

Reading The Good Between The Lines

June 1

" You know in all you and in all your souls that not one thing has failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spoke.." — Joshua 23:14

"Reading between the lines" is something we all do. It's like "putting two and two together," a mental activity in which everyone engages. The difference between the person who is living by faith and the negative-thinking person is that the pessimist reads only bad news between the lines where the optimist reads good news.

Preview

Two birds - a vulture and a hummingbird - fly over the California desert. One sees a rotting carcass; the other, a fragrant flower. Each sees what it looks for!

If you are a believer and have received guidance from God Himself, you don't blind yourself to upcoming problems; but you do keep your eye on the possibilities! You never allow problems to overpower the possibilities.

The truth is you can always read either good or bad between the lines. There is something negative and something positive in every person, proposal, and project.

The most fantastic idea contains the seeds of problems as well as the seeds of possibilities!

Innerview

Both success and failure exist in every project. Your vote can go either way, but you cast the deciding vote and determine the destiny positively when you choose to read the good instead of the bad.

Review

Here is a powerful truth: What you see is what you will be. Our firmly focused imaginations tend to become self-fulfilling prophecies.

The vulture finds a carcass, while the hummingbird finds honey in a flower half-hidden in a cactus behind barren roots. God's Word tells us to believe the best in the worst of times. Question: Are you practicing positive thinking or negative thinking today? Here's the test:

Believe the best! And live with zest!

(Adapted from Robert Schuller)

Praise God for: His protective Care!

Thank God for: loving even me!

Ask God's forgiveness for: doubting his love!

Ask God to help: someone to feel His love in a new way today!

Ask God to supply our need for : His kind of love!

DIGGING DEEPER AND REACHING HIGHER:

Write down the main reason you are unable to trust God. Write out 2 Peter 1:3 and begin to memorize it. Read or say it every day until you begin to see positive change.

Journal for Digging Deeper:

Daily Sunshine In The Sun

I pray for the needs of others, especially

Lord, today I thank You for:

Thank You for these answers to prayer:

Today, Lord, I need

Resolving Conflicts Creatively

June 2

"Avoid foolish and ignorant disputes, knowing that they generate strife. A servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to reach, patient." — 2 Timothy 2:23-24

Walking the walk of faith will ultimately lead you to a clearing where the sun can shine gloriously upon your well-lived life! How can you be sure that the walk of faith will lead to such a happy ending? By its very nature, faith cultivates a positive mental attitude toward conflicts.

Preview

If you anticipate problems and tensions after making a commitment, you are not necessarily guilty of negative thinking.

For the truth is, any time you press forward toward your goal, you will create conflict.

You can be sure most everyone will agree with you! Conflicts are inherent in creative accomplishments.

Innerview

Notice here the difference between the person who has a positive mental attitude and a negative mental attitude. The positive person has a creative attitude toward problems, whereas a negative person has a destructive and complicating attitude toward conflict.

Negative thinkers become defensive when they face conflicts.

Positive thinkers become peacemakers when they face conflicts.

When you walk the walk of faith, you discipline yourself to resolve conflicts.

Review

Resolving conflicts always starts with a resolution: I will manage the conflict and not allow the conflict to manage me!

I will not allow the conflict to collide, clash, or collapse the commitments I have made.

I will be more patient and determined to turn the conflict around and in the process become healthier and happier than I was before!

I am resolved to win out over the conflict!
(Adapted from Robert Schuller)

Praise God for: being my best friend!

Thank God for: new friends!

Ask God's forgiveness for: my self-protection!

Ask God to help: those who feel friendless!

Ask God to supply our need for: openness!

DIGGING DEEPER AND REACHING HIGHER:

Do you want to be made whole? Do you have a problem anticipating and accepting problems? Ask the Lord to change your heart about how you are dealing with your problems.

Journal for Digging Deeper:

Daily Sunshine In The Sun

I pray for the needs of others, especially

Lord, today I thank You for:

Thank You for these answers to prayer:

Today, Lord, I need

Fixing Problems

June 3

" My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." — 2 Corinthians 12:9

One of the greatest basketball coaches of all times was John Wooden of UCLA, a fantastic positive-thinking believer. One of his great motivating statements to his players was: "Nobody is a real loser - until he starts blaming somebody else!"

Preview

Faith believes there is a solution to every problem. Even when the problem defies solutions, faith believes that we can be positive anyway!

Affirm with me:
"Today I shall exercise my faith to seek solutions immediately, instinctively, impulsively, and intelligently".

Innerview

I'll look upon this not as a problem, but as an opportunity to grow up and be more effective as a manger of my own life.

I will categorically reject all negative judgements, and I believe that with the help of God there will be a solution every problem I face. I'll go work right now and fix my problem, just as soon as I fix my attitude!

Review

Dear Lord, I'm aware that the biggest part of any problem is my attitude toward it. I thank You, that You and I together can fix that today. Your strength is my strength, so I'm trusting You. Help me, O God, my Father, to bloom with such faith that I will be surprised, and so

will everybody else who watches me go through this trying time. Thank You, Lord. Amen.

Praise God for: being my Savior!

Thank God for: dependable fathers!

Ask God's forgiveness for: paralyzing fears!

Ask God to help: people in danger!

Ask God to supply our need for : security!

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DIGGING DEEPER AND REACHING HIGHER:

What vision do you have of yourself? Is it different from God's vision of you? Are you allowing your problems to affect your faith? Pray about it.

Journal for Digging Deeper:

Negotiating Your Way Around Obstacles

June 4

" May our Lord Jesus Christ...comfort your hearts and establish you in every good word and work." — 2 Thessalonians 2:16-17

Preview

Dedicated faith walkers who are mature believers stubbornly refuse to accept defeat. Rather, in the face of apparent catastrophe, they seek creative solutions. Possibility thinking is a process of creatively negotiating around obstacles.

Begin the process by believing you will not accept defeat. Hang in there and decide you're going to make it within the rules and laws of God and country. Consider all constructive compromises. Creatively calculate new and innovative schemes to achieve what appears to be unachievable.. It may even require retreat in order to advance later on. Rework, revise, rewrite, reorganize, reschedule, or refinance; and thereby creatively negotiate your way to ultimate victory.

Innerview

Begin with these affirmations:
I am open to new strategies.
I will review the price.
I will call for a review of the proposal.
I will break the stalemate.
After all, I don't want to have my own way; I just want to do the right thing. For I am a mature Christian. I exercise faith. I am a courageous and wise negotiator.

Review

I believe that I will ultimately salvage and save the most valued part of my life's work.

I believe in myself and in my God-given dream. I, and only I, have the power to kill my dream. I do that if I'm unwilling to negotiate. God has entrusted a dream to my care and keeping. I will nurture it carefully. I will protect its life at all costs. I will prove faithful, because I want to glorify God in my life and with my dream.

Praise God for: faithfulness!

Thank God for: being real to me!

Ask God's forgiveness for: trusting others more than Him!

Ask God to help: those trying to overcome alone!

Ask God to supply our need for : faith in His promises!

DIGGING DEEPER AND REACHING HIGHER:

List three things you can accomplish today to show yourself and others that your vision is eternal rather than temporary.

Journal for Digging Deeper:

Daily Sunshine In The Son

Lord, today I thank You for:

I pray for the needs of others, especially

Thank You for these answers to prayer:

Today, Lord, I need

Inventing Solutions

June 5

"...always pursue what is good both for yourselves and for all." — 1 Thessalonians 5:15

Preview

Robert Schuller shares an insightful experience out of his life that I think has the possibility to help you invent solutions for your problems. "Years ago when my children were yet small", he said "our family spent summer vacations in Iowa, visiting our relatives. One summer, as we drove the long road back to California, we heard an enormous explosion! My left rear tire had blown out!

I stood dejectedly on the shoulder, looking at the tire, now in shreds. Fortunately, I had a spare tire, jack, and crowbar readily available. I promptly put the jack under the car and began to pump it up. Just as the flattened tire rose a few inches, the jack suddenly started bending as if it were made of rubber! I couldn't believe my eyes. Never had I seen or heard of that. The tire slowly settled down again on the hard adobe-like surface.

What could I do? I had no jack! There was no gas station for miles! Suddenly I had an idea: "If I can't raise the tire, why don't I lower the ground?"

He took his only tool, the crowbar, and proceeded to chip away at the hard ground around the flattened tire. It was hard work, but after almost an hour, He could remove the bolts, lift the tire off, and slip the spare tire on!

