'll have to just grin and bear it." Mary was joyful and enthusiastic about doing God's will.

2. She was humble and yielded. "Behold the maidservant of the Lord!" Luke 1:38. "...For He has regarded the lowly state of His maidservant ..." Luke 1:48. She didn't think, "God is sure lucky to get me! With my abilities I'm going to do a lot of great things for Him." She was thankful that God was willing to use her. Mary desired to do God's will.

GOD USES PEOPLE WILLING TO PAY THE COST

After Gabriel explained to Mary that as a virgin she would conceive and bear a son by the empowering of the Holy Spirit, she answered, "...Let it be to me according to your word." Luke 1:38. Mary surely knew that doing God's will was going to cost her the loss of her reputation. She was only engaged to be married and before long it would become obvious that she was pregnant. In that close community of Nazareth, everyone would know. Mary could imagine herself explaining, "I'm still a virgin. I conceived by the power of God and the son I'm giving birth to will be the God/man by the name of Jesus." Mary could probably also imagine everyone responding in sarcasm, "Right!".

Everybody won't believe in what you're carrying. The cost of carrying greatness may be more than you want to pay but your commitment to pay the cost will prove you are qualified to carry that greatness.

And the questions probably rose fast in Mary's mind, "What will my family...my fiancée...my friends think?!" "Will I lose the man I love over this?" She also knew she could be stoned to death.

Doing God's will cost Mary her reputation for many years. Jesus would not begin His ministry of miracles that

would vindicate that He truly was the Son of God for thirty years. You must understand that Mary did not just lose her reputation until Jesus was born but she lost her reputation because the word is, what you are carrying is the Son of God. Jesus doesn't prove who he is until 30 years later which means that Mary lost her entire LIFE to fulfill her assignment.

The plain truth is, if we do get serious about knowing and doing the will of God, it will cost us our reputation in some circles. There will be many who just will not understand. There will be others who will flat out dislike what we are and strongly disagree with what we do. We will be criticized and slandered.

GOD USES PEOPLE WITH FAITH TO TRUST HIS PROMISES

Christians are saved by faith; live by faith and walk by faith. The object of that faith is God, and the basis of that faith is God's promises. "So, then faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of God" Romans 10:17.

When Gabriel told Mary what God was going to do, she had fear, but she did not have doubt. She did ask, "How shall this thing be, seeing I know not a man?" But she was not expressing doubt she was asking how such an awesome thing could take place. Gabriel proceeded to tell her how it would take place and added, "For with God nothing shall be impossible." And Mary said, in effect,

“Well, let’s get on with it.” The promise from God gave her faith to believe it would all come to pass. That faith also gave her courage to face all the potential difficulties that would lie ahead. Elizabeth said to Mary, “And blessed is she who believed for there will be a fulfillment of those things which were told her from the Lord.” Luke 1:45

Everything that God has given you to carry has an assignment attached to it, but you have to understand, there will be a day of fulfillment! That’s why you can’t get weary in well doing for in due season, which is the time for fulfillment, you shall reap if you faint not.

Giving up is never an option! Mary has a great assignment to carry, and she is carrying this assignment, but you have to see the reason she is carrying it. The bible says Elizabeth, Mary’s cousin, is 6 months pregnant with John. Mary must accept this assignment to be pregnant with Jesus. Because later on you see Mary walked over to her cousin’s house and while in the presence of Elizabeth, the baby in Elizabeth leaped!

What is significant about this is when you study the writings of Josephus, the Jewish Historian, what Elizabeth was carrying was a stillborn, a lifeless baby. John was unconscious. But when Mary got in the presence of Elizabeth, the baby in Mary caused the baby in Elizabeth to leap. Mary had to carry Jesus because the resurrection and the life had to be in proximity with John to bring him back to life. Mary had to carry Jesus and come in the presence of a “dead” John because John’s purpose was to prepare the way for Jesus and John couldn’t prepare the

way if he was dead so Jesus had to get John to wake up so he could go prepare ye the way.

When John woke up, it confirmed that Mary was carrying a great assignment. You too carry a great assignment. Allow the example of Mary to be your fuel for your assignment. You are necessary.

