



THE WAY FORWARD: IMPLEMENTING THE DML MINISTRY IN THE LOCAL CHURCH

Working with the Church to understand its role in discipling Marketplace Leaders through a thirty-day church-wide effort.

But the believers who were scattered preached the Good News about Jesus wherever they went.

Acts 8:4 (NLT)

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Last edited July 2025.

The 8:4 Journey:

Where are you on the journey? The journey of which we speak begins in Acts 8:4. Jesus told the disciples in Acts 1:8 that they were to be his witnesses beginning in Jerusalem and then to the ends of the earth. It took the death of Stephen and the persecution of the early Church to move the believers out of the comfort of Jerusalem and Judea. Starting with Pentecost, thousands accepted the truth that Jesus was the Messiah. Many of those who received the message were from outside of the Jewish nation and came to celebrate Passover and Pentecost. After becoming followers of Jesus, many stayed to be part of a community being disciplined by the Apostles.

Once the persecutions began, many of these pilgrims left to return to their homes. They headed to Spain, Rome, and Asia. They traveled down the highways of commerce, working, buying, and selling as they went. They came to Jerusalem to celebrate their faith. They left Jerusalem with a passion for the message of Jesus their Messiah. Luke says, ⁴*But the believers who were scattered preached the Good News about Jesus wherever they went.*

Acts 8:4 (NLT). These were not missionaries sent out by local congregations, but believers working to support themselves, their families, and their communities. They were solid citizens invested in the marketplace, earning incomes just as we do now. The difference is that they viewed their work as part of their worship of the God who saved them. For them, work was not a necessary evil, but an opportunity to do what they were created to do (Gen. 1:28, 2:15) while making disciples (Matt. 28:19,20). Their work provided the capacity to express that love in real, tangible ways.

God is calling a new generation to enter the Acts 8:4 Journey. In most cases you will not need to travel far. Your journey may begin in your home and end with the workplace which God has given to you as your personal venue for sharing the Good News. Just as in the early Church, it is your personal platform to share Christ in love and message.

We pray that the DML Journey will encourage you to be part of the **Acts 8:4 Journey** until men and women from every tribe, nation, and tongue are reconciled to their great redeemer.





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Just the Facts

Don't have time to do all the reading? Here are the next steps in brief:

Decision! Does the Church Leadership agree?

- Do we as a church agree that it is important and necessary to disciple people to do their work as an act of worship? Do we agree that this is not a program but an ongoing ministry?

Delegate Who will lead this ministry?

- Will a new department be set up for a business/professionals ministry? Will this be subsumed into the men's or women's ministry? Who will lead it?

Date When do we start?

- Select a date to start the Business Month and start preaching for at least four Sundays, encouraging the church to read the devotions on their own.

Doings What can we do? Take your pick!

- Sermons - at least four weeks per year
- Devotions - thirty days per year
- Prayer Walk through your city - once per year
- Commissioning those in the workplace - once per year
- Prayer retreat to dedicate our work to the Lord, praying through the quadruple bottom line: missional, social, economic, environmental
- Discipleship groups - ongoing
- Adult Sunday School class - Leaders in the Workplace
- Business trainings - Microbusiness and/or Small and Medium Size Entrepreneur Training
- Participate in Work as Worship Retreat

Introducing DML



Welcome to the way forward designed for churches looking to engage with Discipling Marketplace Leaders Business Month! We are so happy that you will be joining us for this journey. Our heart's desire is that you and your church grow in passion for reclaiming the redeemed Marketplace by spending intentional time to learn, grow, discuss, and pray together about how we can be transformational for Christ in business, education, and government.

This guide will help you focus through preaching, daily devotions and small group/church activities designed to help the body of Christ grow together.

DML's Vision:

Discipling Marketplace Leaders envisions *every* local church discipling *every* member to be the church in *every* marketplace so that all may flourish.

DML's Mission:

Discipling Marketplace Leaders educates, equips, and empowers the local church to establish a ministry that disciples every believer to live out work as worship and mission.

What's In Our Name:

Discipling – A Christian disciple is one who accepts and assists in spreading the good news of Jesus Christ while seeking to become more and more like Jesus. A disciple is also a student, undergoing learning and training. We want to be in the ongoing process of discipling; learning God's will for the marketplace and how that applies to each of us. Jesus wouldn't have done what he did without disciples; the major fulfillment of the gospel is what happened AFTER the cross, through the disciples.

Marketplace – The marketplace is that combination of business, education, and government that come together to make economic transactions possible. These three systems are the key components of a nation and form its. Health is measured by the synergy between these key components of every community. The call of the church is to make disciples of every nation. The three components of every economy forms the avenue through which the Good News must flow.

Leaders – The focus is upon Christian leaders who form the backbone of every church in every community. These leaders direct businesses, organizations, and groups. A leader has influence and power. A leader has followers (otherwise they are just out for a walk!). A Christian leader recognizes 1 Peter 2:9 which says that we are a “chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.” These Christian leaders are called to be priests and ambassadors in the marketplace, their parish. Leaders need to know how to use their power and influence to declare the praises of God through their faithful leadership in the marketplace.

Our mandate: The Lausanne Commission summarized its recommendations to the global Church in 2004:

- We call upon the Church worldwide to identify, affirm, pray for, commission and release businesspeople and entrepreneurs to exercise their gifts and calling as business people in the world – among all peoples and to the ends of the earth.
- We call upon businesspeople globally to receive this affirmation and to consider how their gifts and experience might be used to help meet the world’s most pressing spiritual and physical needs through Business as Mission.

These recommendations start with the Church and flows to the individual business owner. We believe this is the proper order for this work. The DML focus is to bring together the leaders in the church and the Christian leaders of the marketplace in their congregations. The Church empowers business people (the first recommendation) so that business people in their congregations can use their gifts to serve the community and be a light unto the nations (fulfilling the second recommendation).



Our Approach: Discipling Marketplace Leaders is about marketplace **discipleship** more than business **development**. We start with Church leaders to help them understand the theology of work as revealed in God's word. This includes a look at what has been missed through a wrong understanding of work. When Church leaders understand the importance of marketplace ministry, DML helps them start

Marketplace Ministries, in order to equip, encourage, and disciple the business leaders. DML introduces a three-step approach of business discipleship: training, mentoring, and advocacy.

The foundation of the DML work is in the understanding that Business, in and of itself, is a Mission, a good and holy calling, for the majority of Christians in every community. The partnership between pulpit pastors and marketplace ministers are foundational to achieve the Biblical objectives of reclaiming the redeemed marketplace.

Dear Pastor:

You are now ready to begin the DML Journey! The material in this booklet is almost the same as in the flash drive. The following will refer to the material in the booklet but also understand you can use the flash to print individual sections for your use. First, let's review some of the key thoughts from the two-day workshop.



1. Discipling Marketplace Leaders (DML) is designed to be part of your church ministry, not a program. A program usually has a beginning and an ending. Most churches have ministries such as home or cell groups, men and women's ministry, and youth and children ministry. These are ongoing ministries that are important to the long-term discipling of your members. Now you are adding another key component, discipling your members to live for Jesus in the workplace.
2. Work is what we were created to do (Gen. 2:15). We bring glory to God in and through the work God has called us to do (Col. 3:23). We saw many scriptures in the Old and New Testament concerning work as part of what we do as Christians.
3. God instituted the local church for the equipping of the saints for service (Eph. 4:11,12). God will hold pastors accountable for the discipling the congregation to follow Jesus in every area of their lives: general discipleship (living for Jesus), marriage, parenting, and now, discipling to live for Jesus in the marketplace.
4. We spoke of God's plan of redemption and restoration. God has called us to declare the arrival of the Kingdom of God. Jesus has redeemed us, now we have the message of redemption that will bring reconciliation between God and man, man and man and man and creation. Every believer is to live as ambassadors declaring the Good News that through Jesus we have redemption in all three areas.
5. We learned that every believer is a Saint, Priest, and Ambassador. Peter, quoting Leviticus, declares that we are now God's holy nation, a royal Priesthood. Understanding every believer

as Priest and Ambassador releases the greatest mission force the world has ever seen. By bringing down the false divide between clergy/laity your congregation is disciplined to the purpose being the Church in the community rather than simply people in a building.

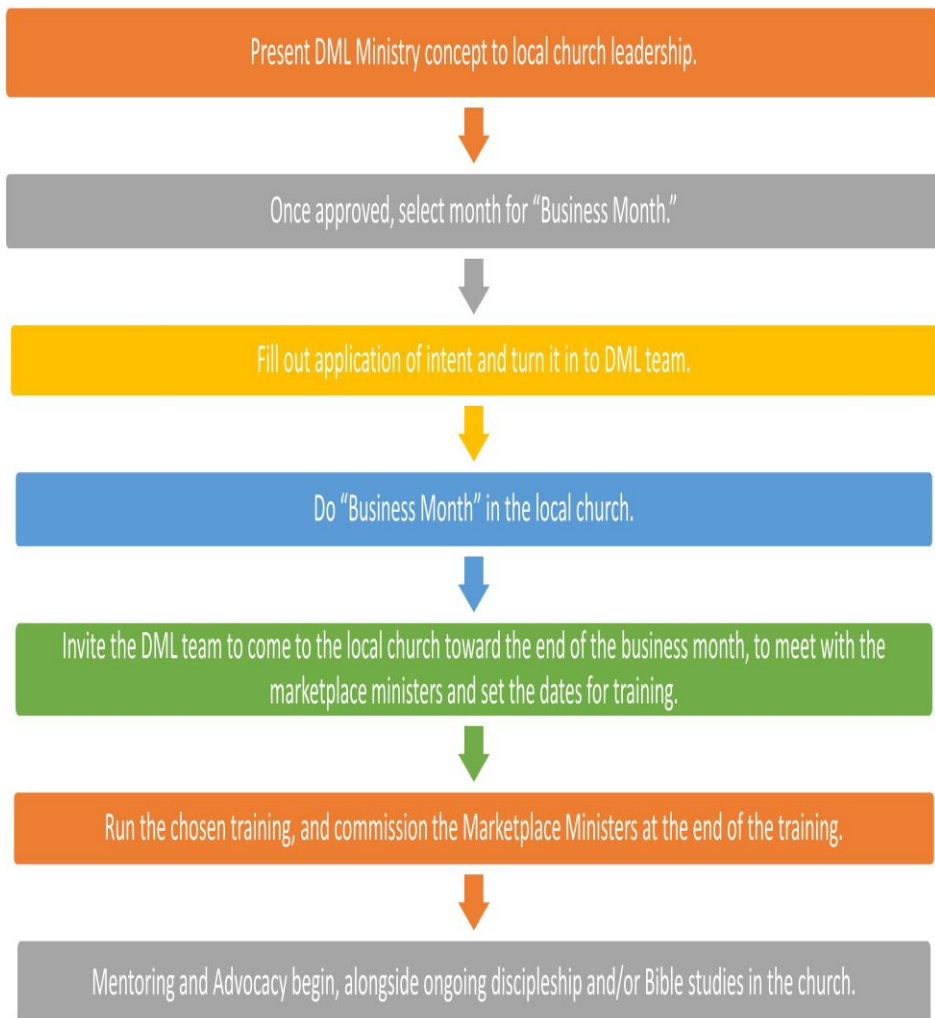
So, let the journey begin! Here is what you have on this booklet. These are tools to help you move forward in your journey!