Innerview

The walk of faith can be fun! When something seems impossible just invent new products or new procedures".

God gave you the only tool you need - your brain. We can all be inventors on this walk of faith. We won't necessarily dream up new gadget, but we can invent new ideas that will prove to be the solution to our problem. Faith is inventing solutions, pursuing "what is good both for yourselves and for all."

Review

1. **ASSUME** responsibility for your own life. Refuse to be either an *Excuser* (rationalize failure) or an *Accuser* (blame others). Instead, be a *CHOOSE*R and choose to break out of the rut you're in.
2. **BELIEVE** you can change! Stop saying "I can't" and start saying "I can."
3. **CLARIFY** what you really want. Write down specifically how you'd like to change.
4. **DON'T WAIT** for ideal circumstances. Stop saying "When things settle down.." Do it now! "One of these days" is really *NONE* of these days.

PRAY THIS: "God help me this week to do something differently, and to do it better. Give me your strength to change."

Praise God for: His hand in mine!

Thank God for: peace!

Ask God's forgiveness for: complicating life!

Ask God to help: trusting children!

Ask God to supply our need for : childlike trust!

Daily Sunshine In The Son

DIGGING DEEPER AND REACHING HIGHER:

List the areas in which the Lord has planted seeds of success and you see changes taking place in your life.

Thank You for these answers to prayer:

Journal for Digging Deeper:

I pray for the needs of others, especially

Lord, today I thank You for:

Today, Lord, I need

Allowing For Error

June 6

" You know in all you and in all your souls that not one thing has failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spoke.." — Joshua 23:14

A famous British statesman had his formal portrait done. When it was finished he took a look at what was a most remarkable likeness. The artist, expecting compliments, instead received this rebuff: "You didn't paint the wart!" The artist meekly replied, "But, sir, I think you are more attractive without it. Don't you think so?"

The politician answered, "Paint me as I am - wart and all!"

Preview

Accepting yourself with your imperfections gives evidence that your faith has achieved a remarkable level of maturity. Until you and I are able to allow for error in ourselves we will lack the grace to allow error in others.

Your faith is able to spare you from what psychologists call "projection" - projecting your feelings toward others. If you feel good today, you treat people well. If you feel bad, you treat others badly.

Innerview

When you make a mistake after doing your best, be thankful to God that you're able to perform at all: Have faith that you are doing a worthwhile job, anyway!

Now project this positive attitude toward your family, your friends, and your business associates.

Allow for error in yourself and others. Until you do, you will never be able to have a strong relationship with anyone - including God Almighty.

Review

If you can't believe that God accepts you with your obvious sins, shortcomings, and errors, you may find yourself subconsciously leaning toward agnosticism.

Faith allows for error. The Lord accepts you anyway!

Praise God for: His comforting arms!

Thank God for: nurturing love!

Ask God's forgiveness for: my self sufficiency!

Ask God to help: all who are ill!

Ask God to supply our need for : inner strength from Him!

DIGGING DEEPER AND REACHING HIGHER:

Tell God the "things" you need in your life. Confess the places where you have had little success trying to fix these things. Tell Him specifically how you will give Him first place today.

Journal for Digging Deeper:

Lord, today I thank You for:

Daily Sunshine In The Son

I pray for the needs of others, especially

Thank You for these answers to prayer:

Today, Lord, I need

Catching The Blame

June 7

" So then each of us shall give account...to God." — Romans 14:12

When the finger points at you and criticism falls at your doorstep, when you catch the blame and are held responsible for a mistake, look upon this as a left-handed compliment. You tried your best; you are willing to be held accountable!

Preview

It's hard to find people who are brave enough to accept responsibility. The fear of being held liable for mistakes is enough to frighten many a person from a leadership position. Faith is "catching the blame." When you walk the walk of faith, you accept responsibility with a tremendously serious attitude. You are able to face the reality that you may make a mistake. But your mature attitude and positive-thinking faith gives you enough confidence in your own abilities to be willing to be held accountable!

Innerview

Until you're able to conquer the fear of "catching the blame," you probably will not have enough courage to become the entrepreneurial person you ought to be.

Do you dare to become an effective manager, a successful supervisor, or an inspiring leader in your congregation or community? All you need to do is overcome the fear of failure by looking for the positive emotions in people, and inspire and encourage them.

Review

Today have the faith to believe that these responsibilities of life are steps upward. You are maturing in the walk of faith. You will not be afraid of the blame and criticism that comes with accountability. Criticism won't mean you get fired - it will mean you'll get inspired ... to do ...and ... to be better!

Affirm today: "I have the courage to be accountable!"

Praise God for: reaching those who are hard to reach!

Thank God for: His Guiding Word!

Ask God's forgiveness for: taking so many blessings for granted!

Ask God to help: provide guidance for every child!

Ask God to supply our need for : life changing principals!

DIGGING DEEPER AND REACHING HIGHER:

What holds first place in your life? In what ways have you tried to succeed and failed? What would it mean to you to give the Lord first place?

Journal for Digging Deeper:

Daily Sunshine In The Sun

Lord, today I thank You for:

I pray for the needs of others, especially

Today, Lord, I need

Thank You for these answers to prayer:

Hearing What The Critics Say

June 8

" Listen to counsel and receive instruction that you may be wise.." — Proverbs 19:20

I'd rather succeed than have my own way! You agree with me, don't you?

Preview

You are moving strongly forward on this walk of faith. You have made commitments. The public announcement is out. It's no secret what you intend to do. Now, for the sake of our God, you had better make it happen.

In order to do that you need to make sure you have not forgotten something. You don't know all the answers. You can't do everything perfectly. You are still a person subject to error and fault.

So, if there is something wrong with your project, your plans, your timetable, or your team, you'd better find out about it - now!

Innerview

I learned long ago that if I live by faith, I will listen to what my critics say. My friends may be blinded to my shortcomings by their own devotion, loyalty and affection. In truth, my best friend may well be my most severe critic. I listen and carefully evaluate his or her critique.

You are a person of great faith! If there is something wrong with your project or performance, it's not too late to correct the problem or compensate creatively for the drawbacks you have neglected to notice.

Insecure people are defensive people who refuse to refuse to respect their critics. But you are inwardly secure. You have the calling from God. You are confident.

Review

You are strong in your faith. You are strong enough to listen to your critics. For you discover that even they are sent as friends from God!

"Thank You, Father, that You are protecting me from the blindness that comes through ego involvement. Thank You for everything You're doing to guide me to success". Amen.

Praise God for: the Holy Spirit!

Thank God for: filling me up with Him!

Ask God's forgiveness for: half-hearted surrender!

Ask God to help: hearts be open to His filling!

Ask God to supply our need for : more of Him!

DIGGING DEEPER AND REACHING HIGHER:

What is the most important thing or person in your life? Do you find it difficult to accept criticism? If so, why? How could you truly seek to give God first place in every area of your life?

Journal for Digging Deeper:

Daily Sunshine In The Son

Lord, today I thank You for:

I pray for the needs of others, especially

Thank You for these answers to prayer:

Today, Lord, I need

Handling Criticism

June 9

*"Let the wise listen and add to their learning, and let the discerning get guidance-." — Proverbs 1:5
NIV*

A monk joined a monastery and took a vow of silence. After the first 10 years, his superior called him in and asked, "Do you have anything to say?" The monk replied, "Food bad." After another 10 years, the monk again had an opportunity to voice his thoughts. He said, "Bed hard." Another 10 years went by and again he was called in before his superior. When asked if he had anything to say, he responded, "I quit." "It doesn't surprise me a bit. You have done nothing but complain ever since you got here."

John Mason in *You're Born An Original, Don't Die A Copy*, writes, "You can always spot a failure by the way he criticizes success. Those who can – do. Those who can not – criticize. Those who complain about the way the ball bounces are often the ones who dropped it in the first place. If it were not for the doers, the critics would soon be out of business. Envy provides the mud that failures throw at success. Whoever criticizes to you will criticize about you. If someone belittles you, he is only trying to cut you down to his size."

Yes, there are those who criticize just to criticize. So the question is, how do you handle criticism even from them?

ONE SHOULD LISTEN TO IT & EVALUATE THE MERIT OF IT.

Evaluate the merit of the criticism independent of the person: Is the critic accurate? Do they have a legitimate concern? Often this involves time of speculation and prayer. This is why it is good to surround yourself with godly people who can help you

with this process. ***"Let the wise listen and add to their learning, and let the discerning get guidance—" (Proverbs 1:5 NIV)***

SECONDLY, LOOK AT THE SOURCE OF THE CRITICISM.