CHAPTER 5

FUEL FOR VISION

If God does not continue to give you vision, then that which you were created to do has been completed. Vision means approval to continue. I always say that vision gives us instruction, direction, and responsibility.

Instruction

The instruction mandates that the church be a praying Church. Hearing from God gives sense of instruction. Sensitivity is a must in this season. Instruction means trusted to continue. If God gives you instruction, it means He has more for you. It is a privilege to receive instruction from God because it says I want you to go further.

Direction

Where are we going? Instruction is the “what”. Direction is the “where”. Where determines the level of God’s trust in you and what you have been graced to handle.

Responsibility

This is the “how”. You must watch your particular “response-sibility” in the vision. How you respond to the

vision determines how much responsibility you are allowed in the vision.

A famous quote by Helen Keller says, “The only thing worse than being blind is having sight with no vision.” Vision is, by Webster’s account, unusual foresight, supernatural appearance that conveys a revelation. Vision is a manifestation to the senses of something immaterial, the art of seeing what’s invisible to others. John Maxwell states “vision is awareness, attitude and action.” The ability to see, the faith to believe, and the courage to do.

Vision comes from God. God gives us vision to guide and direct the path of our life that will bring us to our life’s destiny. Our purpose in life will be visible when we embrace vision. God reveals His will and His plan by vision. He opens our hearts and our minds by vision. To move to the next item on God’s timeline for our life and our churches, we must embrace that God gives us vision to show us our true potential. God understands that vision pulls out the best in people. God allows us to see things as they can become by vision. The thing we must understand, that is often feared and overlooked, is that God’s vision is always possible! John Haggai says, “Attempt something so impossible that if God is not in it; it is doomed to fail.”

Another perspective of vision is the level of stewardship we flow in concerning that which we have been given responsibility. Luke 16:12 says “And if you have not been faithful in the use of that which is another’s, who

will give you that which is your own.” Sarcastically, it is amazing how we expect God to bless what belongs to us when we haven’t been faithful in pushing what does not belong to us.

Habakkuk 2:2, the Lord said, “Write the vision, make it plain that he may run who reads it.” There is a problem, and the vision is unclear when the person who wrote has to run too. The reason many pastors are exhausted is because we have made them write and run with what we are supposed to run with.

The pastor writes a vision for a media ministry, and they must purchase the equipment, make sure the person is here to fix it, set up everything and pay for it... they’re writing and running.

The pastor writes a vision for building for the community next to the church, but he is the only one excited, doing the research and mapping out the details... they’re writing and running.

When you have a productive visionary, they cannot be restricted, locked up and tied down to running with the vision. His job is to write and speak it! Your job as a proficient leader is to read it and run with it. Whenever you run with the vision two things are important. You must be able to hear and see! Hearing speaks to direction! When I hear, then I am clear on which way I am to go. Hearing is important and it must be protected. Pastors do not think you can’t hear. It’s what you are hearing and who are you hearing it from.

What you hear connects to what you say. That's why you can always tell when leaders have been contaminated by people because it is expressed in what they say.

Whenever they start conveying improper things about the church and the leader and it is totally different from what they normally say, chances are they heard something from the wrong somebody, and it changed their perspective and perception and now they say the wrong thing.

Not only is hearing important but seeing is important. Hearing has to do with understanding direction but "Seeing" has to do with focus. Whenever you are giving the vision of the church, you must focus on seeing it properly. You cannot see it through your own level of sight and reasoning, but you must see it through the lenses of the visionary. If you try to see it through your own level of reasoning, you will always think it's too much, it cost too much, we don't have the help, we don't have the resources, I don't see how we're going to do that. This happens because you are seeing, but you're not focused properly.

When you are focused properly, you acknowledge Hebrews 13:7 "...remember your leaders who spoke the Word of God to you, consider the outcome of their life and imitate their faith." You cannot run with vision by sight. You must run with it by faith! Spiritual "bad sight" is contagious and just because you can't see it like the leader sees doesn't mean you go spread your contagious bad sight and mess up the perception and

vision of others. You must stay focused on seeing the vision.