1. Please review the table of contents for a full description of what is in this booklet.
2. **Important!!!** The Business Month helps you introduce DML to your congregation by preaching on Business as Mission. You will share four sermons that emphasize the things discussed in the two-day workshop. This can be four sermons on four consecutive Sundays, or four sermons spread out over a few months. You can use your own sermons or those provided (page 16-23). The goal is to begin helping your members understand that work in the marketplace is a good and holy calling. Like planting, this is a time to turn the soil to prepare your people for the opportunity that comes at the completion of the Business Month.
3. The Business Month is in the Marketplace Guide: The purpose of the Guide is to help you prepare your members understand work as worship and business as mission. It is an introduction to the actual training that will take place that begins after you complete the Business Month. It has a variety of options to use to help ensure your people are committed to serving Jesus in the marketplace.
 - a. **Marketplace Sermons, Ideas, and Outlines, p. 15:** The next stop in our Manual is sermon ideas. You do not need to do any of these, they are here if you want them or to help you come up with your own sermons. The big idea is to show how scripture endorses work, business and the marketplace as foundational to the Christian life! Between pages 15 and 22 are four “sample” sermons.
 - b. **Church Service Ideas for Highlighting the Marketplace, p. 23:** You will find a variety of things you might consider doing during the four sermons you give. These are just ideas

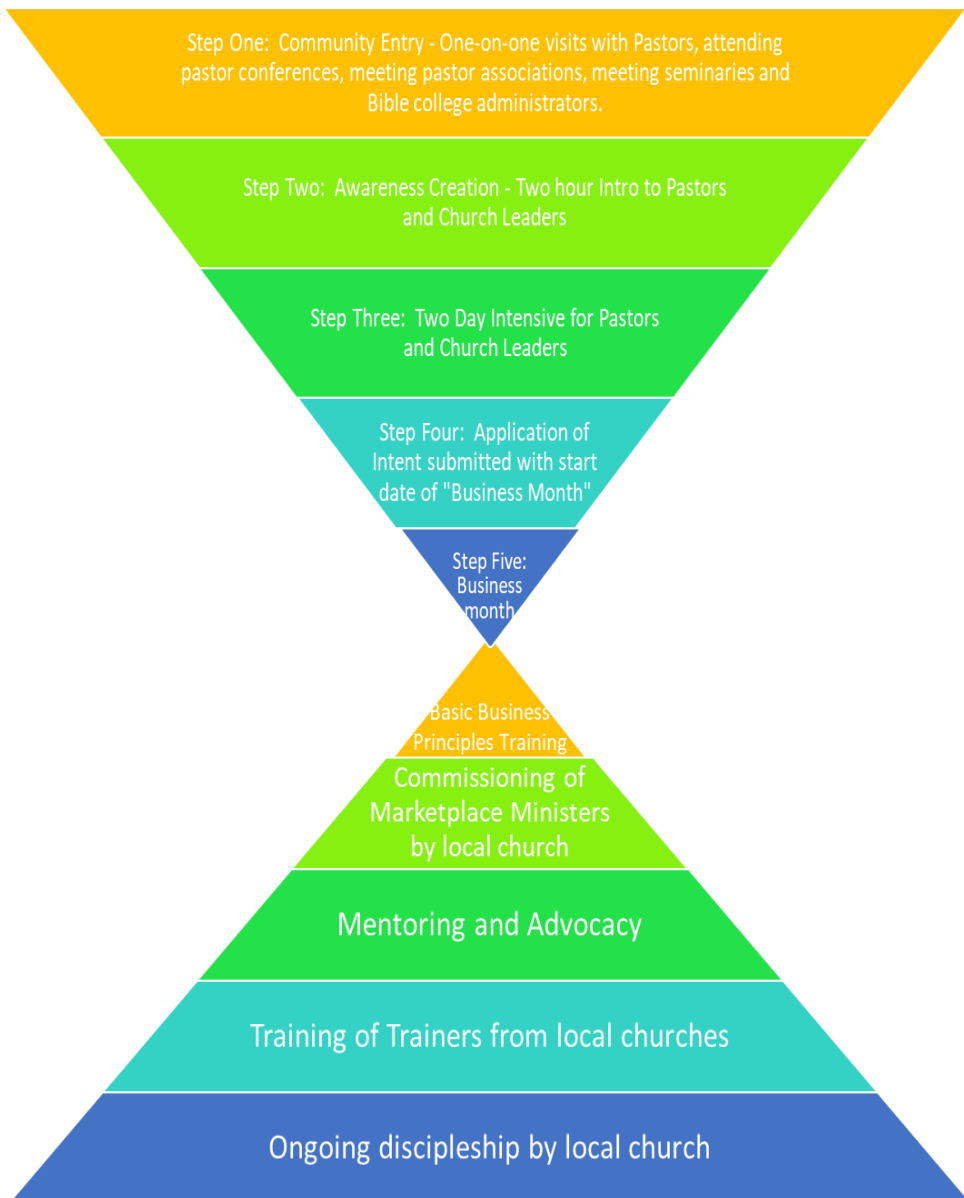
you might use during one of your four sermons, or use your own ideas.

- c. **Church Wide Activities, p. 24-25:** We have listed different things others have done that you might do to get your congregation involved practically. These are activities others have tried. We strongly urge you to pray about getting your people busy living out life with purpose in the marketplace.
 - d. **Thirty Days in the Marketplace Devotions, p 26-57:** These are optional devotions you can print and provide your congregation or small groups. We would encourage you to make them available to your congregation. They are very helpful in getting your congregation aligned to Discipling Marketplace Leaders (DML). They can be used as individual devotions, small group devotions, or whole church devotions.
4. **Conclusion** – Now you understand the tools you have in to use in this booklet or in the flash drive (optional). Now decide when you will begin your four sermons. Please contact your DML coordinator and let them know the dates. We want to partner with you by praying for you and your congregation as you begin this journey.
- a. **Next** – As you finish your last sermon be sure to invite those in the congregation to meet with the DML team. The DML team will challenge the congregation based on which training series you feel is most appropriate for your members. At this meeting the DML team will register members for the training.
 - b. **The DML team will help your people organize themselves to be ready for the trainers.** Each week a trainer will come to teach and discuss a critical topic on how to be effective in your calling to the Marketplace.
 - c. **After completing the training,** depending on the program, select a Sunday (as near as possible to the completion date) and invite the whole congregation to dedicate those trained as Marketplace Ministers. This commissioning service is one of the most moving and empowering part of the whole process.
 - d. **At this point we encourage** you to speak to the DML team to discover how you and your congregation can become trainers for DML.

Summary of the Steps to Follow



DML Flow Chart



Marketplace Sermons Ideas and Outlines

You are welcome to use the following sermon/message outlines in the preaching that you do on this topic of “Church-based Business as Mission” OR you are welcome to use what God is laying on your heart regarding this same topic. These sermon outlines are there to help you, should you desire to use them.

Sermon Idea #1 –Four Goals of Work

Key Texts: Genesis 1:1-3, 2:1-3; John 5:17; Acts 20:35; Col. 3:23, 24; 1 Chron. 4:9,10

Description: Work is not a necessary evil, but a God ordained directive. God worked and used his creativity to create the universe and everything in it. He continues to work as he redeems and restores creation to its original purpose. We are made in the image of God and express God's image in and through our work and creativity. Beginning with Adam and Eve, humanity has taken the raw materials of creation and continues to make amazing things from God's creation. God has given us four goals that guide our lives and helps us flourish: Social, Economic, Environmental, and Missional. When we move the focus off ourselves and onto performing our work as "unto the Lord," these four goals bring glory to our creator, expands the Kingdom of God, and enables all to flourish.

Outline:

- I. Work is God's Idea
 - a. God is the God of Work – Gen. 2:1; Jn. 5:17 (God worked, creating he universe and now he is still working to redeem and restore it).
 - b. God placed Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden to work it and care for the Garden of Eden (Gen. 1:28; 2:15 cf Genesis 9).
 - c. Genesis 1:28 is called the Great Commitment, God committed to us through his blessing and we commit to God by caring out the call to fill the earth by being fruitful, multiplying, subduing and ruling.
- II. God chose us to be his partners in creation –Environmental Goals
 - a. God is owner of all things – Ps. 24:1; 1 Cor. 10:26 (God called Adam and Eve to take good care of what he has created).
 - b. God created us on purpose (Ps. 139) and for a purpose (Eph. 2:10). Part of that purpose is to use our God given creativity to help all of creation flourish. This includes bringing the

earth under control while ruling well the animal kingdom In Genesis 2:15 God gave the Garden to Adam and Eve that they might “work it” and “keep it” (guard it).

- c. We are held accountable for what we do in and with the world that God made us stewards- Matt. 25:14-26.

III. God wants us to “be fruitful and multiply” – Economic Goal

- a. God’s call was for humanity to be fruitful and multiply. While this includes an expanding population, it also called for the development of economic and social (government) systems that make expansion possible. Gen. 1:26-28
- b. God called for them to fill the earth – Gen. 1:28. Through their creativity and work they fill the earth and flourish.
- c. When members of the local Church sees their work as worship and are encouraged to be priests and ambassador (1 Peter 2:9) their work becomes a holy calling making them frontline workers of God’s mission to make disciples. (Matt. 28:19,20; 2 Cor. 9:6,7; Acts 20:35).

