

NEW BEGINNINGS



What are the things that we need to focus on as a church in this season!

- As I have been praying about my upcoming mission's trip to Africa, I really sensed that we are now in a new season as we can see the imminent rapture of all true believers

In the book of Isaiah we read,



“Do not remember the former things, Nor consider the things of old. Behold, I will do a new thing, Now it shall spring forth; Shall you not know it? I will even make a road in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.”
(Isaiah 43:18-19)

- Sometimes in the busyness of ministry and as a result of the trials and challenges that we go through in life, we can begin to lose clarity of focus in what God has called us to do and just get locked into doing the same thing from week to week



- This is why it is so important to regularly draw aside with the Lord to ensure that we are continually flowing in His will and plan for our lives and ministries
- God always has new and greater things planned for our lives and ministries

In the book of Isaiah we read,

“For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways,” says the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts.” (Isaiah 55:8-9)

The LORD said to the prophet Jeremiah,

“Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know.” (Jeremiah 33:3)



- So given the times that we are now living in, it is crucial that we BOTH know what the will of the Lord is for our own lives and for our church fellowships and ministries



The Apostle Paul wrote,

“See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is.” **(Ephesians 5:15-17)**

- Given that time is our most precious resource, it is important that we have a clear understanding of what we are meant to focus on both individually and as a church in this coming season



- We only have so much time and energy so it is crucial that we continually flow in our own unique gifts and callings
- This is such a great key to our lives bearing much eternal fruit as we focus on doing the God things well

Fully connecting with God's will for our life is the key to:

- Being the most anointed and effective in what we do for His Kingdom and to being the greatest blessing to others
- To seeing God's continual ongoing provision (Where God guides, He provides)
- To seeing God connections as He draws the people that we need to see HIS vision and plan for our lives and churches come to pass
- To seeing doors open that no man can close, and
- To seeing our lives bearing much eternal fruit



- So today I felt to encourage everyone to really seek the Lord to gain clarity of focus in what God is calling you to do in this season, a season of new beginnings

In the book of Proverbs we read,

“Commit your works to the Lord, and your thoughts will be established.” **(Proverbs 16:3)**



**The Apostle Paul wrote, “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.”
(Ephesians 2:10)**



Jesus Himself also said, “You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you.” (John 15:16)

So, in this teaching I will be looking at the following two things:

1) What are some important things that we need to look at focusing on as a church and as a believer in the times that we are now living in, and



2) How can we have a clear understanding of what God is calling us to do in this season of our lives and ministries. **HOW DO WE EMBRACE THE NEW THINGS!**

1) What are some important things that we need to look at focusing on as a church and as a believer in the times that we are now living in

i. The importance of the new season being birthed in the power of the Holy Spirit and prayer. We need to seek God's presence and power in all of our meetings

- Jesus Himself regularly drew aside to pray to His Father in heaven and continually ministered in the power of the Holy Spirit



In the book of Acts we read,

“how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.” (Acts 10:38)



In 2 Chronicles we read,

“If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.” **(2 Chronicles 7:14)**



- Given the times that we are now living in, we need to seek God for His presence and power in all of our meetings
- We need the power of the Holy Spirit to invade our lives and churches
- We need to have an expectation of miracles in our meetings
- We need to hunger for God's presence in our meetings



- We must not grow weary while doing good



- We need to simply keep pressing into God and keep praying for God to pour out His Spirit in these days and to bring revival to our cities and nations



The Scripture that came to me as I prepared this message was the words of the Apostle Paul,

“And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.” (Galatians 6:9)



ii. IT IS HARVEST TIME

- We need to have a greater desperation and urgency to reach the lost with the gospel message. The harvest truly is ripe now and the rapture of all true believers imminent

Jesus Himself said, “Do you not say, ‘There are still four months and then comes the harvest? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest!” **(John 4:35)**

- **The Apostle Paul knew the value of every soul to God**

The Apostle Paul wrote, “For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win the more; and to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might win Jews; to those who are under the law, as under the law, that I might win those who are under the law, to those who are without law, as without law (not being without law toward God, but under law toward Christ), that I might win those who are without law; to the weak I became as weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.” Now this I do for the gospel’s sake, that I may be partaker of it with you.” **(1 Corinthians 9:19-23)**



iii. It is time to ALSO strengthen Christians (particularly new believers) through the preaching of the word of God and through helping all believers to be disciplined and mentored in their walk with the Lord



Jesus Himself said,

“If you abide in My word you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” (John 8:31-32)

- When commissioning Peter to be a shepherd to His sheep (To lead the first church), Jesus said to him, “Feed My lambs.” “Tend My sheep.” “Feed My sheep”



Jesus Himself also said in the Great Commission,

“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. Amen.” **(Matthew 28:19-20)**

iv. It is time to help mobilise Christians to become soul winners. Every believer has a mission's field

Jesus Himself said, “The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few; therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into His harvest” (Luke 10:2)



- **As pastors and leaders, it is important to help equip and encourage Christians to share their faith with others**
- As leaders we ourselves need to have a passion for sharing our faith with others so that those in our congregation can catch God's heart for evangelism as well
- The role of the five-fold ministry is to equip the saints for the work of the ministry.
- So given that multitudes are now in the valley of decision, how important it is that we help equip and resource believers to actively share their faith with others



v. It is time to draw aside to seek the Lord for His plans for this season of our lives individually and for our Churches. We need to have fresh vision for this season