LORD, OPEN OUR EYES

2 Kings 6 paints our picture clearly for us. The Israelites remembered Elisha as an extraordinary man of God. Elisha committed his life to bringing the wayward Israelite leaders and people back to their covenant with God. He served the Northern kingdom of Israel during Jehu's bloody revolution against the house of Ahab and Baal worship (2 Kings 9-10). Israel was so weakened by internal turmoil that its northern neighbor Syria (Aram) began making raids into Israelite territory. Elisha remained at the center of events swirling around his nation.

The Arameans were sometimes at war and sometimes at peace with Israel during the years of Elisha's ministry. At the time of this particular incident, the Arameans were making profitable surprise raids into Israel. The king of Aram was probably Ben-Hadad II. In preparation for another raid, Ben-Hadad planned to pitch his camp on the border of Israel from which he could strike unexpectedly. However, God informed Elisha of the place and the prophet passed his information on to the King of Israel with a warning to beware. The king checked Elisha's information, found it to be correct, prepared for the encounter, and frustrated Ben-Hadad's secret attack.

Two important details emerge in these verses. First, we see that Elisha's efforts for his people put him in personal danger (v.11). Some people speak of “spiritual warfare” in such situations. They interpret any antagonism directed against them as a spiritual attack from Satan or demons. The Bible does not interpret circumstances in this way. Scripture is very realistic in portraying people's folly, selfishness, and sin as the source of most conflict in the world. In our story, the opposition is simply from one who stands to lose, or at least not gain, because of Elisha's actions.

The Gospels record Jesus' personal temptation. Yet, they never connect Satan or demons with his crucifixion. Jesus' opposition was from religious people who didn't like his teachings or his style of ministry. Perhaps we would prefer to believe that hostility directed against us is demonic, then believe that people around us can be so insensitive to spiritual concerns, and to each other.

The second point that emerges from these verses is more subtle, but equally important. The King of Syria had made plans that Elisha continually failed. Ben-Hadad concluded that one of his men was tipping off the enemy. An officer assured the king that there were no traitors in his camp but that it was Elisha who had supernatural knowledge of his plans. Verse 12 says “The very words you speak in your bedroom.” That means even his most private conversations were known to the prophet. The mistake many make is that when the pastor as a prophet addresses an issue, in offense, many automatically

assume that somebody told the pastor when actually the Holy Ghost reveals.

If Elisha remained free, the enemy was unsuccessful. So, he boldly issued orders to capture the prophet. The irony of this order reveals something about the king. His officers had told him that Elisha could learn about his most secret plans. Yet, he made a move against the prophet as if they could sneak up and carry Elisha away before he knew it. The king was not very wise! He did not really understand with whom he was dealing. It was not only Elisha that his armies would confront.

Understand that there will be opposition any time we truly respond to God and serve Him. That is the point of the New Testament sayings about taking up our cross and following Jesus. In the face of conflict, we can remain steadfast, assured that our opposition does not really understand. They are not opposing us, but God (note 1 Samuel 8:7). And God can handle them!

So, the king sends after Elisha. Elisha's servant got up early that morning and when he went outside and saw that the Aramean army had surrounded the house, he immediately goes back in the house and asked Elisha what are "WE" going to do? And Elisha said don't worry because there are more with us than with them.

THE SERVANT STAYS WITH HIS LEADER

What are "WE" going to do? He stays with Elisha. You can't see the ministry in trouble and then jump ship and leave the pastor hanging. When ministry takes a turn

and the odds seem to be stacked against the church, stay with your leader.

Trust your pastor in hard times so that you may see the results on the other side of the problem.

THE SERVANT STANDS WITH HIS LEADER

What are “WE” going to do? He stands with Elisha.

There is a difference between staying and standing. Because there are some people that will stay with you, but they won’t stand with you. To stay means to remain in a specified place or position. Stand means: an upright position and a physical manifestation of your psychological strength.

Not only do good leaders stay with the pastor but they stand with the pastor against the enemy, situations and opposition against the ministry.

THE SERVANT EXPECTS TO SEE THE SUPERNATURAL

Elisha just said, don’t be afraid because there are more with us than it is with them, and the servant can’t see what Elisha is seeing but because he believes in the leader and his vision, he is expecting to see what Elisha sees.