What is their intent? Do they have an agenda in mind? Are they chronic complainers?

"Even a child is known by his actions, by whether his conduct is pure and right." (Proverbs 20:11 NIV)

FINALLY, DETERMINE IF ACTION SHOULD BE TAKEN, WHETHER IT BE A CHANGE OR AN APOLOGY. *Correction and self-control will lead you through life." (Proverbs 6:23b)*

"It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbled or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena; whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly, who errs and comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; who does actually try to do the deed; who knows great enthusiasm, the great devotion and spends himself in a worthy cause; who are the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly."

April 10th, 1899, Theodore Roosevelt

Praise God For: His knowledge of us!

Daily Sunshine In The Sun

Thank God For: friends who love
enough to
Correct us!

Ask God's Forgiveness for: living in
fear of bad news!

Ask God to help: all who receive bad news
today!

Ask God to supply our need for : peaceful
days!

DIGGING DEEPER AND REACHING HIGHER:

When you attempt to change a point of behavior in
your life, write it down in your journal and remind
your self why you needed to change behavior.

Journal for Digging Deeper:

Lord, today I thank You for:

Thank You for these answers to prayer:

I pray for the needs of others, especially

Today, Lord, I need

Things People Over Thirty Should Have

June 10

"No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon." — Matthew 6:24

After age 25-30, depending on marital status and other things, it becomes more and more helpful to have and to know certain things. Some are practical and some make sense from a life planning standpoint. The following are suggested for anyone over age 30, single or married, male or female, "wealthy" or of more "average" means.

1. A "Last Will And Testament" Prepared By An Attorney.

Our time on Earth is numbered. We don't know what our number is, so it makes sense to have a Will. A "Living Will" also makes sense if you want to be sure your wishes regarding how you die or are "kept alive" are honored. Included may also be a "Memorandum."

2. Adequate Household And Liability Insurance.

This includes household contents, autos (it costs VERY little to jump from the standard \$5,000 per person medical coverage to \$25,000!) as well as business and liability insurance. Make sure any fine art/antique items are appraised and insured on a separate "floater" policy.

3. A Personal Financial Plan For NOW and For The FUTURE.

Done by yourself, by using one of many computer and other "kits" sold, or by using a financial planner, it makes good sense to know where you are now, and where you need and want to be in 20-30 years financially.

4. Your Own Personal Physician.

M.D. or D.O., as we get past age 30, chances are greater that we will have some problem that might become chronic or acute where having a physician who knows us and our past medical problems or history comes in very handy and could save our life. Taking your chances on E.R. doctors when you get ill or have an emergency is a lot riskier than if you have a regular physician who they can call. Additionally, women over age 30 need to get a baseline mammogram and exams for breast cancer "screening." After about age 35 or 40, men need both prostate and cardiac baseline tests. So having a personal doctor just makes common sense. It's self-care, and the responsible thing to do, married or single.

5. A Business/Career Plan For The Present And For The Future.

You *know* where you are hopefully business or career-wise NOW. Maybe you are happy and satisfied with that and maybe you are not. Regardless, it is helpful to set goals if you want to keep up with the cost of living, and plan ahead for retirement. If you want to work your way up in your job or business and make more money or have a different position or career, then you definitely need to address these issues by yourself, or with a career coach or other qualified expert.

Daily Sunshine In The Sun

Praise God for: His guidance!

Thank God for: showing me the way!

Ask God's forgiveness for: my self-reliance!

Ask God to help: the lost find their way!

Ask God to supply our need for: daily guidance!

DIGGING DEEPER AND REACHING HIGHER:

When God answers a prayer, write it in your journal, noting the date and time of the answer. Then write a word of praise and thanksgiving to Him.

Journal for Digging Deeper:

Lord, today I thank You for:

Thank You for these answers to prayer:

I pray for the needs of others, especially

Today, Lord, I need

Things People Over Thirty Should Have (2)

June 11

"No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon." — Matthew 6:24

6. Knowledge Of Your Parents' Or Closest Relative's Medical History And Current Medical Condition.

This is important because if you have parents and one or both fall ill or are injured, you may be the one an attorney, the doctors, or the hospital calls upon to provide some needed information. If you have no parents, but a close next of kin relative, knowing their situation will help for the same reasons. You can help them greatly by knowing the basics and having it written down should you need it.

7. A Waterproof/Secure File Cabinet.

These can be disguised as furniture these days! They are necessary to keep tax and bank statements, copies of legal papers, and other things in for future access by you or any authorized people. Fire-resistant and "fireproof" cabinets are available now at very reasonable prices through the discount office supply stores. You can also use them to store treasured family mementos, unframed photos, etc.

8. A Personal Computer And Printer.

It sounds like **everyone** above age 5 has one these days, but some people over age 30 still do not. The prices now are so low that with time pay plans and sales, everyone can have one. You need to have some helpful software such as personal/business financial software, email access, a word processor (throw

away the old typewriter!!) and some educational software to replace the myriad books and reference guides you have that may be outdated, and take up a lot of room and gather dust.

9. A Personal/Business Attorney.

For the same reasons it helps to have a personal physician by age 30, having your own attorney who can keep a file for you of your Will, home mortgage (they charge \$400-700. for a copy if you ever lose yours!) etc. is really very prudent. He or she can also be there for you if you need legal advice around a car accident, a business or career problem, or any number of other things that seem to happen more often after age 30.

10. A Safe Deposit Box.

Also known as the "metal tax deduction." They come in all sizes and shapes, and getting one through your personal or business bank is usually the most economical and makes the most sense. Prices for rental for a year are from \$15-25. for the smallest size box (long, but not real wide or high) to \$100's for boxes large enough to put oil paintings or other large valuables in. And on each year's taxes you can deduct the fee. This is one necessity that actually gives you your money BACK, and is very useful. Put the keys in a VERY safe place, as they charge between \$10.-30. per key to make a duplicate.

Daily Sunshine In The Sun

Praise God for: His watchful eye!

Thank God for: faith reminders!

Ask God's forgiveness for: forgetting Him!

Ask God to help: trouble pass us by!

Ask God to supply our need for : His blessings!

Thank You for these answers to prayer:

DIGGING DEEPER AND REACHING HIGHER:

Do you doubt God's care for you? Have you been trying to reach your goals without his help? Tell God about it and ask Him to lead you to victory.

Journal for Digging Deeper:

I pray for the needs of others, especially

Lord, today I thank You for:

Today, Lord, I need

Are You Wasting Time

June 12

"And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed...." — Romans 13:11-14

Do your habits help you achieve positive results, or do they hinder your success? Check your habits against these good time-management habits. Merrill Douglass, in his book Success Secrets, gives 5 habits to utilizing time more effectively.

Habit No. 1: KEEP SETTING NEW GOALS. The simple truth is that people who regularly write out their goals achieve more. Studies show they also make more money and gain more personal fulfillment.

Habit No. 2: ANALYZE YOUR BEHAVIOR. What do you do? Why do you do it? How often do you do it? How much time do you spend doing it? How much does it help? At least once a year, keep a time log for a month. Track both work time and personal time.

Habit No. 3: PLAN YOUR TIME. A good plan will help you accomplish more. It will also save you time and effort. Write out a plan for every week. What are your goals for this week? What must you do? When will different activities take place? How much time will you need? Try this for several weeks, and then evaluate your progress to see how much it helps.

Habit No. 4: CUT OUT TIMEWASTERS. Most of us complain about the timewasters in our lives. However, very few people are actively working to eliminate the timewasters that bother them most. Stop complaining and act. Pick one timewaster every week, and focus on decreasing it. Can you eliminate it? Can you reduce it? Can you lessen its impact? Do this every week, all year long. In just a few weeks,

you will have formed the habit of searching for and eliminating timewasters.

Habit No. 5: STOP PROCRASTINATING. We often try to side-step unpleasant things by putting them off. Sometimes it works; most of the time it does not. Fight the do-it-later urge. Do it now instead.

If you always do what you have always done, you will always be what you have always been. Do not expect different results from the same old actions.

"Act like people with good sense and not like fools. These are evil times, so make every minute count. Do not be foolish. Instead find out what you have been designed by God to do and do it!"
Ephesians 5:15-16

Praise God for: wholeness!

Thank God for: knowing exactly what we need!

Ask God's forgiveness for: letting disappointment get the best of me!

Ask God to help: those sliding into depression!