IV. God Expects Us to Love our Community – *Social Goal*

- a. God calls us to love our neighbor as ourselves – Matt. 22:39; Lk. 10:25-37; cp Deut. 6:4; Lev. 9:9-18).
- b. God expects love to be expressed in action – Gal. 6:10; Matt. 25:31-46. God judges not what we say, but what we do in caring for others.
- c. God expects us to love all humanity, made in the image of God, they deserve dignity, respect, and loving kindness (see the Good Samaritan story in Luke 10:25-37).

V. God Created us for His Glory – Missional Goal

- a. Our work is a form of worship and part of our mission – Col. 3:23,24.
- b. God has given us the Great Commission, to make disciples, to express his love to all people – Matt. 28:19,20 (We Jesus said “go” he was not commanding us to leave, but as we go about our work to make disciples.
- c. God has given us the ministry of reconciliation, declaring us to be ambassadors of the Kingdom of God (2 Cor. 5:14-21).

Conclusion:

The greatest missionary force in the world today is the men and women who are in every congregation on Sunday morning. The rest of the week these Christians are sprinkled throughout the community serving in government, schools and businesses where they have the opportunity to be light, leaven, and salt to many people who will never attend the local Church. The Church must light the fuse that will ignite every believer to be Kingdom ambassadors in every part of the marketplace. The end result will be a second reformation as great or greater than the first.

Sermon Idea #2 – Saints, Priests, Ambassadors

Key Texts: Psalm 139; Eph. 2:10; Eph. 1:1; 1 Peter 2:5-9; 2 Cor. 5:18-20; Acts 1:8.

Description: In the New Testament, we find that a mystery was made clear. It involved one of the most strategic shifts in God's eternal plan (Rom. 11:25; 16:25; 1 Cor. 2:7; Eph. 5:32). God had shifted his message carriers from a nation, Israel, to the people as the Church. Now the message of the resurrected Christ would be presented person to person throughout the nations allowing for believers to be insiders in every ethnic group in the world! God's goal is to unleash his people from being chained to a building to fulfill their calling to be light and salt in every corner of the a community, in every nation in the world.

Outline:

- I. Created on Purpose for Purpose
 - a. God created you on Purpose - Psalm 139:13,14
 - b. God created you for Purpose – Eph. 2:10
 - c. God has given each believer three important positions
- II. Created to be a Saint
 - a. Saint – the word is used over 220 and is translated holy or saint
 - b. To be holy is to be separated for God's particular purposes. When we are doing life as unto the Lord, we are his saints or holy ones, separated from living for ourselves to living for God.
 - c. In the N.T., the term was most commonly used to refer to the believers in geographically areas (Acts 9:22; Eph. 1:1, etc.). Another name that was used was Church, God's called-out ones to be his representatives.
 - d. Both saints and the Church refers to believers, often gathered in geographical areas.
- III. Created to be a Priest
 - a. As saints and the Church, we are called to perform the work of God in the parish where he puts us.

- b. As Priests, we reveal the love and purposes of God to those around us – 1 Peter 2:9
- c. We are committed to offering spiritual sacrifices Rom. 12:1,2; Eph. 2:10; Titus 2:14; Hebrews 13:16
- d. We are to join others to form a Kingdom of Priests Rev. 5:10 (see Ex. 19:6)

IV. Created to be an Ambassador

- a. We have a message from King Jesus for the world – 2 Cor. 5:18-20.
 - i. Jesus is victorious over death, sin, and sickness
 - ii. Jesus has redeemed what Satan has taken
 - iii. God has given us the time between the first coming and the second coming to deliver the message of reconciliation 2 Peter 3:9
- b. God has given us the message of reconciliation 2 Cor. 5:18-20.
- c. The message of reconciliation must move from the four walls of the Church to the four corners of the marketplace – it is here that we fulfill our roles as Saints, Priests, and Ambassadors.

Conclusion:

God has made his people into a Kingdom of Priests. Israel failed to become a nation of priests to the nations and instead became a nation of priests. God has chosen us to be the messengers that will go into every corner of the world and share the message of reconciliation. Satan would be content to let Christians do their thing within the church building. But when they move out of the Church as Ambassadors and become the Church in the community, he will react. Warfare is seldom waged in the military barracks, but on the field where the enemy has its forces. Let's get believers out of the barracks and into the battle! Let's go in and possess the land that Jesus has redeemed!

Sermon Idea #3– Three Great Directives

Key Texts: Gen. 1:28; 2:15; Matt. 22:34-40; Matt. 28:19,20;

Description: God has given us three Great Directives: The Great Commitment (Gen. 1:28; 2:15), the Great Commandment (Matt. 22:34-40), and the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19,20). Every Christian must understand that how they live and share their lives is just as important as how they share Jesus in words. This is important as we realize that the Great Commitment is the foundation for living out the Great Commandment and the Great Commission discipleship is about a relationship and is every Christians calling. Also, it is essential to remind your congregation they are created on purpose for purpose

Outline:

- I. Created on Purpose for Purpose (The Great Commitment)
 - a. God created you on Purpose – Ps. 139:13,14
 - b. God created you for Purpose – Eph. 2:10
 - c. God has given each believer three Great Directives
- II. Created to Love - Matt. 22:34-40 (The Great Commandment)
 - a. Jesus explains that all the commandments are expressed in just two relationships:
 - i. Loving God (Deut. 6:5)
 - ii. Loving your neighbor (Lev. 19:18)
 - b. We learn that love is an action - 1 Cor. 13
 - c. Love is expressed through sacrifice – John 3:16
- III. Created to make disciples – Matt. 28:19, 20 (The Great Commission).
 - a. Jesus gives us one “command” in these verses – Make disciples (vs. 28).
 - b. We make disciples in three ways: “go,” “baptize,” and “teach.”
 - c. To “go” refers to going to the “ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8), but it also refers to going to work every day. It could be translated, “as you go.”

- d. It is especially crucial as you “go” to work to make sure you are making disciples.

IV. Go and Love

- a. The foundation for discipleship is love
 - i. We disciple because we love God and want to share him with others
 - ii. We disciple because we love our neighbors and want them to know God
- b. God has given us the message of reconciliation 2 Cor. 5:18-20.
 - i. We share this message through our lives and work
 - ii. We share this message as part of the process of making disciples
 - iii. We share this message because we love those around us
- c. You cannot love God without loving your neighbors, and you cannot love your neighbors without introducing them to God – Discipling them.
- d. As you “go” about your life fulfilling the Great Commitment, love God continually and love others, the Great Commandment, discipling them to be followers of Jesus (The Great Commission).

Conclusion:

God has made his people into a Kingdom of Priests. Israel failed to fulfill the role of Priests to the nations. God has chosen us to be the messengers that will go into every corner of the world and share the message of reconciliation. Satan would be content to let Christians do their thing within the church building. But when they move out of the Church as Ambassadors and become the Church in the community, he will react. Warfare is seldom waged in the military barracks, but on the field where the enemy has its forces. Let's get believers out of the barracks and into the battle! Let's go in and possess the land that Jesus has redeemed!

Sermon Idea #4– The Holy Calling of Work

Key Texts: Gen. 1,2; Ex. 31:1-4; Matt. 25; Col. 3:23

Description: Work is too often seen as something we have to do, but God gives it to us for a different purpose. Work is why God created us. The creation story reveals an amazing Universe and an amazing plan for planet earth. Central to that plan was the creation of humanity made in God's image given responsibility to fill the earth with God's praise. Central to the plan was the call to work and develop the marketplace not merely as place to earn a living but a place to live out the love of Christ. We need to understand that the Church is more about the six days outside of the building than the one day inside it.

Outline:

- I. Work is not a punishment but a blessing.
 - a. God was the first workman (Gen. 2:2)
 - b. God created Adam to Work (Gen. 2:15)
 - c. Work is the basis of the Great Commitment (Gen 1:28)
- II. Three Truths about Bezalel the Craftsman Ex. 31:-4
 - a. He was chosen by God for his work
 - b. He was filled with the Spirit of God to do his work.
 - c. He had God-given wisdom
 - d. He was an expert craftsman empowered by the Holy Spirit.
 - e. God had shaped him for work (S.H.A.P.E.
 - i. Spiritually – as we grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus (2 Peter 3:18)
 - ii. Heart – as we discover the passion he has given us
 - iii. As we develop our God-given skills and abilities
 - iv. Personality – our unique personality molded by Jesus
 - v. As we appreciate our unique life experiences
- III. Like Bezalel, every believer is created for a purpose (Eph. 2:10)
 - a. Our purpose is to live and work to the glory of God (Col. 3:23)
 - b. Our calling to work forms a foundation for our calling to make disciples

- c. Your community is the garden God has called you to work, love, and share
- d. Church provides the place of worship, teaching, and learning to equip every believer to be the vessel of God's light (Eph. 4:11-16)

IV. Unleashing the Church

- a. We have a message from King Jesus for the world – 2 Cor. 5:18-20
- b. We have a place to deliver that message – the community/marketplace
- c. We have the power to witness for God (Acts 1:8)
- d. We have the motivation to live for Jesus (2 Cor. 5:14,15)
- e. We have the command to make disciples through loving others (Matt. 22:34-40; Matt. 28:19,20)
- f. Now let us move from the four walls of the Church and live for Jesus in the four corners of the marketplace!

Conclusion:

God has made his people into a Kingdom of Priests. Israel failed to fulfill the role of Priests to the nations. God has chosen us to be the messengers that will go into every corner of the world and share the message of reconciliation. Satan would be content to let Christians to live their lives within the church building. But when they move out of the Church as Ambassadors and become the Church in the community, he will react. Warfare is seldom waged in the military barracks, but on the field where the enemy has its forces. Let's get believers out of the barracks and into the battle! Let's go in and possess the land that Jesus has redeemed!

Activities to Highlight Marketplace Ministers in the Church Service:

1. This Time Tomorrow

Ask your members to turn to each other in the service and ask at least two different people these three questions to learn more about their workplace environment:

- i. Where will you be at this time tomorrow?
- ii. What challenges will you be facing?
- iii. How can I pray for you?