And Elisha prayed, “O Lord, open his eyes so he may see.” Then the Lord opened the servant’s eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha. In other words, there were resources that he couldn’t see before, that he can see now!

Your prayer as a leader fueled by the vision of your pastor should be “Lord, open my eyes.”

CHAPTER 6
BONUS CHAPTER

FUEL FOR SERVING

After traveling and ministering for nearly 20 years, I am a preacher who is still in awe, still amazed at preaching invitations. When God blesses me with an assignment attached to His will, I am still humbled. The reason I applaud and appreciate God allowing me to serve is because I'm amazed at Him entrusting someone He knows so well. I believe when God allows me to stand, He is entrusting treasure in an earthen vessel. The word earthen means, dirt- like, worldly, carnal and fleshly. Some people invite you and they don't know you. God knows you and still gives you the grace to go. Amazing right? We don't deserve the gifts that God gives us to serve Him with, and because of our sin we don't deserve the opportunity to work for Him.

The privilege of serving God has become diluted by the demand that serving God has on our life. Because of what we constantly seem to sacrifice for God and his work, it seems as if serving Him is more so to His benefit than it is to our privilege. You're quiet but that reason alone is part of the reason we are so uncommitted, disloyal and unfaithful to God's work and assignments. We continually look at serving God as a "burden" when in actuality, it should be our pleasure to do kingdom

work. It should be our pleasure to serve God, our pleasure to be used by Him, our desire to work for Him.

It's not just about serving but about the privilege of serving. The subtle and understated difference changes everything. It is about keeping an eye on who it is we are serving and about maintaining a God-perspective. What makes kingdom work worth doing is the one we are working for. C.T. Studd says, "If Christ be God and died for me, no sacrifice can be too great for me to make." BUT David Livingstone is quoted saying "If commission by an earthly king is considered an honor, how can a commission by a heavenly King be considered sacrifice..." We must graduate to the place that everything we do for Christ is not considered a sacrifice! When working for God, you must keep one eye on who we are doing our acts of service for - God himself- is a key principle. Remembering the sense of privilege is another.

The dichotomy of "church people" and "Christ-minded people" is the maturity level of accountability. Whereas one side, when it comes to kingdom work, looks for an excuse that will open the door for them to say, "I don't have to" and the other looks at kingdom work as "I get to". The mindset of the believer, the servant of God must graduate and mature to the place of "I get to". The problem is many of us have more of an allegiance to church than we have a relationship with God. Whenever you are just church minded, you will adhere to doing what you do so you can say you did what you did, so you won't be corrected by leadership, so you won't be the only one who failed, or you do it for recognition. That's

why many get discouraged in kingdom work when people don't respond to what they are doing. A "me, my, and I" mentality develops and whenever your focus is off as a servant, you will look to please yourself instead of being in a place where pleasing God pleases you.

I get to serve! Servanthood requires a mental shift, a change in your attitudes. God is always more interested in WHY we do something than in what we do. Attitudes count more than achievements. King Amaziah lost God's favor in 2 Chronicles 25 because "He did what was right in the sight of the Lord, yet not with a true heart." When you understand the privilege of serving God, then you will never half-do His work. You will never just do enough to get by. You will never make excuses as to why you can't. You will never lie to get out of working. You will never mishandle your gift and leave it underdeveloped. You will never sit on your calling. When you understand that it is a privilege to serve God, you move your life and kingdom assignment from operating in mediocrity to the spirit of excellence.

When I put my hand to kingdom work, I am overly pressing for every endeavor to be outstanding and extremely good under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. That's what it means to operate in the spirit of excellence. Which means, a great servant takes advantage of the opportunity to use their gifts and talents to serve God in the utmost degree of excellence and servanthood. When I'm working for Jesus, there is no big thing, little thing, big appointment, little

appointment, big event or little event. I am consistently always operating in excellence and when my flesh tries to make me back down from strong effort; I must remember why I'm doing what I'm doing and what could be the detrimental outcome if I don't press with all that God has given me. This is the culture we want developed in our churches.