Ask God to supply our need for: the right words of comfort!

DIGGING DEEPER AND REACHING HIGHER:

Confess to God one specific area in which you are refusing to obey. Ask Him to help you obey His commands.

Daily Sunshine In The Sun

Journal for Digging Deeper:

I pray for the needs of others, especially

Lord, today I thank You for:

Today, Lord, I need

Thank You for these answers to prayer:

Tips To Accomplishing More Every Day Of Your Life

June 13

"Whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away." — James 4:14

After complaining that I had "too little time" to do all the things that "needed to be done," a mentor said:

"You have the same amount of time per day that everyone else has...24 hours. You don't need more time. What you need is the discipline to use the time you've got more wisely."

With this in mind, here are seven tips that have equip me to accomplish more each day of my life. These tips will work for you too!

1) PLAN EACH DAY. The last thing you should do each evening (or the first thing you do in the morning) should be to create a "task list" for the upcoming day. Your list will help you set priorities and keep focused throughout the day. In addition to planning each day, I also suggest weekly, monthly, and yearly planning with your life's purpose statement and goals in hand.

2) ORGANIZE YOUR LIFE. One of life's greatest time wasters is a cluttered office or messy living space. How often have you wasted valuable time trying to find that memo, contract, your wallet, or even your car keys. Follow the old adage that says, "Everything has a place and everything should be in its place!" Get your life organized.

3) DON'T BE A MAIL PACK-RAT! I recently visited a friend's office and noticed several piles of mail cluttering his desk. Instead of filing, responding to, or trashing these mailing, he instead seemed to simply sort through them every few days, shifting the

stacks from one place to another on his desk. Avoid this time waster and you'll accomplish more each day.

Praise God for: His eternal truths!

Thank God for: protection!

Ask God's forgiveness for: treasuring the wrong things!

Ask God to help: those experiencing a loss!

Ask God to supply our need for : His protection !

DIGGING DEEPER AND REACHING HIGHER:

What choices did you make today that led to obedience? What choices led to disobedience? How could you begin to make more compliant, obedient choices?

Journal for Digging Deeper:

Lord, today I thank You for:

Daily Sunshine In The Son

Thank You for these answers to prayer:

Today, Lord, I need

I pray for the needs of others, especially

Tips To Accomplishing More Every Day Of Your Life (2)

June 14

" Wheeas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away. " — James 4:14

4) UTILIZE ALL AVAILABLE TIME.

How? Start by taking a book with you wherever you go. When you find yourself waiting--in the doctor's office, for a appointment to commence, or for your car to be repaired, try increasing your knowledge by reading that book. In addition, while driving your car, don't waste time listening to the "fluff" that fills the airwaves. Instead listen to teaching and/or motivational tapes in your car.

children, reading a book, or spending time with your spouse.

You only have 24 hour allotted each day. Use them wisely!

Praise God for: His grace!

Thank God for: deep contentment!

Ask God's forgiveness for: worrying!

Ask God to help: the discontented!

Ask God to supply our need for : grace in every circumstance!

5) DEVELOP HEALTHY HABITS. The body needs adequate rest, proper nutrition, and energetic exercise to fight off fatigue and extend life. Give your body what it needs and your have the energy to accomplish much more with your life. Get an adequate nights sleep. Eat a healthy diet. Exercise regularly. Your energy level will increase and you will reap the benefit by accomplishing more each day.

DIGGING DEEPER AND REACHING HIGHER:

Have you studied God's commands and plans for your life? What does He want for your life?

Journal for Digging Deeper:

Also consider including good nutritional supplements in your diet.

6) AVOID ENERGY STEALERS. Do you know people like that? Do you know individual's whose attitudes literally suck the life out of you? Then make it a practice to avoid any contact with these people that is not absolutely necessary.

7) BLOW UP YOUR TELEVISION. If you are not willing to part with your television completely (I'm not either) then we should at least learn which button turns the set off...and then develop the courage to use that button (often). Spend that time playing with your

Lord, today I thank You for:

Daily Sunshine In The Sun

Two columns of horizontal lines for writing.

Today, Lord, I need

Two columns of horizontal lines for writing.

I pray for the needs of others, especially

Swallowing Your Hurts

June 15

"If I say, 'I will forget my complaint, I will put off my sad face and wear a smile..' — Job 9:27

Here's some good advice on how to handle the rejections, defeats, or failures you probably have experienced. You may have collected enough hurts to keep you from wanting to press forward. Setbacks can take the joy out of faith if you don't watch out! Even success - steady, solid, and exceptional - can make you the target of criticism from colleagues who are jealous of your achievement.

Preview

Careful! Hidden hurts in the heart can nurture and nourish negative thinking. Often the most painful wounds are not the scars that are outwardly seen but the hidden wounds deep in the heart. Because they are hidden they are often the most dangerous.

Swallow your hurts and stimulate a new spirit and spurt of growth!

If, in fact, your drive to grow has lost its passionate power, if the flush of enthusiasm has mysteriously diminished, then check the accumulation of negative emotions that have attached themselves to you.

Innerview

Along the shoreline in California it is a common sight to see whales stopping alongside rocks to scrape off barnacles as they migrate from Alaska to Mexico.

In the walk of faith we too will pick up a collection of personal hurts that will attach themselves to our souls like parasites sapping the life and vitality out of us!

Ouch! You can't let these negative emotions get to you!

Review

By faith, learn to swallow hard. Imagine all polluted thoughts being drained from your mind, body, and spirit. Remember, God has no wastebaskets.

He makes no mistakes. He never bungles a job. So He will somehow be able to take the torturing experiences and turn them into diamonds that will sparkle in the crown of your life. God will not allow the suffering, the sorrow, and the pain to be fruitless.

John Greenleaf Whittier put it well, "I know not where the islands lift their fringed palms in air. I only know I cannot drift beyond my Master's love and care."

Prayer: O God, thank You for the faith I have today. In spite of all the suffering, sin, sickness, and unspeakable tragedies that exist in the human family, I sense deeply and irrevocably that love will triumph. The sun is stronger than the clouds. God is more powerful than evil.

Lord, with Your help, I swallow the hurts. They will pass on and out. Thank You. Amen.

Praise God for: directing my path!

Thank God for: life's disappointments!

Ask God's forgiveness for: doubting his guidance !

Ask God to help: the hurting!

Ask God to supply our need for : grace in every circumstance!

Daily Sunshine In The Sun

DIGGING DEEPER AND REACHING HIGHER:

Make a list of the things that repeatedly tempt you.
Choose one to pray about and ask God to break the
stronghold of this temptation.

Journal for Digging Deeper:

Thank You for these answers to prayer:

Lord, today I thank You for:

I pray for the needs of others, especially

Today, Lord, I need

Sensing Success In Dark Times

June 16

" We know that all things work together for good to those who love God." – Romans 8:28

Deep down within yourself you know with a solid knowingness that the worst times will pass. Better days are around the corner. The storm is not eternal. The clouds have a limited lifespan. The mountain has a peak. Dark times will give way to bright days. Somehow you intuitively sense that the tragedy can turn into a spiritual triumph.

Preview

No matter how difficult the time may be, remember: God has no wastebaskets. He makes no mistakes. He never bungles a job. So He will somehow be able to take the torturing experiences and turn them into diamonds that will sparkle in the crown of your life. God will not allow the suffering, the sorrow, and the pain to be fruitless.

"Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good." - Romans 12:21

Faith doesn't immunize you from difficulty. But it does radically alter your attitude. The negative person takes a bad experience and curses it. He takes it out on his best friends and innocent people! He nurses the affliction and tells people how bad the situation is. He talks up his tough times. He rehearses the miserable history that got him into the predicament.

Innerview

Then there is the believer - the person who looks for positive possibilities. He disperses the gloom-and-doom mentality.

He disperses negative thoughts with positive ones: "The sun is stronger than the clouds. And my God within me is more powerful than any

depressive mood that surrounds me. Light is stronger than darkness; therefore, the sun will shine again the new morning!"

The believer waits for the sunrise, with a positive faith he reverses the negative situation and turns it into something positive! How do you overcome evil with good? By believing there is good in every situation!

Review

Denis Waitley, displays on his wall an airline ticket to a flight he missed. By the time he reached the gate, the DC-10 was pulling away. He was terribly dejected! Then it happened! The plane had hardly taken off before it exploded. All passengers on board were killed.

Troubles today? Don't curse them, don't nurse them, but disperse them, and even reverse the negative situations into a positive possibility. Trouble is only a blessing in disguise!

