



PRINCIPLES FOR

# SUCCESSFUL LIVING

TAKE CHARGE & SHAPE THE FUTURE

“Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.”  
Galatians 6:7

The year’s fast rounding up and very soon there will be new year congratulatory messages circulating. The New Year resolutions will be made and hopes and expectations will be set. But what really separates one year from another isn’t a matter of date change but what changes are made within you.

If nothing within you changes, then nothing will really change externally. If we keep planting the same seed, we will keep getting the same fruit. However, when the seed changes, the fruit will definitely be different. If we start practicing different principles, our response to life will also be different.

This series we’re going to look at some principles that can help us shape our future for success as we partner with the Holy Spirit to direct us accordingly.

Stay connected.



## Day 1

### Starting the Day

'O Lord, I know that the path of [life of] a man is not in himself; It is not within [the limited ability of] man [even one at his best] to choose and direct his steps [in life]. ' Jeremiah 10:23 AMP

Jeremiah made an astounding statement above – if we do not have the capacity to choose and direct our steps in life, then who's directing us? Who really determines what we do and how we do it? Everyday we wake up, who's really calling the shots? Do we consciously place our moments in God's hands, or do we try and control things ourselves?

'Trust in and rely confidently on the Lord with all your heart and do not rely on your own insight or understanding.' Proverbs 3:5

'My times are in Your hands...' Psalms 31:15

How we start the day is a clear indicator of who we really believe is in charge. Do we rush into the day assuming we have things figured out or do we take the time to commit each day into God's hands? What's our consistent first step? Put a plan in place and then ask God to bless it? Look for who you know who can help? Or put God first and find out what He has to say about the day, week, project, etc. and then implement?

'In all your ways know and acknowledge and recognize Him, and He will make your paths straight and smooth [removing obstacles that block your way].' Proverbs 3:6 AMP

If we really believe that God is in charge and we trust Him to take care of us, then ideally by default we will reach out to Him first on all issues – not just the ones we think are major issues and not after we have exhausted every other possible option. We will involve Him at the start of every decision and accept that we can't make our lives better than Him.

**Prayer:** Lord, help me reach out to you first before reaching for my mobile device or rushing into the day. Help me to always ask for Your guidance during the day and give me the grace to be attentive and obedient to what You're saying.



## Day 2

### Mentorship

'The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.' Philippians 4:9

God doesn't intend for us to walk alone, we are all designed to be interconnected in order to fulfil our God-given purpose as we're all part of a much larger picture. However not many of us take advantage of the experiences of others in moving forward in life. The risk we run with trying to do everything on our own is we will make mistakes or experience delays we could have avoided through mentorship. Put very simply, mentorship is receiving guidance, handholding or direction from someone who is more experienced in a particular field. When we go through our Bible, we will see several illustrations of mentorship in action.

'And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.' II Timothy 2:2

When Paul was helping Timothy grow in ministry he acted not just as his apostle but also his mentor, teaching and guiding him until Timothy was to grow to the extent that he would be able to guide others also. This is the principle behind mentorship – we learn from others and as we grow, we also provide guidance to others. But as a first step, how do we know who to approach to mentor us?

'Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith.' Hebrews 13:7

'Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God...' I John 4:1

The first place to start is with the Holy Spirit for two critical reasons. First reason is that all we see is the externals. So even if someone may seem to be bearing results based on what we call success, the Holy Spirit knows who that person really is and what's really going on in that person's heart and character. Secondly, the Holy Spirit knows the best pathway for every area of your life (Ps 32:8) – career, business, ministry, etc – and best person/people to guide you in these areas. If you try and pick someone based only on what you think you know without involving the Holy Spirit, you could be aligning yourself with the wrong person.

**Prayer:** Lord please help me identify the right mentor(s) for my life and connect me to them.



## Day 3

### Consistency

'His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful and trustworthy over a little, I will put you in charge of many things; share in the joy of your master.' ' Matthew 25:21

Consistency – which we may also be referred to as faithfulness or diligence in the Bible – is a foundational principle for success. Consistency assures us that we are more likely to see the results we're looking for rather than if we adopt a haphazard approach. This applies to both spiritual and physical activities. For example, the spiritual growth someone will get from praying once in a while can't be compared with another person who prays consistently. Similarly, a person who consistently develops oneself mentally/physically/spiritually will definitely be set apart from someone who doesn't place a premium on diligence in these areas.