2. Show these short videos:

- Work as Worship - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m06DYIAeCtU> – 2:46
- The Florist - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qwaiE7tW6kw> – 2:17
- Work Redefined - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cHrynF3LUus> – 1:56
- Created to Create - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vnvUSHXTo7g> – 3:37
- This is Discipling - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rk8ERxqCZqQ> – 1:59

3. Highlight a Marketplace Minister

Have a person share a testimony about how God has used their work to be an act of worship, sharing how they are fulfilling the missional, social, economic, and environmental bottom lines in their work. While the person shares for three-four minutes, have pictures of their work showing on the projector.

Annual/On-Going Activities

1. Prayer Walk

Conduct a prayer walk in the business sector with the people in the church, two by two. This could be through the city center, taken block by block, reclaiming the primary places of business for God. This is quiet prayer while walking, not done to gain attention or advertise the church. We recommend that you meet for prayer before you go out, and then have a central meeting place again at the end of the prayer walk, to debrief any messages from the Holy Spirit that may have come during the walk. This could be repeated one or two times per year. Often our eyes will be opened to new ways of seeing the city and business when this is done. Or form a city wide coalition of intercessors, marketplace leaders and pastors. Meet for prayer twice a month for one hour in public building.

2. Annual Prayer Breakfast

Sponsor an annual prayer breakfast in your city or for a large company in your town, or for your business persons in your church. Invite key leaders from government, education and business to gather for breakfast and followed by a time of prayer for the city as it relates to these three key areas. Be sure to follow ACTS: Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving and Supplication, ensuring that the time is not just spent in making requests to God but on the other aspects as well.

3. Workplace Small Groups

Small groups are often less threatening to people than a church. Every working person in your church likely influences at least ten people in the workplace. Every working person in your church likely influences at least 10 people in the workplace. Therefore, developing many workplace small groups will impact people where they live most of the week. Workplace small groups offer a way for co-workers

to come together to pray about tackling the giants in their workplace. It is a place for co-workers to encourage one another and learn to be more like Christ at work and to be a refueling station to connect with God during the week. Workplace small groups are made of individuals learning how to be more like Christ in their work life. It could be co-workers at a company who come together during the lunch hour or before or after work. A group could also consist of like-minded individuals across the community who come together, usually before work.

4. Work as Worship Retreat

Join us for this annual event as we listen and learn from leaders in the workplace who have learned to do their work as an act of worship. This event will have both live speakers as well as streamed speakers from the live event that takes place in Texas, from RightNow Ministries. Please contact the DML Ministry team at info@dmleaders.org for more information regarding dates and location.

Thirty Days of Marketplace Devotions

DML's Short Video MARKETPLACE DEVOTIONS

These videos were created by the DML International Chaplain, Freeman Okoro Jr. Please share this with church members, friends, and family as you go through the business month. To see the whole playlist, go to disciplingmarketplaceleaders in YouTube or go to:

<https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLPdt14d41XXBLvMN5C8sSLbzutsibHp-k&si=wshsNMjQoHCSV2CU>

NAME	BIBLE TEXT	LINK
INTRODUCTION		
JOB DESCRIPTION	Genesis 2:15-17	Watch Video
COMPARISONS	1 Timothy 6:6	Watch Video
OWNERS OR STEWARDS?	Deuteronomy 8:18	Watch Video
SUCCESS	Acts 13:36	Watch Video
ABILITY VS AVAILABILITY	Psalms 147:10-11	Watch Video
WHAT IS YOUR BRAND?	1 Thessalonians 5:24	Watch Video
HEARING GOD ON THE JOB	1 Corinthians 1:27	Watch Video
SHEEP WITHOUT SHEPHERD	Matthew 9:36	Watch Video
FAITH, SPELLED RISK	Matthew 14:28-30	Watch Video
CAN A CITY BE TRANSFORMED?	2 Chronicles 7:14	Watch Video
BUSINESS AS MISSION OR AS USUAL?	2 Corinthians 6:17	Watch Video
ENTITLEMENT	Philippians 2:5-8	Watch Video
THE VALUE OF WORDS	Matthew 5:37	Watch Video
ACCURATE AND HONEST MEASURES	Deuteronomy 25:15	Watch Video
LYDIA	Acts 16:12-15	Watch Video
BREAKING BAD HABITS	John 8:34	Watch Video
A NEW BREED OF MISSIONARIES	Acts 1:8	Watch Video
YOU AND YOUR BOSS	Genesis 41:38	Watch Video
PLANNING FOR SUCCESS	Jeremiah 10:23; Proverbs 16:9	Watch Video
BALANCING THE NATURAL AND THE SPIRITUAL	Psalms 33:16-17	Watch Video
THE THREE RESOURCES	2 Corinthians 5:18-20	Watch Videos
WORKPLACE DISCIPLESHIP PLEDGE	Matthew 28:18-20	Watch Video
KINGDOM VISION	Matthew 5:14-16	Watch Video
GEHAZI	2 Kings 5:16	Watch Video
THE THREE CALLING OF EVERY BELIEVER	Ephesians 2:10; 1 Peter 2:9	Watch Video
WORK, BUSINESS, AND SABBATH	Exodus 31:14	Watch Video
WORK, GOD'S IDEA	Genesis 1:1-3; 2:15	Watch Video
PRAYER WORK AND PRAYER WALK	Ephesians 6:18	Watch Video
GRACE	Matthew 5:45	Watch Video
FOREVER WITH GOD	Revelation 7:9-12	Watch Video

Daily Written Devotions

to be shared on WhatsApp or printed for members.

Taken from: TGIF Today God Is First Daily Devotionals which are a service of [Marketplace Leaders Ministries](http://www.marketplaceleaders.org/tgif/) To receive daily emailed devotions, go to <http://www.marketplaceleaders.org/tgif/>.

Day One - Freedom and Boundaries

And the LORD God commanded the man, 'You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die'" (Gen 2:16-17). "

Everyone needs the gift of freedom and boundaries in their work to succeed. God set up the ultimate work environment in the Garden of Eden. He gave Adam and Eve responsibility to manage the animals, the agriculture and every activity. He gave them specific instructions as to how things were to be done but gave liberty of expression for fulfilling their tasks.

He also told them what was off limits. They could not eat from the tree of good and evil because He knew it would be bad for them. He was not trying to withhold from them; He was trying to protect them.

If you are a manager it is your responsibility to clearly define the job responsibilities of those under your care. They should know clearly what the freedoms and the boundaries are in carrying out their duties. They should be given adequate freedoms with authority to enforce their decisions that will impact whether they can be successful or not.

Once freedoms and boundaries are established, this allows a healthy accountability to take place between management and worker. Both can have healthy expectations of each other.

Do you have a clearly defined job description with measurable goals outlined? Are your freedom and boundaries clearly defined so you know what you can and cannot do within the scope of your job? If not, you are setting yourself up for failure.

Today, evaluate your job function and make sure you have clearly defined expectations and the way in which you are expected to accomplish your tasks.

Day Two - Understanding Our Own Calling

"If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you? You must follow Me." - John 21:22

Jesus was talking to Peter after he had just had a very important encounter with Him—one of the last meetings the two would have. This was the third time Jesus had shown Himself to the disciples after His resurrection. It is the famous dialogue between Jesus and Peter in which Jesus asked Peter three times if he loved Him. Jesus followed by commanding, "Feed My sheep." Jesus went on to foretell of Peter's future death. As they were walking together, John was with Peter and Jesus. Peter asked Jesus about John and whether he would die also. Jesus reacted sharply to Peter's comment, telling him not to worry about what John's role or purpose was in life. All Peter had to do was worry about fulfilling his own purpose.

As workplace believers we tend to measure our success on whether we have achieved a certain position or stature in life. Even as Christians the temptation to believe that someone is blessed if they have achieved prominence is always confronting us. In His discussion with Peter, Jesus was getting at the very heart of the matter of a person's calling. Peter was worried about whether his friend John was going to get the same lot in life as he was. Jesus told him it should not be his concern. He was to concern himself only with one thing: his own calling before God.

Are you tempted to compare yourself with where others are in their life? Are you dissatisfied with where God has you right now? Be of good cheer—"[be]

confident of this, that He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus" (Phil. 1:6).

Day Three - David Fulfilled His Purpose

"For David...served the purpose of God in his own generation" (Acts 13:36 NASB)

Imagine for a moment that you have just died and you are about to come before the Judgment Seat of Christ. Jesus is speaking to his angel about you. He then says these words: "Janice served the purpose of my Heavenly Father for her generation."

Will God be able to say you served your purpose in your generation? Imagine being able to say that. God was able to say this about the life of David, even though David made some incredibly bad choices in his life that led to long term consequences. However, because David repented each time he erred, his purpose was accomplished on earth as God had designed it.

One of the prayers I often pray for people whenever I'm asked to pray for them is this; "Lord, may you fulfill every purpose for which you made them. May there be no inheritance left on the table that he/she is entitled to."

That is really the definition of success. Success is fulfilling the complete purpose for which God made you. It has nothing to do with wealth, accomplishments, stature in life, or standard of living. It has to do with living a life of obedience to the Father. And when we live a life of obedience to the Father, we will fulfill the purposes that God had in mind when he made you and me.

In 1924, Eric Liddell, a Scottish Olympic runner whose life was chronicled in a movie entitled the Chariots of Fire, was challenged by his missionary sister to forego running in the Olympics in lieu of going to China with her as a missionary. He responded by saying, "When I run I feel His (God's) pleasure. I was made to run and I was made to be a missionary too." Eric understood his complete purpose for his generation. As a result, he brought glory to the Father through his running and his missionary service. Today, ask God to fulfill His purposes for your life in your generation.

Day Four - Resolving the Ownership Issue

"The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it; for He founded it upon the seas and established it upon the waters." - Psalm 24:1-2

As Christian workplace believers, God calls us to view Him as the owner of everything. We are to be stewards of all that He entrusts to us. This is one of the hardest of all commandments to follow for the Christian workplace believer because, if we work hard at business, we receive all the benefits of that work. It appears as though all that we have achieved was through our hand. Yet God says that it is by His hand that we are able to make wealth (see Deut. 8). He is the source of that ability. As soon as we become owners and not managers, we fall into trouble with God.