John Greenleaf Whittier put it well, "I know not where the islands lift their fringed palms in air. I only know I cannot drift beyond my Master's love and care."

O God, thank You for the faith I have today. In spite of all the suffering, sin, sickness, and unspeakable tragedies that exist in the human family, I sense deeply and irrevocably that love will triumph. The sun is stronger than the clouds. God is more powerful than evil. I shall succeed in spite of dire predictions, gloomy forecasts, and depressing projections! I sense success in the dark times. This is my faith operating, Thank You for giving me this gift. Amen.

Daily Sunshine In The Sun

Praise God for: His peace!

Thank God for: steadying my heart!

Ask God's forgiveness for: my
overwhelming fear!

Ask God to help: hearts turn God-ward!

Ask God to supply our need for: living
faith!

Thank You for these answers to prayer:

DIGGING DEEPER AND REACHING HIGHER:

What was your most recent temptation, and what way out did God provide? Did you see it? What can you do to be more mindful of the exit when you are faced with temptation?

Journal for Digging Deeper:

I pray for the needs of others, especially

Today, Lord, I need

Lord, today I thank You for:

I Like Being Your Dad

June 17

" Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them, Are ye not much better than they? — Matthew 6:26

I have been blessed with three wonderful adult children. Three children who are not perfect, but perfectly loved. Each dime or dollar I've spent on them across the years, has been a privilege. As a matter of fact, my children have never come close to asking me, for as much as I'm willing to give them. The reason being, I LOVE BEING THEIR DAD.

Preview

Every so often I remind each of them of, what God wants me to remind you, that he created you *uniquely you* as an act of joy. . It is not fate, nor chance, nor luck, nor coincidence that you are breathing at this very moment. You are alive because God wanted to create you.

Do I need to remind you, you are not an accident? You weren't mass-produced. You aren't an assembly line product. You were deliberately planned, specifically gifted, and lovingly positioned on this earth by the Master Craftsman.

You're not one in a million; you're more like one in several billion. You are created an original, so you need never live a carbon copy of anyone else. Forget about who others think you are and become who you really are.

You have unique experiences, insights, strengths, and passions. Pursue them! Cultivate what motivates your mind and makes you come alive. Pursue a noble cause. Embrace your uniqueness and don't apologize for it.

Innerview

God placed within you the design and desire for greatness, THAT'S WHY HE LOVES BEING YOUR DAD .

If God had a refrigerator, your picture would be on it.

If God had a wallet, photos of you would be displayed all over it.

If God had a calendar, your birthday would be circled.

If God carved the name of the person he loved on a mountain, it would be your name.

If he sent you an e-mail he would sign at the bottom of each one a secret code , "I-L-B-Y-D!" Those letters stand for "I love being your dad."

Review

HE LOVES BEING YOUR DAD

BECAUSE YOU ARE
The apple of His eye
The delight of His Soul
The Love of His heart

You are..

Called by His name

Delivered by His hand
Made In His image
Created in His likeness
Filled with His Breathe
Anchored in His love
Blessed by His goodness

Daily Sunshine In The Sun

Led by his spirit
lifted by his love
loved by his goodness
strengthened by his word
baptized by his authority
saved by his grace

SO
RELY on His mercy
HOLD to His hand
TRUST in His power
ABIDE IN HIS Presence
STAND UPON HIS WORD

Thank You for these answers to prayer:

Praise God for: His redemption!
Thank God for: changing the landscape of
our lives!
Ask God's forgiveness for: refusing to
change!
Ask God to help: in life's catastrophes!
Ask God to supply our need for: beauty
come from ashes!

I pray for the needs of others, especially

DIGGING DEEPER AND REACHING HIGHER:
*In what areas of your life do you try to excuse sin? What
will you give over to God's control today?*

Journal for Digging Deeper:

Today, Lord, I need

Lord, today I thank You for:

Insulating Against The Negatives

June 18

"The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light.." — Matthew 6:22

Once you have declared your intention and entered the contest, be prepared for an attack from negative-thinking people! As much as possible, insulate yourself from their influence on you.

Preview

Insulation is a wonderful thing! We put it in the walls of a house to insulate from the summer heat and the winter cold. How can you insulate yourself from the inevitable negative criticism you can expect, as you move forward, upward, and onward?

"The lamp of the body is the eye." Begin by focusing on the Bible. Go back through this book and find Bible verses that give you courage, confidence, and conviction. Then when negative forces attack, they will bounce off you like sparks off cement, desert sand, or asphalt pavement.

"The lamp of the body is the eye."

Innerview

The mind that is filled with a visual eye on God's promises of prosperity and power and peace will see sparks of negativity bounce off! We are insulated!

- (1) Feed your mind with all the positive literature you can read.
- (2) Choose as your closest friends and collaborators, dynamic possibility thinkers who will encourage you and keep boosting your spirits!

(3) Attend a positive-thinking faith building house of worship every Sunday.

(4) Program your mind with a possibility-thinking treatment every morning.

Review

Finally, insulate yourself through positive prayer. Affirm today: Thank You, God, that my eyes are focused on my dream which has come from You! As I focus on You, I am insulated from all negativity. Thank You, God. Amen.

- Praise God for:** letting me be on His team!
- Thank God for:** daily challenges!
- Ask God's forgiveness for:** my self-doubts!
- Ask God to help:** people who feel excluded!
- Ask God to supply our need for :** self-acceptance!

DIGGING DEEPER AND REACHING HIGHER:

Share with God your plans for today and ask Him to alert you before you give in to temptation.

Journal for Digging Deeper:

Daily Sunshine In The Sun

Lord, today I thank You for:

I pray for the needs of others, especially

Thank You for these answers to prayer:

Today, Lord, I need

Putting Up With The Disagreeable

June 19

"...In quietness and confidence shall be your strength.." — Isaiah 30:15

Today you may encounter disagreeable confrontation with negative situations. How will you react when you experience rejection or insult? How will you handle frustrations when everything seems to go wrong?

Preview

Will you be put out, put off, or will you put up with the problem? Touchy people will be put out. Arrogant people will be put off. Positive people will put up with the problem, patiently enduring the unpleasant scene, quietly riding out the storm.

By faith you can duck a lot of problems, avoiding some of them and facing sudden cloudbursts the way ducks do. They simply sit still, waiting patiently knowing the storm will pass. The sun will break through again, soon.

Innerview

Something amusing will happen shortly, and you'll be laughing again. Anticipate humorous moods that will replace the time of tension. This is faith - putting up with the disagreeable. Remind yourself that your reaction can exaggerate, aggravate, or tolerate the sorry scene. You can make matters better - or worse.

Review

So faith tolerates the scene patiently. This does not mean you remain apathetic in the face of injustice or approve of mediocrity. Instead, you must not allow yourself to be drawn into troublesome quarrels over petty causes. Develop the skill of separating the important from the insignificant before you make a

mistake and waste your emotional energy and creative power.

Don't fret over the frivolous and get tense over the trivial.

Faith is putting up with the disagreeable.

Praise God for: His call on each life!

Thank God for: fulfilling work!

Ask God's forgiveness for: complaining!

Ask God to help: every person find purposeful work!

Ask God to supply our need for : employment!

DIGGING DEEPER AND REACHING HIGHER:

What else have you looked to, to fill your heart and satisfy your soul? Ask God to help you want to study and memorize His Word. Ask everyday until you start doing it.

Journal for Digging Deeper:

Lord, today I thank You for:

Daily Sunshine In The Sun

Today, Lord, I need

Thank You for these answers to prayer:

I pray for the needs of others, especially

Steps To Have A Fulfilling Life

June 20

"...I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." — John 10:10

Many of us are incredibly frustrated at not being able to reach our dreams and have the life we want. I believe there are 4 simple (not easy, but simple) techniques for getting there. You really can achieve your goals and live your dreams!

1. **CLARIFY EXACTLY WHAT YOU WANT!** Many of my clients have never defined what "better" or "happier" really means. How many dollars do you want to earn? How much time together as a family? Working from home doing what? What, precisely, would a better relationship look like? This can be hard work, and it involves tough choices.

One client wanted to stay home with her children, improve her marriage, and make more money, but also wanted to break the "glass ceiling" and be recognized in a profession that is notoriously competitive and involved traveling several times a month. All of these are worthy, wonderful goals, but to some extent they were mutually exclusive and she had avoided the process of choosing and writing down what she wanted most. We worked together (with her family's help and input) to design a clear and attainable balance that she was able to pursue very quickly, ending years of frustration!