'He who is faithful in a very little thing is also faithful in much; and he who is dishonest in a very little thing is also dishonest in much.' Luke 16:10

Consistency in positive areas generates rewards, likewise consistency in negative areas generates negative outcomes. Sometimes we forego the apparently smaller things when we work with the mindset that we need to have a huge opportunity to show our faithfulness – at home, work, in our business, studies, etc. But this goes against the fundamental principle of consistency which is about showing up and doing the best with what you have daily.

'Do you see a man skillful and experienced in his work? He will stand [in honor] before kings; He will not stand before obscure men.'  
Proverbs 22:29

The Lord doesn't elevate those who haven't been tested and shown faithful. This is because He expects us to demonstrate consistency in what we may consider the small things before He gives us more responsibilities or larger opportunities. This is contrary to the 'overnight successes' that seem to come from out of nowhere and then disappear almost as quickly. God builds to last and that is why consistency/faithfulness/diligence are the bedrock of success with and from Him. When we try and manufacture our own success outside of this, we may be creating avenues for unnecessary struggles and battles.

**Prayer:** Lord I need help in being consistent in (mention the areas you need help), please help me Lord as I've seen I can't achieve this on my own.



## Day 4

### Discretion in Speech

'My son, let them not escape from your sight, But keep sound wisdom and discretion, And they will be life to your soul (your inner self) And a gracious adornment to your neck (your outer self). Then you will walk on your way [of life] securely and your foot will not stumble.' Proverbs 3:21-23.

What does it mean to be discreet and why does the Bible count it as being important? Discretion is evident when we show good conduct and judgement in action and in speech. This means we need to be conscious of what we say and do, not in a manner to please others, but to ensure we do not do or say things that may disconnect us from the Holy Spirit.

'Let your eyes look directly ahead [toward the path of moral courage] And let your gaze be fixed straight in front of you [toward the path of integrity]. Watch over your heart with all diligence, For from it flow the springs of life.' Proverbs 4:23,25

'...For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.' Matthew 12:34

'Set a guard, O Lord, over my mouth; Keep watch over the door of my lips.', Psalms 141:3

Why is discretion in speech an important principle? It is difficult to trust and entrust more responsibilities or opportunities to people who have what may be termed 'loose lips'. Anyone that hears a person speaking openly, unguardedly about others will also ask themselves – "what is this person saying about me, my business, etc. when I am not there?" When we ask the Holy Spirit to help us practice discretion in our speech and follow His guidance He will start the work of transformation in our hearts that will help us check ourselves when we may start engaging in indiscreet discussions. As He works on our hearts, our minds and lips will begin to align with His leading.

Another way the Holy Spirit helps us is when we ask Him daily to set a guard over our mouths. When we do this, what we're saying to the Holy Spirit is, "I need help, please check me before I say the wrong things'.

**Prayer:** Dear Lord, I acknowledge that there are times I speak loosely, please watch over the door of my lips so only words of wisdom come out of them.



## Day 5

### Discretion in Action

'Then you will walk on your way [of life] securely and your foot will not stumble.' Proverbs 3:23.

Yesterday we looked at discretion in speech, today we're looking at discretion in action. The challenge some of us may face is while we may not necessarily say the wrong things, we may find ourselves doing things that don't really help us grow and may even end up setting us back. When we constantly engage in a series of unguarded actions, we run the risk of becoming enslaved to those actions. How then do we practice discretion in our actions?

'You say, "I am allowed to do anything"—but not everything is good for you. And even though "I am allowed to do anything," I must not become a slave to anything.' 1 Corinthians 6:12

'Therefore see that you walk carefully [living life with honor, purpose, and courage; shunning those who tolerate and enable evil], not as the unwise, but as wise [sensible, intelligent, discerning people]' Ephesians 5:15

One of the things the Bible encourages us to do is to live our days wisely and one of the ways to do so is by making a conscious effort to be clear on what things are acceptable and unacceptable by God's standards. Just because something doesn't appear to be bad does not mean that action is beneficial to us at that point in time. And it's really important we understand that whatever we do is a seed planted which we will reap in future.