Joseph understood that he was a steward of all the resources of Egypt. God promoted him to affect an entire region of the world. Joseph had more power, prestige, and wealth than any 30-year-old who ever lived before him. The temptation for him in this newfound role in life must have been great. Many a man has not been able to handle material success. Many of God's choicest servants began well in their calling and service to God only to fail at the end. Consider Hezekiah, the great king who achieved many great things but failed to acknowledge God's blessing at the end of his reign. His reign was cut short due to pride. Gideon's fate was similar. Success can lead to pride if we are not careful.

"Not every man can carry a full cup. Sudden elevation frequently leads to pride and a fall. The most exacting test of all to survive is prosperity" [Oswald Chambers].

Ask the Lord today if you are living as a steward or an owner. Put whatever skills and resources you possess on His altar. Then you can expect God to do great things through you.

Day Five - Two Grocers

"You must have accurate and honest weights and measures, so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you" (Deut 25:15).

A few hundred years ago there were two Christian grocers in London. One of them said to the other, "You know, as Christians, we're supposed to have honest scales. It says so in the Bible. So how should we do that?" "Well, I'll tell you what, I'll come and check your scales on Wednesdays to make sure they're accurate and you come on Sundays and check mine. We'll make sure they're accurate." The two grocers developed a list of twelve principles that they felt should guide the way they were to do business.

People preferred to buy from them because they knew they would get a good product, at a fair price, with honest scales. Other grocers who were Christians decided to join in and they formed an association of Christian grocers. In those days it wasn't called exactly that, but was actually called the Most Worshipful Company of Livery Merchants. The name is very odd and peculiarly British.

This group led to other industries adopting a similar idealism known as Livery Companies in the City of London. There are now 300 companies in the City of London registered as Livery Companies. The latest one was the Most Worshipful Company of Information Technologists. Everybody that joins one of the companies in the City of London receives a list of the principles they have to agree to. The list contains 36 biblical principles to guide your life and they call the book, *Some Rules for the Conduct of Life to Which Are Added A Few Cautions*.

The rulers of the nation in Britain began to see the effect of these companies and said "What we need to do is make it a law for the whole nation. So instead of just these grocers having their honest scales, every scale in Britain needs to weigh accurately." The government Weights and Measures Department, which is in existence today, can trace its history back to the day when these two grocers decided to keep themselves accountable for biblical principles. Are you operating based on honest weights and measures?

Day Six – Entitlements

"And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross!" - Philippians 2:8

Society today has duped many of us into believing that the world owes us. It owes us a good living, a loving spouse, good health throughout our whole life, sexual pleasure when we want it, and paid vacations the rest of our lives. The world has told us if we work hard and do right, we are entitled to these things. This is the Esau perspective on life. For a mere meal, he sold his own birthright for a simple pleasure to which he felt entitled.

Society, and even the Church, is more pleasure-focused than ever before. George Barna, the Christian researcher, cites:

We are not a society that simply enjoys its time off. Our leisure appetites drive us. It is increasingly common to hear people turning down job offers because the hours or other responsibilities would interfere with their hobbies, fitness regimens and other free time activities. Even our spending habits show that playing has become a major priority. The average household spends more money on entertainment than it does clothing, health care, furniture or gasoline. Recreational activities have jumped more than 10 percent in the amount of time given to them.

[George Barna, Frog in The Kettle (Ventura, California: Regal Books, 1990), 82.]

What are the motives for our work life? Is it only to gain increased pleasure and leisure time? Jesus said He came only to do the work of the Father. I am sure that Jesus had times of refreshment in His life that allowed Him to get recharged for the mission God called Him to. However, He understood the balance of maintaining mission and play. When we view life with an attitude of entitlements, we are susceptible to becoming disappointed, resentful, and even bitter when our expectations go unmet. Ask the Lord if you need to relinquish any rights that may be hindering your freedom to experience His love and grace.

Day Seven - Changing Beseetting Habits-The \$10 Challenge

Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin." - John 8:34

"I hate being late," my friend lamented. "It has been a problem for me all my life."

"Do you really want to change that?" I asked.

"Yes, I do."

"All right. Every time you are late to work or anywhere else where you have committed to be at a particular time you must give me \$25."

"No way!" my friend responded. "I would go broke! But I will do \$10."

"All right, \$10 it is. It has to be a large enough amount of money for it to hurt your pocketbook."

"Believe me, that will hurt," my friend said. About a month later my friend found great motivation to be on time to every place she had to be. In the first week, I got only \$10 from my friend. The next week, \$20. The third week, nothing. By the fifth week, my friend had changed a lifelong habit that had hindered her all her life. In order for my friend not to be resentful of me for the money she had to give, we put it in a jar to be given to some other Christian cause. This ensured my motive was only for her best interest.

Some might be reading this now and say it is legalism. For my friend it was freedom. For the first time she had some means of changing a behavior that had caused her problems in relationships and her own work habits.

Psychologists tell us that it takes 21 days to form a habit. So, if you need to change some habit, you need to be actively engaged in that new behavior at least 21 days. My friend needed help to change a habit she didn't like about herself. It took another individual to hold her accountable, and it took a potential loss of something to provide the added incentive.

A successful businessman was experiencing a difficult marriage. When counseling the couple over dinner one night, a friend of mine noticed that the man often criticized his wife. After further counsel it was determined the man

simply could not love his wife. My friend asked him if he truly wanted to see change in his marriage. When the man said he did, my friend said, "Every time you criticize your wife you must agree to give me \$100." This man was well-off and needed substantial incentive to change his behavior. After the man rebelled and retorted, he agreed in front of his wife. A few weeks later a report came back that things were changing. This man did not want to write any checks to my friend. Although it was a competitive game to the man, it was also yielding some positive changes in his marriage. He began to acquire the habit of avoiding criticism of his wife, which was killing her spirit.

What are the habits that keep you from becoming all that God may want you to become? Do you desire change enough to be accountable in a way that it costs you something when you fail? Ask a friend to hold you accountable in an area that needs change. You will find new freedom as you conquer old besetting habits.

Day Eight - Manipulation in the Workplace

"The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft..."(Gal 5:19-20).

The envelope arrived in my mailbox with the exciting announcement on the outside: "You've just won \$1 million dollars!" Of course, like you, I have gotten so many of these over the years that I automatically file it in my nearby deep file - the trash can. The sensational headline is used to get you to open the envelope, only to discover they are trying to sell you magazines with an opportunity to be entered into a sweepstakes drawing that could allow you to win a million dollars.

Every day we are exposed to witchcraft in the workplace. Yes, I said witchcraft. For most of us we think of this ancient term of witchcraft as something that witches do with no relevance to modern society. However, this is not the case.

Whenever you do something that has the appearance of giving something for nothing with the intentional goal of coercing someone to take action through deceptive practices, you have engaged in witchcraft. You see this take place in advertising, marketing, and even Christian ministries.

In order to avoid engaging in witchcraft in the workplace, ask yourself if you are attempting to persuade others to buy your product by using deceptive practices. Make sure you are conveying truth about your product and what it professes to do. Don't use gimmicky sales approaches to engage others.

Perception is not always reality. However, when it comes to promoting a product or service, you want people's perception to match the reality of your advertising.

Then you will avoid the sin of witchcraft.

Day Nine - The Value of Words

"And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make even one hair white or black. Simply let your 'Yes' be 'Yes,' and your 'No,' 'No'; anything beyond this comes from the evil one." - Matthew 5:36-37

Imagine for a moment that you are living in Jesus' time. It is before Jesus has begun His public ministry. He is a carpenter in your local town of Nazareth. You have asked Jesus to make a table for you. You're on a deadline and you must have it in a week. You agree on the price of \$100 for the table and the date of one week for completion. A week later you arrive to pick up the table. You lay your money down on the table and Jesus says, "Mr. Johnson, I am sorry but the table is not ready. I ran into complications. Also, I can no longer honor the price I gave you. It is now \$150 instead of \$100." Two years later you hear about this same Jesus who is preaching to the local townspeople. How are you going to view this Jesus? You probably won't give much credence to His message because of your personal experience. Our lives have an ability to reinforce the message we stand for, or they can violate it and make it totally ineffective. This literally happens all over the world in different settings with Christian workplace believers. Our message becomes ineffective because we have not done what we said.

I know people who, when they tell me they plan to do something, I can expect them to follow through about 50 percent of the time. I am sure you have had the same experience. Words and commitments are made with little meaning behind those words. However, I know others who will follow through almost every time. The only time they don't is when something falls outside their control. I quickly learn whose words have substance behind them.

There are times when we are unable to perform or deliver what we promised due to outside influences. The key to turning these potentially negative circumstances into a witness for Christ is communication. If we are unable to pay a bill on time, we must communicate with those we owe and make a good faith effort to resolve it within our means. In these cases, God's purposes are being performed as well if we seek to do the right thing.

Do your words mean anything to those who hear them? Do you make commitments and fail to follow through on them? What would others say about how you follow through? Ask the Lord today to show you how you are doing. You might even want to ask three people their opinion as well.

Day Ten - Kingdom Economics

"So I gave you a land on which you did not toil and cities you did not build; and you live in them and eat from vineyards and olive groves that you did not plant" (Josh 24:13).

In the world of business, we are taught to do whatever it takes to produce a desired outcome. Competitive forces can drive companies to go beyond the limits of ethics and integrity to achieve a desired outcome. Men and women can become work-a-holics as the need for competitive advantage is passed down the various management levels in order to meet sales and marketing goals. This sweat and toil mentality contradicts God's Kingdom Economy.

The Kingdom Economy is found in the above verse in Joshua. When the people of Israel were coming out of Egypt, a place of sweat and toil and slavery, God was trying to teach them a new economy of receiving. Instead of sweat and toil, He wanted them to learn obedience. Now their income would be based on their obedience, not their skill or their sweat and toil.

This new Kingdom Economy meant that there would be times when what you receive from your efforts might be less than the commensurate time invested. Yet, there would also be times when you would receive more compared to your time invested.

Many people determine whether to meet with a person based on the perceived return on that investment. That behavior is justified as being a good steward. God says we are to determine if He wants us to meet with that person or be involved with an endeavor based on His leading alone, not based on the perceived outcome. It is His responsibility to bring fruit from the activity.

This will result in a new freedom in your work life. Stay vertical with God and let Him determine your next activity.