2. **COMMIT TO PAYING THE COST IN ADVANCE!** Any worthwhile project is going to cost a lot. An Olympic medal will require hours of training every day, and that means paying costs in terms of

social life, postponing a career or education, and "blood, sweat and tears."

Whatever you most want in life will require that you say "NO!" to other things. Making money means less recreation, writing a book means watching less TV, being closer with your partner or children may mean changes in your work, hobbies or social activities.

3. **RE-COMMIT TO YOUR GOALS EVERY DAY!** Every day, remind yourself of your priorities and re-commit to them. For some this means time to meditate or pray. For others, it means a quick call to their coach, a friend, or members of a mastermind group. I encourage clients to start their day by writing a brief statement of where they are going and what they value in life.

Every day, 1001 minor tasks and distractions will interrupt you. The phone will ring, the boss will give you a "special" project, the kids will interrupt. Life will get in your way. Count on it! Plan for it and inoculate yourself. Every pilot and ship's captain knows that winds and currents will take them dangerously off-course. This is a natural process, something they know about, expect and plan for. It is not a surprise or source of frustration! Every day, plot your location, check your direction, and make sure you stay on course! It only takes a few minutes, and it is essential.

Steps To Having A Fulfilling Life (2)

June 21

...I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. " — John 10:10

Yesterday we pointed out with certainty that you really can achieve your goals and live your dreams if you do four things! The first three are:

CLARIFY EXACTLY WHAT YOU WANT!
COMMIT TO PAYING THE COST IN ADVANCE!
RE-COMMIT TO YOUR GOALS EVERY DAY!

Today we will advance and develop the final step.

4. **EVERY DAY, TAKE ACTION! This**

is perhaps the most difficult step. Rarely, does life give us a "big choice". Most of the transforming moments in life start as a chance meeting, a casual conversation, or an article in a magazine. We all know this, and yet when it comes to pursuing our most important goals we wait for that "big moment", that magical day when the stars are aligned and everything is "just right". For most of us, that means we will never reach our dreams or have the life we want.

To become fit, go for a walk. To create the business of your dreams, call someone today. Want to be a better parent and have a more satisfying family life? Tuck your kid into bed tonight, hold hands with your mate, and tell them how much they mean to you. Want a promotion or a raise? Make that extra contribution today! We've all heard the saying, "A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step", but no one ever adds that the journey also requires,

according to my math, 5 million, two hundred and eighty thousand additional steps after that first one! Every day, take one step closer.

QUICK TOOL: Every morning, get a 3x5 card. On one side, write a brief statement of your biggest goals and most important dreams. Jot it down using whatever words seem right at the moment. Then, on the other side, list one or two specific actions you will take TODAY that will bring you closer to your goal. Make them specific, do-able, and clear. Put the card in your pocket, purse, or on the dash of your car, and go about your day. In 30 days, I promise you will be astonished at the changes in your life!

IN SUMMARY: Life will distract you from achieving your dreams. It will blow you off-course and you will be confused and frustrated at times. So what? Today, and every day, declare your commitment to what you really, REALLY want. Write it down and talk about your dream. Understand, and agree to make the necessary sacrifices - you must pay the costs of developing the life you want - and take action! In the end, only action counts! You can have whatever you want, when you decide to pursue it intelligently, with all your heart and with all your passion. Just do it!

Praise God for: His Joy!

Thank God for: inspiration

Ask God's forgiveness for: dampened enthusiasm!

Ask God to help: talented people use their talents!

Ask God to supply our need for: quiet in life's storms!

Daily Sunshine In The Son

DIGGING DEEPER AND REACHING HIGHER:

Be honest with God about any area of your life in which you are following the pattern of this world through what you read or watch or what you do. Ask Him to help you desire His will in everything that concerns you.

Journal for Digging Deeper:

Thank You for these answers to prayer:

I pray for the needs of others, especially

Lord, today I thank You for:

Today, Lord, I need

A Divine Recall Notice

June 22

"What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?" –

Psalm 8:4

The maker of all human beings is recalling all units manufactured, regardless of make or year, due to the serious defect in the primary and central component of the heart. This is due to a malfunction in the original prototype units code named Adam and Eve, resulting in the reproduction of the same defect in all subsequent units.

This defect has been technically termed 'Sub sequential Internal Non-Morality' or more commonly known as S-I-N, as it is primarily symptomized by loss of moral judgment.

Some other symptoms include:

- (A) Loss of direction
- (B) Foul vocal emissions
- (C) Amnesia of origin
- (D) Lack of peace and joy
- (E) Selfish or violent behavior
- (F) Depression or confusion in the mental component
- (G) Fear
- (H) Idolatry

The manufacturer, who is neither liable or at fault for this defect, is providing factory authorized repair and service, free of charge to correct this SIN defect. The number to call for the recall station in your area is:
O-B-E-D-I-E-N-C-E.

Once connected, please upload your burden of SIN by pressing R-E-P-E-N-T-A-N-C-E. Next, download J-E-S-U-S into the heart. No matter how big or small the SIN defect is, the JESUS repair will replace it with:

- (A) Love
- (B) Joy

- (C) Peace
- (D) Patience
- (E) Gentleness
- (F) Goodness
- (G) Faith
- (H) Meekness
- (I) Temperance

Please see operating manual, HOLY BIBLE, for further details on the use of these repairs.

WARNING: Continuing to operate the human unit without correction, voids the manufacturer's warranty, exposing owner to dangers and problems too numerous to list and will result in the human unit being permanently impounded.

For free emergency service, call on J-E-S-U-S.

DANGER: The human units not receiving this recall action will have to be scrapped in the furnace. The SIN defect must not enter heaven.

Praise God for: meeting our every need!

Thank God for: giving us each other!

Ask God's forgiveness for: not sharing his blessings with others!

Ask God to help: us be gracious givers and receivers !

Ask God to supply our need for : faithful friends!

DIGGING DEEPER AND REACHING HIGHER:

What pattern of the world do you follow? How can you allow God to renew your mind? Do you really have a desire to renew your mind and become more like him?

Content Is More Valuable Than Form

June 23

"Avoid foolish and ignorant disputes, knowing that they generate strife. A servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to reach, patient." — 2 Timothy 2:23-24

I know a brother who is a district manager of a chain of retail stores whose managers are rewarded financially for outstanding sales performance. He recently made the comment, "A number of managers try to score points with me by having the most tidy store-as if that will make up for lack of profit."

Preview

People have a tendency to value form over content. Most real estate professionals will tell you that on a percentage basis, a new coat of paint will increase a home's selling price far more than new plumbing will.

This is a trap we must refuse to be caught in. In the Old Testament, we are reminded that God's priorities are different than ours. God said to Samuel...

"The Lord does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart." (1 Samuel 16:7).

Innerview

We may sometimes allow ourselves to be satisfied with good form-a handsome family, a nice car, a pretty house, a good job, a respectable religious affiliation, a dignified manner of worship-but God reminds us that the content of our lives is much more important than surface level appearances. Samuel said...

"To obey is better than sacrifice." (1 Samuel 15:22)

Review

Our ongoing challenge is to strive to improve the content of our lives, rather than merely settling for good form. It means that we should make it our aim-in our family, in our career, in our relationship with God-to live life from the inside out.

Praise God for: His goodness!

Thank God for: spiritual teachers!

Ask God's forgiveness for: not encouraging others!

Ask God to help: those who feel friendless!

Ask God to supply our need for : realistic goals!

DIGGING DEEPER AND REACHING HIGHER:

Spend time in prayer asking God to reveal to you the person He made you to be. What thoughts did He bring to mind?

Journal for Digging Deeper:

Daily Sunshine In The Sun

Lord, today I thank You for:

I pray for the needs of others, especially

Thank You for these answers to prayer:

Today, Lord, I need

Being Under Estimated

June 24

" My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." — 2 Corinthians 12:9

Before he was a king, David faced a similar situation. He was still a teenager when Goliath the Philistine challenged the army of Israel. None of the Israelite soldiers dared face the challenge; they were paralyzed with fear.

David was God's man to meet the challenge, but those closest to him couldn't see it. His brothers accused him of being selfish and egotistical; the king told him he was young and too small. When Goliath came up against the Israelites, the soldiers all thought, He's too to hit. David looked at the same giant and thought, He's too big to miss. It's a matter of perspective.