In his book, *Courageous Leadership*, Bill Hybels, deals with three essential characteristics of any potential staff member. They are known as the three C's. Hybel says "if you try to get around any of these three, you will pay for it!" In studying these three potent characteristics, I discovered that they are quite essential to the make-up and anatomy of a servant of God doing kingdom work.

They are:

1. Character
2. Competence
3. Chemistry

CHARACTER

Abraham Lincoln said "Character is like a tree; reputation is like its shadow. The shadow is what we think of it; the tree is the real thing." Some of us get by because we ignore our character, and we base our life by the way people respond to us in regard to our reputation. Many of us ignore who we really are by only embracing who people see us as. But to be a servant of God and to understand the privilege of being a servant, you must come to grips with who you are when nobody is looking, when nobody is around, when it's just you by yourself.

You can't serve God wholeheartedly when you aren't being completely honest with yourself. Character and integrity are often closely related, and the word integrity comes from the mathematical term integer which means whole number. Therefore, it is impossible to have integrity, to have character if you're just living as a fraction. We have become people of no character but have become professional characters. Many are guilty of being great actors in the film called "My Life". The truth of your character is always exposed through the choice of your actions.

COMPETENCE

When operating in excellence and serving God, you can't settle for being in a position of service and be incompetent concerning your work and assignment. To be competent means to be properly and sufficiently qualified, capable. It does not just mean you can get the job done, but it means you have the knowledge and the certification to get the job done. A willing servant does not mean competent servant. Available servant does not mean competent servant. Faithful servant does not mean competent servant. Unfortunately, the church of God is full of incompetent servants. In position, but really have no clue what they are doing. Access with no information. Elevated with no credentials. Upfront with no knowledge. But when you understand the privilege of serving God, your desire to operate in excellence makes you put yourself in the process of maturity so that you will be ready and knowledgeable in working your assignment.

Too many of us operate in ministry and in life theoretically and never knowledgeably and experientially. Everything we do is out of theory. Which means, we come up with our own explanations as to “why?”. Why this might work, why this might be the reason, why this might be the purpose. However, we never discipline ourselves to the process of learning how, why, what and when. When we bring our own theories to kingdom work, we must understand that theories fail and when our theories fail, ministry fails and when ministry fails, it makes it look as if God has failed. Whereas, when your theories and ministries fail, it’s because YOU failed! God’s sovereignty does not negate human responsibility. Although God will bless your church, the abundance of your blessing is a result of the work of your hand.

CHEMISTRY

You must get along with people. Please read that again. Point blank period. I’ve noticed a certain witchcraft in ministry that whenever someone new comes to be a part of the team and people don’t want them apart, all you do is mess up the chemistry, communication, and relationship between that person and the team. People have left churches because of the lack of great chemistry between them and people in ministries who shouldn’t be in ministries. Determine not only the competencies and skills necessary for the role but also how valuable the chemistry and culture fit are as well. Note that teams that have true chemistry and community together not only have synergy but also are more effective in their

ministry. They experience less burnout, have more fun, and stay longer in their roles. When you have a team that has a strong chemistry then they are more apt to pull together, rebuke, exhort and encourage one another to never allow failure to overcome them. The best teams have chemistry. They communicate with each other, and they sacrifice personal glory for the common goal. To be a sincere servant of God, you must understand these three things and work to perfect them. Then, you will be exemplifying the servant attributes of Jesus Christ. Philippians 2:5-11 is our reference for this mindset. Jesus shows us the perfect example of servanthood. Paul explains that because of his example of servanthood, we are to “let this mind be in us which was also in Christ Jesus.” The apostle proceeds in this chapter of Philippians where he left off in the last, with further exhortations to Christian duties. He presses them largely to like-mindedness and lowly-mindedness, in conformity to the example of the Lord Jesus.