Day Eleven - Ability Versus Availability

"His pleasure is not in the strength of the horse, nor His delight in the legs of a man; the Lord delights in those who fear Him, who put their hope in His unfailing love." - Psalm 147:10-11

Do you ever feel so skilled in what you do that you require little help from others? Perhaps you may feel that you are more skilled than any other in your field. Does God need your skills and abilities in order to accomplish His purposes on this earth? The answer is NO.

One thing God does not need is our skills and abilities. However, He does give us the privilege to exercise our gifts and abilities for His service. That service may be as a computer technician, a secretary, an ironworker, or even a lawyer. God calls each of us to our vocations to work unto Him. To believe that He needs our skills to accomplish His mission on earth would be to lower our understanding of an all-encompassing and all-powerful God. The psalmist tells us that His pleasure is not in our strength and ability, but His pleasure is in the attitude of the heart. It is what we find in the heart that helps determine whether ability is translated into availability. You see God is looking to and fro throughout the earth for a man or woman who is fully committed to Him. A man or woman who is committed to fearing the Lord and placing his hope in His unfailing love is the person God seeks to support. "For the eyes of the Lord range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to Him" (2 Chron. 16:9a). When our agenda becomes His agenda, we can expect God to fully support all that we do.

If we want to see our skills and abilities multiplied a hundredfold, then we must make them completely available to His service. Where are the opportunities in which God is calling you to be available to Him? Next time someone asks you to be involved in some activity, before you say yea or nay, make sure you check in with the Master of our decisions to ensure that your gifts and talents are being used, as He desires.

Day Twelve - Can a City Be Transformed?

*"All those who lived in Lydda and Sharon saw him and turned to the Lord."
(Acts 9:35).*

Can an entire city be transformed for Jesus Christ? The book of Acts reveals that at least one city was. There are four key ingredients required among its Christian leaders to see a city transformed. These include prayer, humility, unity, and knowledge of God's ways.

Prayer: In every city in which transformation has taken place, believers have come together to pray for their city. Prayer changes the spiritual climate of a city. Some of the main areas of influence that must be the focus of our prayers include churches and businesses; the legal, political, educational and medical fields; and the media/entertainment industry. Workplace leaders must be strategically aligned with intercessors to impact their city.

Humility: God uses men and women who recognize that they need each other and who do not seek glory for their work. "He guides the humble in what is right and teaches them his way" (Ps. 25:9). The workplace leaders that God is using today care little about being in the limelight.

Unity: Jesus said, "May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me" (John 17:23). God calls each of us individually and corporately to represent Christ to the world, but our independence, pride and egos often prevent us from becoming unified in the purposes of Christ.

Knowledge of God's Ways: Sometimes leaders can move in presumption instead of in a faith that is rooted in knowledge of God's ways. Such was the case of David, who wanted to bring the Ark of the Covenant into the city of Jerusalem. He was zealous for God and celebrated as he brought the Ark into the city. However, the ark was being carried into the city on a cart instead of by priests on poles, as God required. When a man named Uzzah reached out to catch the Ark when the oxen stumbled, he was immediately struck dead by God. David was devastated. He lacked a knowledge of God's ways.

Do you want to see your city transformed? Make sure the three ingredients of prayer, unity and knowledge of God's ways exist in your leadership team.

Day Thirteen - Faith is spelled R.I.S.K

"Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus. But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, 'Lord, save me!'" (Matt 14:29-30).

Jesus told Peter to get out of the boat. There is always a risk when we attempt something never done before. Naysayers seem to come out of the wood work. Why? Because it's not their vision, it's yours. Sometimes we fail the first time out. It's a fact that most entrepreneurs fail before they are really successful.

"Success," said Winston Churchill, "is going from failure to failure without loss of enthusiasm." Everybody fails. It's part of the process that leads us to maturity and success. Most successful entrepreneurs don't think of their failures as defeats. They think of them as lessons. If you hope to succeed, learn everything you can from your failures. In *The Three Success Secrets of Shamgar*, Orlando Magic executive Pat Williams observed, "Our experiences may not all be triumphs and successes, but so what? Failure is usually a far better teacher than success - if we are willing to learn the lessons. As Houston Astros pitcher Larry Dierker observed, 'Experience is the best teacher, but a hard grader. She gives the test first, the lesson later.'"

God never gets mired in our past failures. He is constantly viewing our lives with future success in mind. "See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the desert and streams in the wasteland" (Isa. 43:19). Someone once said, "When your memories are bigger than your dreams, you're headed for the grave." God wants to give us new dreams that are bigger than anything that has ever happened to us in the past.

Don't let past failures keep you from future successes.

Day Fourteen - What's Your Brand?

"The one who calls you is faithful and he will do it" (1 Thess 5:24).

Coca-Cola is the number one "brand" in the world. Companies spend millions of dollars making their brands known in business. They want you to recognize their brand. When you think of their brand they hope you will have positive thoughts in hopes it will influence your next purchasing decision.

Every individual has a personal "brand" whether you want it or not. Cultures have a brand. Ethnic groups have a brand. Your brand is defined by your conduct. If you are always late, you'll soon develop a brand or reputation for being late. Others will even show up late because they know you will be late. If you are a person who exaggerates the truth, others will soon fail to take you serious.

However, the opposite can also be true. Your brand can be incredibly positive. By being a man or woman of your word, who is consistent in dealing fairly and honestly with others, your brand becomes known as someone who is faithful in all aspects of life.

One of God's most important characteristics is His faithfulness. Faithfulness means one is true to fulfilling their promises to others in the time which was committed. God is faithful to fulfill all His promises to His children.

Moses was also an example of faithfulness to his call. "Moses was faithful as a servant in all God's house, testifying to what would be said in the future. But Christ is faithful as a son over God's house" (Heb 3:5-6).

What is your brand among your peers? Is it a positive brand or does it need improvement? Allowing the Lord to make us more like Jesus is the only way our brand becomes trustworthy.

Ask the Lord today to make you a faithful brand in which others can trust.

Day Fifteen - Hearing God on the Job

"But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong" (1 Cor 1:26-27).

God is raising up a new kind of workplace believer who is experiencing the power of God in their daily work life. My friend, Emeka Nywankpa, was a barrister (lawyer) in Nigeria. Emeka spoke at a conference a few years ago on the subject of how the spiritual impacts the physical.

Emeka shared a story about arguing an important Supreme Court case in his country. There were five points to argue in the case. The morning the trial began, he prayed with his wife and junior lawyers in his chambers. During his prayer time, he sensed that the Holy Spirit was telling him, "Do not argue points one through four. Only argue point five." Imagine making such a change just before you are to argue a case before the Supreme Court!

In the courtroom, Emeka announced that he wished to drop points one through four and only wished to argue point five. The judge was shocked, but gave him permission to proceed. He argued point five and sat down. The other attorney got up, and then for twelve minutes stumbled around trying to defend his position, unable to get a coherent word out.

Finally, he approached the bench and said, "Your Lordship, it is unfortunate that my learned friend has dropped the first four points. I wish to yield the case." The other attorney had only prepared for the first four points. Emeka won the case. God had given him a strategy to win his case supernaturally. It made no sense to him, but he obeyed and God gave him victory in a very unusual way.

Isaiah 48:17 tells us "Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, The Holy One of Israel: 'I am the LORD your God, Who teaches you to profit, Who leads you by the way you should go.'"

When is the last time you allowed God to give you a strategy to be successful in your work life call and bring glory to His name? This is his desire for you.

Day Sixteen - Mustard Seed Faith in Business

"He replied, 'Because you have so little faith. I tell you the truth, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, "Move from here to there" and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you.'" -Matt 17:20

Does God do miracles in business? Is He concerned about the mountains we face in our work life? Does He want us to bring the everyday problems we face in the workplace to His attention? The answer to every one of these questions is yes. God wants to be involved in every aspect of our lives.

Gunnar Olson, the Swedish founder of the International Christian Chamber of Commerce, tells a story about God performing a miracle in his own business a few years ago. He owns a plastics company in Sweden. They make huge plastic bags that are used to cover bales of hay in the farmlands across Europe. It was the harvest season and they were getting ready to ship thousands of pallets of these bags to their customers. More than 1,000 pallets were ready to ship when an alarming discovery was made. Every bag on the warehouse floor had sealed shut from top to bottom. Scientists declared the entire stock as worthless trash. Nothing could be done. The company would go out of business.

Gunnar, his wife, and children sought the Lord in prayer about this catastrophe. The Holy Spirit spoke through various family members. The wife said, "If God can turn water into wine, what are plastics?" The daughter said, "I don't believe this is from the Lord. We should stand against it." Gunnar sensed they were to trust God for a miracle in this situation. They began to pray. They took authority over this mountain of a problem based on Matthew 17, which gave them the authority to cast a mountain into the sea if faith only the size of a mustard seed could be exercised. The following Monday they went to the warehouse and laid hands on every pallet asking the Lord to restore the bags to their original condition. It took several hours. Later, the employees began to inspect the bags. As they inspected the bags, they discovered that every single bag had been restored to its original condition! An incredible miracle had taken place.

What obstacles are in your life that need a miracle today? Could God be setting the stage for you to trust Him at new levels you've never trusted before? God sets the stage to allow His power to be revealed for those willing to exercise the faith of a mustard seed. All things are possible with God.

Day Seventeen - Lydia, A Workplace Minister

"One of those listening was a woman named Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth from the city of Thyatira, who was a worshiper of God" (Acts 16:14).

There was a business woman whom Paul encountered in Philippi named Lydia. She was an early church entrepreneur dealing in purple cloth, the most expensive type in the 1st century Middle East. Most accounts believe this was Paul's first known convert. I find it interesting that his first known convert was a woman and an entrepreneur.

"We sat down and began to speak to the women who had gathered there. The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul's message. When she and the members of her household were baptized, she invited us to her home" (Acts 16:13-15a).

This encounter with Lydia and her women associates ultimately opened the way for ministry in that region. God often worked in and through women in the early church. Lydia was an influential businesswoman, and the gospel was affecting all strata of society, just as it does today.