'Direct my steps by Your word, and let no iniquity have dominion over me.' Psalms 119:133

We don't have to be subject to the negative things we may be doing. Through the help of the Holy Spirit we can engage and submit to the word of God so it guides and instructs us so we don't veer off into unwholesome or unbeneficial activities. And should we go off the right path, when we submit to the Holy Spirit and turn from those ways, He can re-direct our steps in the right direction again

**Prayer:** Lord direct my steps and let me be at the right place at the right time doing the right thing.



## Day 6

### Honour

'Show respect for all people [treat them honorably], love the brotherhood [of believers], fear God, honor the king.' 1 Peter 2:17 AMP

How we treat people matters to God. Not just the people we like or those we think deserve it, but all people. He's promised us in 1 Samuel 2:30 that He will honour those who honour Him. Truthfully, we cannot really say we honour God if we treat people disrespectfully. God is very interested in the manner in which we conduct ourselves with others as His ambassadors. Exodus 20:12 already instructs us about honouring our parents, in addition to this, let's look at a few ways can we honour others.

'Stand up in the presence of the elderly, and show respect for the aged....' Leviticus 19:32

How do we treat those older than us? Do we acknowledge their years and treat them with respect? Do we visit the aged around us and care for their needs?

'...honor those who are your leaders in the Lord's work. They work hard among you and give you spiritual guidance...' 1 Thessalonians 5:12

Honouring those in spiritual leadership doesn't mean hero worship – the only one we are to worship is the Lord – but treating them with respect and supporting them as best you can, It can be as simple as showing up to meetings on time and being attentive, remembering their birthdays and praying for them.

'Honor the king...' 1 Peter 2:17

'Pray for kings and others in power, so we may live quiet and peaceful lives...' 1 Timothy 2:2

We are also to honour those in positions of authority – these could be political or corporate leaders. While we may not necessarily agree with their behaviour or policies, we are always to intercede for them that God will direct their decision making so we can live and work in peace.

'...Honor one another above yourselves.' Romans 12:10 NIV

This really takes the grace of God to do, because it means we are consciously being unselfish and deliberately placing others above ourselves – regardless of who they are and whether or not we think they deserve it. These could be members of our family, friends, colleagues, even people we don't know personally.

**Prayer:** Lord, help me to honour others in a manner that please you.





## Day 7

### Generosity

'Now [remember] this: he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows generously [that blessings may come to others] will also reap generously [and be blessed].'  
2 Corinthians 9:6

The principle of generosity is clear, giving for the benefit of others yields blessings to the giver. Giving isn't about physical things such as money, but about whatever you have available to you – service, encouragement, time, advice, etc. We are meant to be 'hosepipes' who let the things God has blessed us with constantly flow to others.

'The generous man [is a source of blessing and] shall be prosperous and enriched, and he who waters will himself be watered [reaping the generosity he has sown].'  
Proverbs 11:25

'Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share' | Timothy 6:18

The more we allow ourselves to partner with the Holy Spirit as channels to bless others, the more He will replenish us of what we're pouring out so we can be a source of blessing to many more. As we consistently pour out to others, our capacity to do more increases.

'Give freely and become more wealthy; be stingy and lose everything.'  
Proverbs 11:24

Conversely, when we're stingy with our gifts and resources (remember generosity goes far beyond just giving financially), we actually run the risk of losing what we have. Being stingy from God's perspective isn't about the activity, but the intention behind the action. When we give grudgingly, give the barest minimum we can or to be recognized by others, we're not considered as being generous from God's perspective, rather we would be seen as being stingy. When we're stingy, we don't create room for the Lord to use us to be a blessing to many and therefore will likely stagnate, with a high risk of losing that which is really important – God's approval.

**Prayer:** Lord, please give me a generous heart. Help me to be willing to freely give what you have placed in and around me for the benefit of others, that your name may be glorified.



## Day 8

### Honing Gifts

'A man's gift makes room for him, and brings him before great men.' Proverbs 18:16

We can only function at the level of our current gifts and expertise. When we are satisfied with what we think we know, we will not extend ourselves to invest in growing these gifts. It's important for us to note that the amount of room your gift will make for you is determined by how much you have invested in honing and growing that gift. It's true that the process of growth can really be inconvenient and uncomfortable, but it's a necessary part of any form of success.