SERVING LIKE CHRIST

In verse 5, he tells us we should have the same mind of Jesus Christ. In verse 6, he begins to explain the actions that were a result of this mind of Jesus Christ. You must really consider how strong and powerful this text is in that Jesus shows us the most essential and indispensable example of humility and servanthood. Paul says I really want you to “let” this mind and whenever you see the word “let” it means something is causing it not to be. “Let” means there are some restraints somewhere, some blockage somewhere. Paul says break through whatever

it may be, whether it is pride, arrogance, fleshly desires, selfish ambition, whatever is causing it not to happen. LET this mind be in you. He says Jesus, who being in the form of God thought it not robbery to be equal with God. In other words, he had equal status with God, but didn't think so much of himself that he had to cling to the advantages of that status no matter what. He made himself of no reputation. That tells us when the time came, he set aside the privileges of deity and took on the status of a slave. The New King James Version says he became as that of a bondservant. I like that word because the word bondservant comes from the greek word "doulos" meaning "one who is subservient to, and entirely at the disposal of, his master; a slave." In Roman times, the term bondservant or slave could refer to someone who voluntarily served others. But it usually referred to one who was held in a permanent position of servitude. Under Roman law, a bondservant was considered the owner's personal property. Slaves essentially had no rights and could even be killed with impunity by their owners.

The Hebrew word for "bondservant" 'ebed, had a similar connotation. In many cases throughout the old testament and during the time of Jesus and the first century church, a bondservant carried a low, demeaning and slavery connotation. Jesus, because of his aim and destiny to do kingdom work, stripped himself of his title and power as God and lowered himself to a demeaning and slavery level as a bondservant. He shows us that servants of God are self-forgetful. Servants focus on others, not themselves. This is true humility: not thinking less of ourselves but thinking of ourselves less. Paul said,

forget yourselves long enough to lend a helping hand. This is what it means to “lose your life”, forgetting yourself in service to others. When we stop focusing on our needs, we become aware of the needs around us. Jesus “emptied himself by taking on the form of a servant.” When was the last time you emptied yourself for someone else’s benefit? You can’t be a servant if you’re full of yourself. It’s only when we forget ourselves that we do the things that deserve to be remembered. Unfortunately, a lot of our service is often self-serving. We serve to get others to like us, to be admired, or to achieve our own goals. That is manipulation, not ministry. All the time we’re really thinking about ourselves and how noble and wonderful we are.

The quality of self-forgetfulness, like faithfulness, is extremely rare. Out of all the people Paul knew, Timothy was the only example he could point to. Thinking like a servant is difficult because it challenges the basic problem of some of our lives: Many are, by nature, selfish. We think most about ourselves. That’s why humility is a daily struggle, a lesson we must relearn over and over. The opportunity to be a servant confronts us dozens of times a day where we are given the choice to decide between meeting my needs or the needs of others. Self-denial is the core of servanthood. Jesus shows us in becoming as that of a “bondservant”, servants are stewards and not owners. This is so important because many of us handle kingdom work as if it’s our work and never realizing that this is God’s work and He is entrusting us with the privilege to handle His

business with care. Which pushes us more to dismiss our personal agendas, personal goals, personal ambitions and do what we do to His glory! When we operate like this, then it is impossible for His work to become a burden, a weight or a problem.

When your perspective changes from “I got to” to “I get to, and I want to”, then you will complete His assignment for your life and church in excellence. You will complete His work in excellence. Whatever He calls you to, you will step up to the plate and give it all you got! For the bible says that Jesus humbled himself and became obedient. He subjected himself to death and the worst kind of death at that. It was death by the cross! Jesus made up in his mind that I want to serve and so He stripped himself of the right to be Him and died as a man. When He died, God gave Him a name that was above every name, that at the name of Jesus, every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall confess that Jesus is Lord.

Whenever you die to yourself, die to your flesh, die to your own desires, God will give you favor! Matthew 6:33 says “seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all other things shall be added unto you!” Make up your mind that you want to serve God, and He will never overlook you, never forget about you. Favor will belong to you! Shift your mindset and it will change the culture of your church.

CHAPTER 7
BONUS CHAPTER

FUEL FOR ORDER

Organizing your life is the key component to building a culture of excellence in your church. If you are not an organized individual or if your priorities are not aligned properly, then you will not be able to be an effective asset to the growth and greatness of your church.

Organization is the act or process of putting the different parts of something in a certain order so that they can be managed easily. It is the act or process of planning and arranging the different parts of an event or activity.

Prioritization is to organize (things) so that the most important thing is done or dealt with first to make (something) the most important thing in a group.