Preview

Yet, we all know what David did. He met the challenge; with a sling and a stone he conquered Goliath. Even though no one else recognized David's potential, David didn't lose sight of what he could do with God's help. He refused to let their lack of appreciation for his ability prevented him from doing what God had called him to do.

You, too, may find yourself in this position. Many of the people who benefit from the work you do may never recognize the contribution you make. They may never give you the acknowledgment you deserve. They may underestimate you. They may overlook you. They may see you as something less than you really are. And in the process, like the principal in Dallas, they may make it more difficult to do the work you've been called to do.

If others misjudge you, don't let it keep you from stepping out in faith and letting God do his work in your life. Their opinion of you means nothing. Your faith in God means everything.

Innerview

David told Goliath that he would strike him down so that "all of the earth may know that there is a God in Israel." (1 Samuel 17:46) David's eye wasn't on impressing his friends or winning the approval of his family. His eye was on the big picture—that through this step of faith, God would be glorified before the whole world.

Back when paddling was acceptable policeman in Dallas was working undercover at a high school, posing as a student, trying to bust a drug-ring. In the process of doing his job, he showed up late for class. The teacher sent him to the principal's office, who gave him a choice: licks or detention. Since the detention would interfere with a scheduled drug buy, the policeman had no choice but to take the whipping.

Review

Isn't this ironic? A cop is putting his life on the line for the safety of the students of an inner city school, and in the process has to take a beating from the man whose job he is trying to make easier. The principal didn't know the man was an officer working undercover. When he looked at the cop, he didn't see a comrade, he just saw a long-haired kid. He was

Daily Sunshine In The Son

underestimated.

Praise God for: His steadfast Word!

Thank God for: teaching me responsibility!

Ask God's forgiveness for: broken promises!

Ask God to help: trouble pass us by!

Ask God to supply our need for: follow-through n commitments!

DIGGING DEEPER AND REACHING HIGHER:

Are you more concerned about what people think about you than what God thinks about you? Talk to God about it.

Journal for Digging Deeper:

Thank You for these answers to prayer:

I pray for the needs of others, especially

Lord, today I thank You for:

Today, Lord, I need

A Temporary Situation

June 25

" May our Lord Jesus Christ...comfort your hearts and establish you in every good word and work." — 2
Thessalonians 2:16-17

Most people are familiar with the convoluted sayings of baseball hall-of-famer Yogi Berra. Berra was the catcher, and later the manager, of the legendary New York Yankees. Some of the misstatements attributed to Yogi include...

A nickel ain't worth a dime anymore.
It gets late early this time of year.
If you come to a fork in the road, take it.
I usually take a two hour nap, from one o'clock to four.
If you can't imitate him, don't copy him.
If I didn't wake up, I'd still be sleeping.
It ain't over till it's over.

Preview

My favorite Yogi-ism occurred when a reporter asked him what he was going to do about the fact that he was in the middle of a batting slump. Yogi looked at the reporter with surprise and said, "Slump? I ain't in no slump. I just ain't hitting."

There is undeniable wisdom in his perspective. It's the difference between seeing your problems as a temporary situation or a permanent condition. "Not hitting" is a game-to-game struggle; a "slump" lasts indefinitely.

Innerview

The bible teaches that believers can strike the word "slump" and its equivalents from their vocabulary. We may face challenges, setbacks--even outright persecution--but we have God's guarantee that it will not last. His words to Jeremiah apply to us today:

"I will fight against you but will not overcome you, for I am with you and will rescue you."
(Jeremiah 1:19)

During a difficult time in his life, a friend of mine told me that he kept in his desk drawer a legal pad with the heading "Things that will get better." It contained an itemized list of his many problems, and without exception every one of them fell into the category of "temporary." He referred to the list several times a week--and often several times a day--to remind himself that he wasn't really in a permanent slump, and that soon he would be hitting again.

I once heard a man say that as a child, when his mother couldn't afford to buy him new clothes or expensive toys, she would remind him, "Son, we're not really poor, we're just broke." He learned to understand the difference. Poor is a long-term label; broke is a temporary inconvenience.

Review

Paul made reference to this mindset in one of his letters. He said...

We are hard-pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. (2 Corinthians 4:8-9)

Paul reminds us there is a difference between being knocked down and being knocked out; there's a difference between seeing a problem

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as a temporary situation and a permanent condition.

Be careful of the labels you give to the challenges you face. Remember that they will not last forever, and by God's grace, it won't be long until you're hitting again.

Praise God for: His goodness!

Thank God for: the wonder of His love!

Ask God's forgiveness for: becoming an effective soul winner!

Ask God to help: me find words to praise Him!

Ask God to supply our need for : hearts stirred to praise!

Thank You for these answers to prayer:

DIGGING DEEPER AND REACHING HIGHER:

Ask God to show you areas of your life in which you still retain ownership. Ask God to make you willing to give up ownership to Him.

Journal for Digging Deeper:

I pray for the needs of others, especially

Lord, today I thank You for:

Today, Lord, I need

Tenderness In A Tough World

June 26

" See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men.." — 1 Thessalonians 5:15

How to be a Christian in a non-Christian world has always been the crucial question that confronts sincere believers. The society in which we live can be cold and cruel and from our childhood we have been taught to be tough-skinned. You know the trite old saying, "When the going gets tough, the tough get going."

PREVIEW

I have read recently a delightful devotional book entitled HOW TO BE TENDER IN A TOUGH WORLD. This refreshing, confessional and insightful book was written by Denise George, wife of Dr. Timothy George, Dean of the Beason Divinity School at Samford University. The title is the theme and thesis of the work-tenderness in a tough world.

In her preface Denise George outlines four basic ways we can approach life in a tough world.

INNERVIEW

First, she describes the "FIGHT IT" APPROACH. This is an effort to get tough in a tough world. It is the way of self sufficiency that masks inferiority and insecurity.

The second Approach involves AN IN-DIFFERENT ATTITUDE. When one realizes that being tough enough in the viciously tough world is almost impossible, a sense of apathy becomes the prevailing attitude. Life becomes like lukewarm water, neither hot or cold. This approach to life leaves one with an uncaring and unfeeling attitude.

The third option isn't any better. It is the FUGITIVE APPROACH TO THE WORLD. In an effort to cope with the pain of living in a tough world, a person may try escape mechanisms such as drugs, alcohol and permissive lifestyles. This is an attempt to shelter or protect oneself in a fantasy world where life is easier to handle.

REVIEW

TENDERNESS IS THE FOURTH AND BY FAR THE BEST APPROACH TO LIFE. Sensitivity, caring, and vulnerability are risky, but also immensely rewarding. The rewards of the tenderness lifestyle include meaningful relationships with God, others, and oneself. The ultimate personification of this way of life is seen in Jesus Christ Himself. I pray that all of us can become more like Christ-tender in a tough world.

Praise God for: His excellence!

Thank God for: taking no shortcuts in building my character!

Ask God's forgiveness for: taking shortcuts!

Ask God to help: people pressured by deadlines!

Ask God to supply our need for: a commitment to excellence!

DIGGING DEEPER AND REACHING HIGHER:

How do you feel about your spiritual life?

What does it mean to you that Jesus bought you with his life?

Journal for Digging Deeper:

The Challenge Of Creative Strategies

June 27

" My son, attend unto my wisdom, and bow thine ear to my understanding: That thou mayest regard discretion, and that thy lips may keep knowledge. " — Proverbs 5:1,2

A man bought a new Lexus and was testing its performance on a lonely stretch of highway. As the speedometer passed 90 mph, he saw a flashing blue light in his rear-view mirror. Thinking first that his new automobile could surely outrun the patrolman, he pressed the accelerator and broke the 100 mph barrier. But he immediately thought better of what he was doing and pulled to the side of the road. The officer came up to him and took his license. Sizing up the situation of a man driving fast in a car with its temporary tag clearly visible, he wanted to think of a way to give him a break. "I've had a tough shift, and this is my last stop," he said. "I don't feel like doing any more paperwork. So if you can give me an excuse for your driving that I haven't heard before, I'll let you go!"

"Last week, my wife ran off with a highway patrolman," the speeder replied. "And I was afraid you were trying to give her back!" "Have a nice night," the officer said.

Preview

Creativity is in short supply in most companies. People often depend on doing the same things in the same tried-and-true ways - and go bankrupt. A new product comes along that pushes the envelope. A competitor becomes more aggressive with its marketing strategies. Too much is taken for granted, and the result is disastrous.