Lydia was a maker of beautiful cloth mainly used by members of the royal families and Roman senators who were required to have a purple band around the edge of their togas, or robes. Purple cloth was both valuable and expensive in the culture of the first century. It was often worn as a sign of nobility or royalty. Lydia's ministry would be to the upper-class business community. Evidence of her conversion was immediate. She told the men if they considered her a believer in the Lord, she would like for them to come and stay at her house. Evidently, she had plenty of room to accommodate the four of them; Paul, Silas, Timothy, and Luke was with them also. She continued to urge them and they accepted her invitation. Lydia's heart was like the good soil in the parable of the sower. When she heard the word of God, she received it with joy and obeyed the words of the apostle.

Who are the "Lydias" God has placed in your circle of influence? Pray that you will be the instrument, like Paul, to bring the gospel to influential women entrepreneurs.

Day Eighteen - Losing Your Life for His Purpose

"For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for Me will save it." - Luke 9:24

When the time came for God to fulfill Joseph's dreams, Joseph himself had virtually no interest at all in it. Jesus said, "For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for Me will save it" (Lk. 9:24). God wants to teach us a different set of values so that the kind of thing we start out wanting becomes secondary. God has something in mind for us that is far greater than the interest we began with.

Joseph's day of exaltation had arrived. Yet, through it all, a very real humiliation had to take place. We know about the humiliation Joseph had experienced for 13 years after being sold by his brothers into slavery, then taken to Egypt. We know how he was falsely accused and cast into prison.

Then came a different situation. Joseph had had a triumph and was given an exaltation, but the kind he really never asked for. He did not appear to be all that interested in what was about to happen. He watched as the Pharaoh took his ring off his finger and put it on Joseph's finger. Joseph never asked for that. All he wanted was to go home. He longed to go back to Canaan, to see his father, and to have his dreams fulfilled.

Therefore, here we find an extraordinary incongruity: a humiliation in the heart of vindication. A triumph that was the opposite of everything he, himself, could have envisaged. Joseph wanted to go home, but a one-way ticket to Canaan wasn't available. Before he knew it, he had Egypt in his hip pocket. He had never prayed for that. But God wanted Egypt. What God wanted is what Joseph got.

Joseph was given something that he could be trusted with because it didn't mean that much to him.

Day Nineteen - Four Attributes of a Life God Blesses

"So this is what the Sovereign Lord says: 'See, I lay a stone in Zion, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone for a sure foundation; the one who trusts will never be dismayed.'" - Isaiah 28:16

Whenever God calls us into a consecrated life, it is made up of **four distinct stages**. Christ often compared this process to building a house. **First**, we must prepare to build by laying a foundation. That foundation is none other than Jesus Christ Himself. Any foundation other than Christ will not stand.

Second, as we enter a walk of faith with God, He allows each of us to experience trials, testings, miracles, and challenges in life that are designed to provide "faith experiences" that demonstrate tangible evidences of His work in our life: Moses' burning-bush experience, Peter's walk on the water, Joshua's parting of the Jordan River. These experiences built the faith of these people. The depth and width of our calling is directly proportional to the faith experiences He allows in each of our lives. If God plans an international ministry with you, chances are you will experience a higher degree of faith experiences compared to another. The reason being, you will need to look on these to ensure your calling and provide testimony to His work in your life.

The **third** stage deals with motives. "All a man's ways seem innocent to him, but motives are weighed by the Lord" (Prov. 16:2). What is the motive behind my actions? Is it only financial accumulation? Is it to gain control? Is it to create independence? The primary motive must be God's leading you to take such an action - it must be obedience. These other factors must be by-products of the decision. **Finally**, we are prepared to take action. Here we must ask, "Do we have the skill, quality, and ability to enter into this activity?" So often we have not trained ourselves adequately to be successful in our endeavor. You would never want someone working on your teeth who had not been trained and certified as a dentist.

Before you begin your next project, ask yourself these four questions. What is the foundation this project is based on? What experiences has God demonstrated in my life that indicate His involvement? What is my motive for entering this activity? Do I have the skill, quality, and ability to accomplish the task?

Day Twenty - The Integrity Test

"Surely you desire truth in the inner parts; you teach me wisdom in the inmost place" (Ps 51:6).

Integrity is often defined by what we do in secret. Are our actions the same in public as what we do behind closed doors? Kenneth Lay was the chairman and CEO of Enron, a multi-billion-dollar energy corporation that went bankrupt at the hands of its executives because of mismanagement and misrepresentation of its financial practices. Many people lost their retirement life savings as a result.

In 1996, Kenneth Lay made a comment in a book entitled, *Business as Mission*.

"In my own case I grew up the son of a Baptist minister. From this background, I was fully exposed to not only legal behavior but moral and ethical behavior and what that means from the standpoint of leading organizations and people. I was, and am, a strong believer that one of the most satisfying things in life is to create a highly moral and ethical environment in which every individual is allowed and encouraged to realize their God-given potential. There are few things more satisfying than to see individuals reach levels of performance that they would have thought was virtually impossible for themselves."

Something went very wrong from the time Kenneth Lay wrote those words and the time he was convicted June 6, 2006. Strangely, Lay never went to prison because he died suddenly of a heart attack a few months after being convicted.

No one is immune from starting well and ending badly. The scriptures are full of men and women who did great things for God but did not finish well toward the latter part of their lives. Success can often be the breeding ground for ethical failure. Oswald Chambers said, "Not every man can carry a full cup. Sudden elevation frequently leads to pride and a fall. The most exacting test of all to survive is prosperity."

Ask God today to protect you from pride that can lead to ethical failure.

Day Twenty-One - Closed on Sunday

"Observe the Sabbath, because it is holy to you" (Ex 31:14).

Can a business have a Christian testimony without ever saying a word?
Absolutely.

Atlanta-based Chick-fil-A, Inc. is America's second-largest quick service chicken restaurant chain. The company's stated corporate purpose is "to glorify God by being a faithful steward of all that is entrusted to us, and to have a positive influence on all who come in contact with Chick-fil-A." The company is a great example of a business that is modeling Christian values and producing a quality product in the competitive fast-food industry. Chick-fil-A is one of the fastest-growing chains nationally, currently with over two billion dollars in annual sales.

One of the defining distinctions of Chick-fil-A is that the restaurants are not open on Sundays. From the time Truett Cathy, the company's founder, started in the restaurant business in 1946, he believed that God wanted him to honor the Sabbath by keeping the stores closed on Sundays. Though the Biblical Sabbath is Friday sundown to Saturday sundown, most Christians today celebrate Sunday as a day of worship and as "Sabbath". Although he was challenged on this idea many times by shopping mall operators, Truett always held that "we will have more sales in six days than those who are open for seven." This has proven to be true, and today it is no longer an issue to fulfill the malls' requirement to remain open on Sunday."

When you go to a Chick-fil-A restaurant, you can tell something is different about the people and the atmosphere. The messages in the company's kids' meals always reinforce education, values, and integrity. Although the employees do not wear their faith on their sleeve, the fruit of the company is known by many - especially the many young restaurant employees who receive educational scholarships each year. The company also focuses on character-building programs for kids, foster homes, and other community services. I have spoken at Chick-fil-A's corporate headquarters several times and have met with Truett and his son, Dan. The appearance of their headquarters conveys their values - a sense of quality without extravagance.

Day Twenty-Two - New Paradigms

"Yes, he has hidden himself among the baggage" (1 Sam. 10:22).

If you want to experience something you've never done, you must do something you've never done. In his book *Experiencing God: Knowing and Doing His Will*, Henry Blackaby writes, "You cannot go with God and stay where you are."

God often has to radically change us if we are going to fulfill His purposes in our lives. Saul was about to be anointed by Samuel as the first king of Israel. Samuel said to Saul, "The Spirit of the Lord will come upon you in power, and you will prophesy with them; and you will be changed into a different person" (1 Sam. 10:6). Up to this point, Saul had never prophesied or led a group of people. He had also never had to be accountable to a prophet and to God for his every action.

Saul took a big step of faith right away and prophesied with the prophets just as Samuel said he would. How exciting that must have been. Yet, when Samuel called the entire nation of Israel together to announce him as Israel's first king in history, Saul was nowhere to be found. This part of the story is humorous. Excitement is in the air, but when they call Saul's name, he doesn't even come forward. So the people "inquired further of the Lord, 'Has the man come here yet?' And the Lord said, 'Yes, he has hidden himself among the baggage'" (1 Sam. 10:22).

I recall when God began moving me from a career in advertising to a new ministry to men and women in the workplace that involved writing and public speaking. Neither of these were my particular forté. I was forced to do something I had never done.

The story of King Saul should be an encouragement to us all. God continues to pick the foolish things of this world to confound the wise. Your greatest setback can be thinking that there's no way that God can use "little me." However, the reality is that He can and will, if we respond to the new places He takes us.

Day Twenty-Three - Planning for Success

"I know, O Lord, that a man's life is not his own; it is not for man to direct his steps." - Jeremiah 10:23

In business, I hear a lot about planning. Every January I hear workplace believers establishing their planning for the year. Corporations establish plans that cover anywhere from one to five years. Individuals establish personal life plans. There is only one problem that I see with most planning done by well-meaning believers. If God is not the originator and director of the plan, then that plan is doomed for failure. So often, Christian workplace believers set out to plan something that seems good in their own mind. The merits of what is being planned can look great, and it can even be a worthy endeavor. However, that is not the point. When Jesus said He came only to do the will of the Father, He could not consider doing anything that was not what the Father wanted, no matter how good or righteous it might appear to be.

"In his heart a man plans his course, but the Lord determines his steps" (Prov. 16:9). God must give us the vision for what He calls us to do. After we have the vision, we must ask Him if He wants us to take action on that vision and what the action steps entail. The Lord wants to direct each step of the planning process. David learned this lesson when he went to battle against his enemy, the Philistines. One day he inquired of God as to whether he was to go up against the Philistines, and the Lord said, "Yes, but only when you hear the marching in the balsam trees." It is a mistake to reason and analyze in order to come to a decision on a matter. The Lord already knows the answer. It is our responsibility to seek Him to find out His mind on the matter. Our planning must be established in Him. Only when we remain so connected to the source can we be assured of putting God's plan into place. Also, getting that plan confirmed through others will assure that we are not following the deceit of our own heart.

When you begin to plan next time, ask God for His wisdom for establishing the vision and action steps. You will be surprised how well He can plan.