Let me share with you what organization and prioritization does for you and your life. Organization and Prioritization:

1. Removes Stress
2. Removes Anxiety
3. Removes Failure in temptation
4. Yields Motivation to finish and gives the feeling of victory.
5. Yields Productivity and good stewardship

As you can see, pressure in many forms is erased when organization and prioritization are present. A few questions you must ask yourself. How much time do you spend working on what your kingdom position is? How much time do you waste? Where is your “things to do” list? An important fact to understand is that too much clutter makes you procrastinate, fearful and can lead to making irrational decisions. Hence, your answer to the questions above could be negative or absent because you have not organized your life. Everything will seem like a burden when your life is not properly balanced with organization and prioritization.

Organization and Prioritization are essential to the survival of your mind and life in Christ. Burn out, anxiety, overwhelming emotions and mental unstableness are sometimes a result of disorder. Today, sit down and think! Make the necessary moves to bring order to your life. It will save your mind.

Don't kill yourself trying to live. Many of us continue running off fumes trying to please everybody, that you forget about pleasing you! Organization and prioritization will cause you to think about yourself more. You need personal vacation time, chill time, relaxation time, and thinking time. But you cannot experience those until you bring structure to your life. We cannot continually run and never rest. Get rid of the “whatever happens” mentality every day of your life. We cannot wake up each day without a plan. 1 Corinthians 14:40 (ESV) says, “But all things should be done decently and in order.” “All things” is the focus.

We cannot just have order for some things. It must be ALL things. It is the small, detailed things that make a difference. 1 Corinthians 14:33 (ESV) says, “for God is not a God of confusion but of peace.”

Chaos and disorganization bring confusion to your life and that is not the will of God for you. Changes must be made to be effective in your future. Fearing change deprives you of potential stability and peace of mind. The application of instruction alters your comfortability. Embrace breaking your norm and creating a new norm. Do not fall in love with what doesn't love you. The chaotic lifestyle destroys your life and upsets your future. It doesn't love you.

Remember,
Chaos breeds procrastination.
Chaos breeds instability.
Chaos produces poor decision making.
Chaos produces lack of concern.

You cannot bring order to chaos in motion. You need thinking time. You need time to get alone, process, brainstorm, regroup, recommit, and regain stability. You need to take off work, get away by yourself and reinvent your habits, lifestyle and decisions. An article by Sarah Klein entitled “*14 Habits Of Organized People That We ALL Should Borrow*” opens our eyes to some major realities about organized people. Allow me to share a few with you and some thoughts concerning them. The article was heavily influenced by David W. Ballard PsyD, MBA, the Assistant Executive Director for the

American Psychological Association's Center for Organizational Excellence. Also, there is much thought-provoking insight from Annette Reyman, President of the Greater Philadelphia chapter of the National Association of Professional Organizers.

The truth about organized people is:

THEY “UNITASK”

People who think they're really productive like to think that they're great multi-taskers,” says David W. Ballard. “But in reality, even those who think they're good at it are not.” Multi-tasking essentially spreads your attention too thin, and all the different tasks you're juggling get less and lower-quality love consequently. “The more efficient, effective and organized people do it as little as possible,” he says. They give one task their ultimate attention, turning off email pop-ups and other disruptive notifications to “protect their time,” he says, whether it's in the office or with family or just quiet time alone.

THEY ASK FOR HELP

Organized people know their strengths and weaknesses, and they delegate accordingly. “They know they don't have to do it all themselves,” Annette Reyman, President of the Greater Philadelphia chapter of the National Association of Professional Organizers says, and they avoid additional stress by reaching out when they need support. This reflects a high sense of self-worth among organized people: “They realize that their time is worth more than trying to figure out every little thing,” she

says, and if they use others' strengths to make something run more efficiently, everyone ends up with more time. "Thinking about your time as a resource that has value will help you decide how to effectively allocate across all the other things that you're doing," says Ballard. Perfectionists and high achievers may not be comfortable letting anyone else share the reins, but interpersonal support goes a long way in managing stress and staying on top of goals, he says.

THEY KNOW WHEN THEY DO THEIR BEST WORK.