Innerview

Most of us whine about those creative, right-brained persons who think up new ways to do things and fail to realize that everyone has the ability to innovate. Originality is not the province of a select few who are out to sabotage life for the rest of us.

People who change the world are the women and men who are willing to ask hard questions, explore new ways of doing things, and make changes when change has the prospect of doing things better. The enemy of creativity isn't really custom or tradition. Its enemy is a mix of laziness, rigid control, and self-indulgence. These sorry qualities of a corporate or personal identity will not permit vision. They champion a status-quo mentality that refuses to ask how things can be improved.

Review

Discretion is a virtue, but noncommittal and fearful control of a situation is the blueprint for failure. The Bible says: "Whoever watches the wind will not plant; whoever looks at the clouds will not reap" (Ecclesiastes 11:4). That's another way of saying that people whose watchword is "We've never done it that way before!" will soon be watching from the sidelines as life's visionaries pass them by.

The most valuable few hours you use this week could be the brainstorming time around this question: What can we do to do things better here?

Daily Sunshine In The Sun

Praise God for: His generosity!

Thank God for: keeping me company!

Ask God's forgiveness for: avoiding strangers!

Ask God to help: the lonely and alone!

Ask God to supply our need for :
compassion for the lonely !

DIGGING DEEPER AND REACHING HIGHER:

Examine your reasons for wanting to grow spiritually and list them. Do your reasons honor God? Pray and make any changes that are necessary to follow God's command to honor what is His.

I pray for the needs of others, especially

Journal for Digging Deeper:

Lord, today I thank You for:

Today, Lord, I need

Thank You for these answers to prayer:

The Big Little Things

June 28

" My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." — 2 Corinthians 12:9

Hurricanes get a lot of publicity and in the case of Floyd, the monetary loss was enormous and the loss of life, including livestock, animals, was certainly tragic. However, from a financial perspective, though they don't really get much publicity, termites actually do more financial damage, and termites are so small the naked eye cannot see the bite one takes out of the structure. But there are so many of those little guys-and they take so many bites-that the damage is enormous.

Preview

The message I communicate is that radical things can happen in minute steps, and I speak now of positive changes. Personal application: I am doing counseling with someone who set a goal to lose weight. By losing one and nine-tenths ounces per day (that's not much!) on average every day for ten months, He lost 37 pounds 17 years ago, and the weight is still gone. Those of you who have a weight problem probably just said to yourselves, "You know, I could do that!" Hope was born, and action will probably follow.

Innerview

Beautiful marriages are built not by a magnificent wedding, an incredible honeymoon, beautiful anniversary remembrances and gifts along the way. Those certainly are important to some people. However, it's the little kindnesses and courtesies exchanged on a daily basis that enable marriages to become not only

permanent but loving as well. Daily expressions of love and affection, sincere compliments to your mate about your love and appreciation for him or her, lots of intimacy on a regular basis, including hand-holding, gentle touching, hugging, courtesies like opening the car door or doing something special for your mate, something that is small that is regularly repeated, will make a difference. In particular, lots of hugging when all the husband has on his mind is the hug.

Review

You raise positive kids in a negative world in the same manner. The little things assuring them regularly of your unconditional love, starting their day with love and affection and ending their day the same way-can make a lot of difference in their lives and build a permanent relationship that will grow through the years. In the business world, arriving a few minutes early with a great attitude will make a huge difference in your career. In the sales world, dropping that promised note in the mail, returning the phone call when promised, delivering the service you assured, and becoming genuinely interested in the welfare of the client, is what builds a stable career.

Then throw in something that's not little but is not really time-consuming at all. Make certain you're selling, serving and performing with integrity. Those are the little big things-or are they big little things?-that will make a huge difference in your life.

Daily Sunshine In The Son

Praise God for: finding value in each of us!

Thank God for: treasuring me!

Ask God's forgiveness for: not valuing others as He does!

Ask God to help: sin-covered lives!

Ask God to supply our need for: restoration!

DIGGING DEEPER AND REACHING HIGHER:

Begin to give thanks to God every day for all the circumstances of your life and then record what He accomplishes in you spiritually, mentally, emotionally and physically. .

Journal for Digging Deeper:

Thank You for these answers to prayer:

I pray for the needs of others, especially

Lord, today I thank You for:

Today, Lord, I need

Getting Done With It

June 29

" May our Lord Jesus Christ...comfort your hearts and establish you in every good word and work." — 2 Thessalonians 2:16-17

How much energy do you have for living? At the end of your energy, do you still have more day left. We have all noticed how easy it is to get day to day things on our plate. What we are not expecting and that take up vital energy is unfinished things in our life. These ignored and perhaps unconscious intruders eat up our energies and thus our lives.

Preview

One of the most serious and often the most subtle is keeping
Maybe it's your car, or your neighbors, or your spouse or kids. Maybe it's your job, or what you do on your job. Maybe it's the traffic, or whatever. Make a list of all these things that get next to you and eat up your life. You might not have more than a half dozen, but I'm betting that if you really look and think, it is more than a hundred things you are tolerating. What this will do for you is to make what you are tolerating conscious. Remember that:

"Awareness + Attention + Intention = A miracle(or Magic)"

Innerview

They are now available and visible. Take this list and put it somewhere you can find it. Where you can see it is valuable also. Your need do nothing more. Well, not quite. You do have some more work to do. It is, however, easier than you may think. For one thing you can add to your list and see how large a list you can get. The longer the list, the greater the

benefit. So I will help you. Here is a list of some areas to consider.

Review

They are from a list* put out by Thomas Leonard and adapted for this devotion. They are as follows:

1. Have you been feeling/being rushed?
2. Is money dictating your lifestyle choices?
3. Are there people who are not treating you exceptionally well?
4. How is your buying/shopping experience? Clerks, lines, quality, value, cost, etc.
5. Are you running errands?
6. Are you expected to do things, just because?
7. Is your life controlled by tradition or duty, i.e., shoulds, oughts, etc.?
8. What kind of service, food, etc., do you expect and receive at restaurants?
9. Do the things in your life, such as your car, washer, microwave, etc., work right all the time?
10. Do you pay too much for what you buy and the services you receive?

Praise God for: direction!

Thank God for: a thankful spirit!

Ask God's forgiveness for: not giving thanks regularly!

Ask God to help: show thanksgiving in my daily walk!

Ask God to supply our need for : obedience!

DIGGING DEEPER AND REACHING HIGHER:

Daily Sunshine In The Sun

List three actions you can take today that will break through the mind-set of limiting God in how He answers your prayers. Then ask Him to show you His purposes for your life.

Journal for Digging Deeper:

I pray for the needs of others, especially

Lord, today I thank You for:

Today, Lord, I need

Thank You for these answers to prayer:

Marching-On Nevertheless

June 30

" On the seventh day (Joshua)...marched around (Jericho) seven times...when the priest blew the trumpets, Joshua said to the people: 'Shout, for the LORD has given you this city!' " — Joshua 6:16

On the seventh day (Joshua)...marched around (Jericho) seven times... when the priests blew the trumpets, Joshua said to the people: 'Shout, for the LORD has given you this city!' " - Joshua 6:16

Preview

Almost always when the sun sets and you look back on a well-worn day with the happy review, "It's been a great day," you have to admit - you made it a great day! God blessed you. Unexpected good things happened to you, and you responded positively to the opportunities that hit you unexpectedly!

Some other persons had a similar day, but they came to their sunset discouraged. The only difference is that you made it a great day. You had some tough assignments. You ran into some binding predicaments. But you kept marching on - nevertheless!

Innerview

From thinking - to action!

From meditation - to marching.

From the classroom - to the main street.

From the church - to your daily life and business!

From reading a book - to living out the principles!

These are the challenging times of life - when you apply the faith. Life starts when you stop talking and start making it happen!

Review

David Hartman, once the anchor man of "Good Morning, America," always closed his morning program with the challenge: "Make it happen. Make it a great day!"

When at first you don't succeed, like Joshua you keep marching on! A second time, a third, a fourth, a fifth, a sixth, and then on the seventh try, the walls came tumbling down! "Shout, for the

Lord has given you this city!" Praise God right now! For He is giving you victory today!

Praise God for: His redemption!

Thank God for: changing the landscape of our lives!

Ask God's forgiveness for: refusing to change!

Ask God to help: in life's catastrophes!

Ask God to supply our need for : beauty come from ashes!

DIGGING DEEPER AND REACHING HIGHER:

In what areas of your life do you try to excuse sin? What will you give over to God's control today?