Day Twenty-Four - The Fertile Pasture

"Shepherd your people with your staff, the flock of your inheritance, which lives by itself in a forest, in fertile pasturelands" (Mic 7:14).

"I've called you to pastor the bank," said the Lord to my friend Chuck. "Pastor the bank? How does one pastor a bank, Lord?" "The things I taught you I want you to teach others," came the reply.

There is a people who live isolated in fertile pasturelands. They long for a shepherd who will help them discover their own inheritance. They are the lost majority in the marketplace who are living lives as though they are a child lost and aimless in a deep, dark forest.

Though most do not know it, they long for a pastor who will reveal to them their destinies. Your staff, which represents your vocation, is the means by which God is going to use you to pastor those in your sphere of influence in the workplace.

A fertile pastureland means there is a great harvest that can come if only there is someone to do what is necessary to bring a harvest from it. This is where you will derive your inheritance. The people you serve will be the spiritual inheritance God has allotted to you.

This forest is more fertile than all other potential fields because the power and authority represented by this forest has the potential to impact far greater fields. This forest has CEOs, presidents of nations, entertainment moguls, media tycoons, and educators to name just a few. They are the shapers of society who have yet to meet their Maker.

Are you willing to use your staff to be a shepherd to those in the fertile pasturelands?

Day Twenty-Five - Balance the Natural and the Spiritual

"No king is saved by the size of his army; no warrior escapes by his great strength. A horse is a vain hope for deliverance; despite all its great strength it cannot save" (Psalm 33:16-17).

The Bible tells us not to put our confidence in things the world considers to be our protection, defense, or strength. However, the man or woman who does not perform well on the job is left behind in today's competitive world. Not only is this typical of the world at large, but even many Christians promote the importance of identifying our strengths and encourage us to move in them to accomplish God's will. Yet, throughout the Bible, we are discouraged from depending upon our own strengths. Instead, we are urged to rely totally upon the Lord.

God wants us to depend upon Him, and He demonstrates this throughout Scripture. For example, in Judges 7, God wouldn't let Gideon fight against another army until he reduced his own from 22,000 soldiers to a mere 300, so that Gideon could not boast about his army's strength. In Joshua 6, God told Joshua to walk around Jericho seven times and blow trumpets instead of relying upon his mighty army to overpower his enemy. In 2 Samuel 24, God judged David when he counted his troops to determine the size of his army's strength, apparently because David took the census out of pride or overconfidence in the strength of his army.

On the other hand, Jesus instructed the disciples in due diligence through the parable of the builder, who is cautioned to consider the cost before beginning to build. "Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Will he not first sit down and estimate the cost to see if he has enough money to complete it? For if he lays the foundation and is not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule him, saying, 'This fellow began to build and was not able to finish'" (Luke 14:28-30).

Today, bring every project and endeavor before the Lord as you ask for His power and grace to accomplish it using both your natural gifts and the Spirit of God working together.

Day Twenty-Six - Can Your Boss Say This About You?

"Can we find anyone like this man, one in whom is the spirit of God?" (Gen 41:38).

I often get resumes` from people wanting to come to work for us. They think that because we are a Christian organization the pressures and the environment will be so much better than the place where they work. That may be true, but there is a danger in this view.

The Bible says that God has defined the place and time in which we are to live. "LORD, you have assigned me my portion and my cup; you have made my lot secure. The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; surely I have a delightful inheritance" (Ps 16:5-6).

God has uniquely gifted you to bring His presence and power in the area of your calling. Once you begin to realize this, God will use you just as He did Joseph with his employer, Pharaoh. Your life should be a testimony of the power, creativity, and servant-hood of Jesus that it impacts your employer to the degree that he says the same thing Pharaoh said about Joseph: "Can we find anyone like this man, one in whom is the Spirit of God?"

When God accomplishes this in your life He gives you authority in your workplace. You will begin to see others drawn to you. You may begin to be ostracized as well. This too is part of your call. Do not fear this. Embrace it.

We should not be seeking to remove ourselves from the pressure cooker of life, but use that pressure cooker to reveal the power and grace of God through our lives to others. It is here that we will receive our inheritance as we fulfill our purposes in and through our work life call.

Today, ask God to give you supernatural wisdom and discernment to express the Spirit of God through you to your employer.

Day Twenty-Seven - The Integrity Test

"God, who gets invited to dinner at your place? How do we get on your guest list? 'Walk straight, act right, and tell the truth. Don't hurt your friend, don't blame your neighbor; despise the despicable. Keep your word even when it costs you, make an honest living, and never take a bribe. You'll never get blacklisted if you live like this.'" (Psalm 15 :1 THE MESSAGE).

In 2002, U.S. companies Arthur Andersen, Enron, and Salomon Brothers were all brought down by the rogue actions of a few who failed the integrity test. Their corporate integrity code failed to equip front-line employees to make the right decisions without supervision.

Lack of integrity is nothing new. The Bible is full of examples. One of these involves Gehazi, the assistant to the most famous prophet of his day, Elisha. It's hard to imagine that anyone working with such an anointed man who saw firsthand the power of God would fail the integrity test. But he did.

When Elisha healed Naaman (a general in the army) from leprosy, he didn't expect to be compensated and he didn't ask for money. When Naaman insisted that Elisha take some form of payment, the prophet answered, "As surely as the Lord lives, whom I serve, I will not accept a thing" (2 Kings 5:16). Gehazi, however, did not agree with his employer. He saw this as a great opportunity for gain and took matters into his own hands. "Gehazi, the servant of Elisha the man of God, said to himself, 'My master was too easy on Naaman, this Aramean, by not accepting from him what he brought. As surely as the Lord lives, I will run after him and get something from him'" (2 Kings 5:20).

As a result of his sin, God judged Gehazi. Elisha fired him and God struck him with leprosy, and his life was never the same. He was removed from serving one of God's most extraordinary prophets.

Each of us has the potential of being a Gehazi if we do not have a foundation built into our lives that makes us willing to receive only what God gives us through the fruit of our obedience. Ask God to keep your motives pure in all you do.

Day Twenty-Eight - A New Breed of Workplace Believers

"Speak to Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, to Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and to the remnant of the people...." - Haggai 2:2

Zerubbabel was the governor of Judah 60 years after the great temple built by Solomon had been destroyed. The temple lay in ruins, and the Lord spoke to the prophet Haggai, "Is it a time for you yourselves to be living in your paneled houses, while this house remains a ruin?" (Hag. 1:4) God was calling for His people to come out of their comfort zones and restore the glory of God's house.

God is doing this same thing today among Christian workplace believers throughout the world. He is raising up a remnant of workplace believers who are being handpicked to use their resources, skills, and experience to affect nations that have not heard the message of Jesus Christ. The only way they can hear is by commerce being brought into their nation through Christian workplace believers, because these are closed regions to missionary efforts.

"But now be strong, O Zerubbabel," declares the Lord. "Be strong, O Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest. Be strong, all you people of the land," declares the Lord, "and work. For I am with you," declares the Lord Almighty. "This is what I covenanted with you when you came out of Egypt. And My Spirit remains among you. Do not fear" (Haggai 2:4-5).

The remnant of workplace believers God is calling today understand that they have to come out of Egypt from their past work life. Egypt signifies the way of the world. It represents sweat and toil. It is the flesh. This new way is exemplified by a pioneer spirit. God knows we need to have courage in order to move in this realm. Also, God assures us that His Spirit is with anyone who seeks to live in the realm of supernatural faith.

Are you one of these remnants He has handpicked in these days? Has He called you out of Egypt in order to do extraordinary things in your life for His Kingdom? Ask God to show you how He wants to use you in the workplace this year. Then act and "be strong, all you people of the land."

Day Twenty-Nine - Spiritual Contracts

"In the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, understood from the Scriptures, according to the word of the Lord given to Jeremiah the prophet, that the desolation of Jerusalem would last seventy years." - Daniel 9:2

When you enter a legal contract, it binds the two parties to fulfill the terms of that contract. In Heaven there are legal contracts that, when fulfilled, allow the spiritual to impact the physical.

Israel had been in captivity to Babylon for 70 years. Daniel, when he investigated the history of his nation, found the prophecy of Jeremiah, which revealed there would be 70 years of captivity. He recognized that in order to release his nation from this captivity, there had to be a confession of sin on the part of the nation. Daniel took that responsibility. Although he could not personally repent for his nation, he could acknowledge their sin and repent himself. When Daniel acknowledged this sin before God, something took place in Heaven. God heard this prayer and responded by sending His angel Gabriel to Daniel's side.

We know from history that this was the time when Judah's return from exile began. Daniel's prayer of confession was the spiritual key to the physical manifestation of releasing the nation from captivity to Babylon.

Whenever you want to confront spiritual forces that have dominion over a situation, you must find the source of the problem. Once you find the source of the problem, you must take the necessary steps in the spiritual realm to release God's power into that situation. For Daniel, it meant taking responsibility for the sin of the nation by confessing its sins and asking forgiveness on behalf of the entire nation. This allowed God to begin the process of releasing the nation.

Ask God to show you the source of the problems that may exist in your city, your work, or people you want to see freed to fulfill God's purposes for their lives.

Day Thirty - Opening Our Spiritual Eyes

"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." - 2 Kings 6:17

Elisha was counseling the nation of Israel against the impending attack of the king of Aram. The Lord supernaturally gave Elisha the plans that the king was implementing, and in turn, Elisha warned Israel of each intended attack. The king could not understand why his plans were continually foiled. It seemed there was a secret informer in his midst. He was furious when he was told it was the God of Israel who was to blame for this inside information. The king decided the only way to resolve the situation was to get rid of the problem - kill Elisha.

The king's forces arrived and surrounded Elisha and his servant. Elisha's servant became upset and fearful when Elisha was not upset. Elisha immediately prayed that his servant's eyes might be opened to see that there was no need to be afraid, because the angels were protecting them.

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. As the enemy came down toward him, Elisha prayed to the Lord, "Strike these people with blindness." So He struck them with blindness, as Elisha had asked (2 Kings 6:17-18).

Who is the Elisha in your life? Do you have a mentor friend who can see the activity of God in your life when you cannot see it? We all need to have somebody we can trust to help us see the activity of God. It is often difficult for us to see what God is really doing because we are so consumed by the circumstances of the moment. Ask God today to help open your spiritual eyes that you might see Him in your circumstances.