You've probably known at least one ultra-organized person who you'd say was extraordinarily well-versed in the skills of time management. But Ballard says there should be a greater appreciation of energy management. Organized people know how to do tasks at specific points throughout the day that are best suited to the energy level needed for the task. For example, he says, if a project requires your clearest thinking and most creative ideas, you wouldn't save that for the middle of your afternoon slump. Organized people are keenly aware of "where their head is throughout the day," he says. An organized person will charge through a challenging to-do list item at the natural high-energy point in his or her day. "Don't try to accomplish critical tasks at that time of a lull," Ballard says.

THEY DE-STRESS

“Organized people know how to let it all go,” says Ballard. “Most of us are operating in a state of chronic stress; we’re always on.” But the same people who are “able to really stay focused and stay organized do things to manage their stress effectively,” he says. It doesn’t matter if it’s yoga, meditation, mindfulness, exercise or even seeing a mental health professional; the important part is “getting that support to help manage the stress they’re facing... so that it doesn’t detract from their performance and health,” he says.

THEY PREPARE

“Organized people like to be ready for anything. It doesn’t mean they’ve necessarily finished that work presentation three weeks before it’s due,” says Reyman. “It’s just knowing how much time they have and leaving enough time to do it,” she says. “Every individual will have his or her own style of meeting deadlines,” she says, “but organized people are likely to leave a cushion big enough that if something else were to come up they wouldn’t be totally thrown off.”

THEY ARE ACCOUNTABLE TO THEMSELVES

You must tell yourself what to do and remain disciplined to your own instruction. At some point you must shift your mindset from just being accountable to people, to also being accountable to yourself. You shouldn’t want to fail, YOU! This brings to your life discipline and maturity.

Remember,

If you organize your life and prioritize the items in your personal life, you can be more effective for the kingdom of God.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Dr. Aaron B. McNair, II is a 7th generation preacher. He is an influential leader, ingenious strategist, and emerging apostolic voice. In 2015, he became the Lead Pastor of Mt. Moriah Community Church-Raleigh, one of five locations. MMCC-Raleigh is known as the “Place of Impact” and is a vibrant ministry whose mode for excellence is fervently sought after by pastors and ministries nationally. In 2020, he became the successor of Apostle Norbert E. Simmons and Senior Pastor of Deeper Life Church Ministries, a trendsetting and thriving ministry in Goldsboro, NC. He is one with the true heart of a pastor and loves to see people grow in their faith in Jesus Christ.

With 20 years of ministry experience, Dr. McNair has the humbling opportunity of traveling nationally and internationally teaching God’s word, training pastors and secondary leaders. He is a highly sought-after mentor for preachers. He has been interviewed and featured for his ministerial guidance and spiritual insight numerous times on several tv, radio, and internet shows. His academic career consists of degrees in the areas of theology, sacred music &

Christian ministry. He received a Doctor of Ministry from North Carolina Theological Seminary.

In addition, Dr. McNair has obtained years of certification in Advance Studies of Homiletics and Hermeneutics through The Proclaimer's Place at Oxford University under the tutelage of Dr. Joel C. Gregory. Professionally, Dr. McNair is the CEO of Impact Consulting Group which provides guidance, training and services for churches and ministries desiring to make their vision relevant, vibrant, and effective. He has a passion and calling for creating systems and structures for ministry advancement and functionality, as well as teaching and training pastors and secondary leaders. He is the host of the Fuel Strategies Summit, a conference of professional development for pastors and leaders. He is the pedagogue of Fuel School of Ministry, a virtual educational program for pastors and leaders. As an author, Dr. McNair has four published works with more to come.

Dr. McNair serves the Life Changing Ministries International Fellowship. LCMIF is an ecumenical fellowship of pastors, churches, and parachurch ministries under the leadership of Presiding Bishop & Chief Apostle Dr. A.B. McNair, Sr. He serves on the Apostolic Council, Diocesan Bishop of The Third Diocese and oversees administration for LCMIF.

On March 9, 2013, he was united in love with the most beautiful, Lady Ashley McNair. He describes her as "God's love for me in physical form" and she works closely with him in ministry. Lady Ashley McNair is a powerful preacher, psalmist, and intercessor. Together they have one lovely daughter Aylana Lynda Michelle and one energetic son, Aaron III (AB).

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