"Brothers, I do not consider myself to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and reaching forward to what is ahead." Philippians 3:13

Paul shares an important principle here: Don't get comfortable with or be limited by the past – be it good or bad. No matter how good you are at something, there's always room to be better. No matter how poorly you may currently be in an area, you can always get better by the help of the Holy Spirit, diligence and focus. Growing in your personal knowledge of God, growing in our spheres of influence, increasing in skill in our areas of responsibility won't be possible if we don't have a hunger to learn and be more.

'Do you see a man skillful and experienced in his work? He will stand [in honor] before kings; He will not stand before obscure men.' Proverbs 22:29

Gifts are a blessing from God, but skill and experience will not come automatically so we have to consciously exercise our gifts. As we prepare for the coming year, let's start seeking God's help and direction on the best ways to hone the gifts we have so we end the year more skillful and experienced than when we started.

**Prayer:** Dear Lord, thank you for the gifts you have blessed me with, I ask that you help me put a plan in place to grow in this area(s) and give me the discipline and tenacity to see it through.



## Day 9

### Friendships

'As iron sharpens iron, so a friend sharpens a friend.' Proverbs 27:17

As we plan for the new year and new version of ourselves, let's bear in mind that not everyone will place value on this decision and commitment to self-improvement. When we have the wrong people around us and don't recognize it, we may be setting ourselves up for unnecessary challenges and discouragement. If we surround ourselves with those who don't build us up, we create a situation where we give them permission to derail us.

'One who has unreliable friends soon comes to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.' Proverbs 18:24

As we become intentional about exercising the principles for how we choose to live our lives, we may see that it's not necessarily everyone around us right now that we need to draw close to us. The ones who are unreliable and supportive of our growth at this point in time may not necessarily be bad people, they're just functioning on a different wavelength. However, there are those that the Lord will bring our way to act as a support system as we draw closer to God and all that He has for us.

'The righteous choose their friends carefully, but the way of the wicked leads them astray.' Proverbs 12:26

'But the Lord said to Samuel... The Lord doesn't see things the way you see them. People judge by outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.'" 1 Samuel 16:7

When choosing friends, we need to ask the Holy Spirit for guidance. He knows the heart of everyone, and He also knows who's best suited to walk with us through who He's called us to be and what He's called us to do. If we make decisions based on what we think we see or know, we could be making a really big mistake that could damage or derail us.

**Prayer:** Lord, you know those you have assigned to walk with me through various seasons. Help me to lean on you to identify them and value the relationship. Please also help me identify when it's time to separate from those I shouldn't be with for that particular season.



## Day 10

### Time Management

'There is a season (a time appointed) for everything and a time for every delight and event or purpose under heaven ' Ecclesiastes 3:1

Everything we are meant to do has a specific timeframe allotted to it, and when we miss that timing what should be easy becomes more difficult because with the allotted time comes the grace for that task/activity. There will always be 24hours a day available to everyone, no more, no less. What sets people apart is the ability to harness time for the purpose of being productive. The better we understand the importance of harnessing time, the more strategic and intentional we become about managing ourselves within the context of time.

'So teach us to number our days, that we may cultivate and bring to You a heart of wisdom.'  
Psalms 90:12

Two key principles we need to succeed are understanding that there's a time for everything and also that we don't have all the time in the world. When this sinks into our consciousness, it will affect the urgency with which we live life. Procrastination and lethargy will reduce, because we will start living with a deep desire to make every day count.

Picture a person that believes they have an hour to make a journey and someone who believes they have just 20mins to make the same journey. Very likely the one that thinks there's an hour available will be more leisurely in approach, possibly being distracted along the way. The person that believes there's only 20mins will be more focused and able to ignore the distractions because he/she understand there's no time to waste. This isn't about looking at what someone else is doing but taking the time to reflect on what we should be doing with the gift of time we've been given.

**Prayer:** Lord teach me to number my days, hours and minutes. Help me to shut my eyes to distractions and manage myself to harness time effectively so I can be productive in every area that counts daily.

## Day 11

### Valuing Accurately

'Turn my eyes from worthless things, and give me life through your word.' Psalms 119:37

Yesterday we looked at managing ourselves effectively with the understanding that time isn't un-ending and we have to make each day count. But what are we making time count for? What are we going to focus on and place emphasis on in the coming year? It's bad not having a focus, but it's just as dangerous to focus on the wrong things.

'...For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.' Joshua 1:8

Based on this verse the question we may be asking is what does 'good' success mean and is it possible to have success that isn't good? When we do all the things we intend to do, will God call our success 'good' by His standards? Over the last few days, we have looked at principles that can aid our success in the coming year and beyond if we apply them diligently. However, it's critical that we don't spend valuable energy building outside of God's plans for us.

'Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart.' Psalms 37:4

'Teach me your way, Lord, that I may rely on your faithfulness; give me an undivided heart, that I may fear your name.' Psalms 86:11

There's a way God wants us to live so that every aspect of our lives will please Him. When we do so, we are assured of His support and the grace we need to fulfil the plans He's laid on our hearts. When we seek Him first before putting together our strategy and goals for the coming year, we're giving ourselves the opportunity to come into alignment with heaven's agenda for us and access all the spiritual resources that will aid us to fulfil that agenda successfully. If we don't take this approach, we may end up thinking that we are able to succeed in our own strength and therefore don't need God, which is a very dangerous place to be, particularly in these times of high uncertainty. So before we begin strategizing and planning, let's first come to God to get His mind on what success in the coming year looks like from His perspective.

**Prayer:** Lord, I ask that you grant me complete knowledge of your will as well as the wisdom and understanding of how to apply these principles in alignment with your will, so I have good success and your name may be glorified.



## Day 12

### Wisdom and Prudence

"I, [godly] wisdom, reside with prudence [good judgment, moral courage and astute common sense], And I find knowledge and discretion.' Proverbs 8:12 AMP

Wisdom gives us the ability to access information about to what to do at any point in time – the right word, action, etc. Prudence is essentially the ability to restrain oneself to act in accordance with knowledge and wisdom. Note that the scripture tells us that prudence is paired with wisdom or knowledge. This is because as important as each is, they won't be of optimal benefit to us if we try and exercise them independently of one another.

'If any of you lacks wisdom [to guide him through a decision or circumstance], he is to ask of [our benevolent] God, who gives to everyone generously and without rebuke or blame, and it will be given to him.' James 1:5 AMP

'To give prudence to the simple, To the young man knowledge and discretion' Proverbs 1:4

The wonderful thing about walking with the Lord is that He is willing to give us whatever it is we may be lacking to enable us walk more effectively with Him. The door is open to us to ask the Lord for wisdom and prudence as often as we need it, as well as greater degrees of what we may already have.

'But someone might object and say, "One person has faith and another person has works." Go ahead then and prove to me that you have faith without works and I will show you faith by my works as proof that I believe.' James 2:18 TPT

'And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.' Luke 2:52

As with other principles, wisdom and prudence must be exercised to see any results. It's not enough to ask God for them, we must act on what we've received because it's as we do so that we will see increase. Oftentimes we ask God for more of something when we are yet to demonstrate that we are actively utilizing what we have been given already.

**Prayer:** Lord I ask for wisdom and prudence to be effective in the coming year. I also ask for the grace to use what you have given me already so there will be room for growth.



## Day 13

### Rest

“And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done.” Genesis 2:2 NKJV

We all need to recharge. The daily ‘grind’ can be enervating, and the Lord recognizes this. It’s for this reason that He gave us the template for rest. We’re not looking from the perspective of the day one chooses to recognize as sabbath, but the fact that the Lord makes it clear that we need to consciously factor rest into our plans.

“Do not wear yourself out to get rich...” Proverbs 23:4

Rest doesn’t necessarily equate to sleep or idleness. It’s about taking a period of time to cease from activity to renew, refresh and re-energize ourselves as well as re-evaluate what we’re doing. If we just keep running non-stop we run the risk of burning out and missing out on valuable lessons we could learn from pausing and reviewing. As we plan to rest, we should invite the Holy Spirit to take charge of that period so we’re free from distractions and can really spend time engaging with Him.

“Then Jesus said, “Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.” Matthew 11:28 NLT

When we factor rest into our schedules, we’re also acknowledging that we’re not the ones in total control of our own lives. As we rest we’re consciously asking the Holy Spirit to speak to us and creating the enabling environment to really hear and commune with Him.

**Prayer:** Lord please help me realize that I can’t do everything that needs to be done without resting in you. As I plan for the coming year, teach me how to create periods of constructive rest in my schedule and give me the grace to stick to it.



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