The LORD said to the discouraged prophet Habakkuk,

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



• Having clarity of vision is such a great key to our lives and churches bearing much fruit in this season



In the book of Jeremiah we read,

“For who has stood in the counsel of the LORD, And has perceived and heard His word? Who has marked His word and heard it?” (Jeremiah 23:18)

- Especially given the nearness of the rapture of all true believers how important it is that we use our time wisely by flowing in God’s unique plan and purpose for our lives and churches in this season
- **It is so important THAT WE HAVE CLARITY OF VISION FOR THIS SEASON** so that we can fully invest our lives in the things that God has planned for our lives and ministries

vi. It is time to make prayer and practicing God's presence a great priority in our lives. Jesus is our example. He often drew aside to pray to His Father in heaven. Revelation usually comes in isolation. **WE NEED TO KNOW THE LOVE OF CHRIST IN A REAL AND TANGIBLE WAY AND HAVE A LIFESTYLE OF PRAYER**



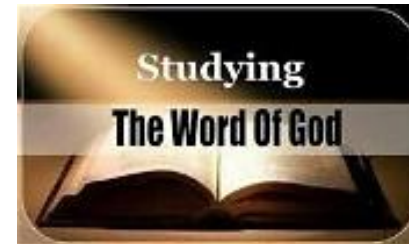
In the book of Daniel we read,

“... but the people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out great exploits.” (Daniel 11:32)

King David wrote, “O GOD, You are my God; Early will I seek You; My soul thirsts for you; My flesh longs for You in a dry and thirsty land where there is no water. So I have looked for You in the sanctuary, To see Your power and Your glory. Because Your lovingkindness is better than life, My lips shall praise You.” (Psalm 63:1-3)



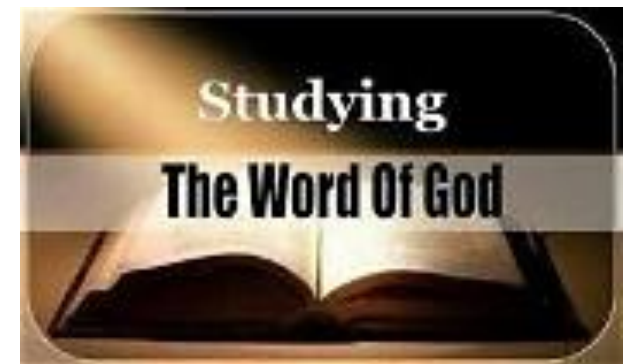
vii. It is time to make the study of the word of God a great priority in our quiet times. We need to continually build our lives on the foundation of the word of God, especially given the lawless and secular times that we are now living in



The Apostle Paul wrote, “And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.” (Romans 12:2)

The LORD said to Joshua,

“This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.” (Joshua 1:8)



viii.It is a time for MULTIPLICATION where we train up and release more Christians into leadership roles



The Apostle Paul wrote to the young pastor Timothy,

“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.” (2 Timothy 2:2)

ix. It is a time now when small groups must be a key focus

- In fact, the bigger a church gets, the more important it is for believers to be also connected to a small group



- Especially given the lawless and challenging times that we are now living in, small groups are a great tool by which Christians can receive encouragement and also be accountable to other mature Christians

- Small groups were a key feature of the early church which grew rapidly as the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved



In the book of Acts we read,

“So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.”
(Acts 2:46-47)

x. The importance of living our lives CONTINUALLY in the power of the Holy Spirit



- It is so important that we always live our lives out of the overflow of the Holy Spirit in our lives
- As we give out to others, we must ourselves be continually filled afresh with the Holy Spirit
- Especially given the lawless and ungodly times that we are now living in we need to continually live our lives and minister in the power of the Holy Spirit

The Apostle Paul wrote,

“I was with you in weakness, in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.” (1 Corinthians 2:3-5)



The Apostle Paul also wrote, “that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height - to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.” (Ephesians 3:17-19)



“And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit,” (Ephesians 5:18)

xi. The importance of having loving community in our Church fellowships

- Helping all Christians to become mature disciples who walk in the Spirit is one great key to creating healthy Christian community

The Apostle Paul wrote, “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.”
(Galatians 5:22-23)

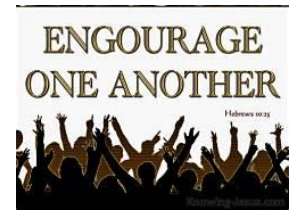


- Especially given the challenging times that we are now living in, it is important that people connected to our church fellowships have a sense of being part of a church family where they can experience genuine love and acceptance



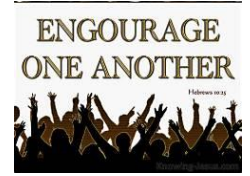
- For some people, their church family is their only family
- Having church family helps people to have a sense of connectedness and belonging which is so important in a world that is getting more and more impersonal

In the book of Hebrews we read, “Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful. And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.” (Hebrews 10:23-25)



- **The Apostle Paul also emphasised in his letters how we should relate to one another in order to cultivate healthy Christian community**

In the book of Ephesians the Apostle Paul wrote,



“Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamour, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you. Therefore be imitators of God as dear children. And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us...” **(Ephesians 4:29-32, 5:1-2) AND**

xii. We need to fully connect with our own unique gifts and callings in this season by knowing the will of God for our lives and ministries



- The simple fact is that we have one gift of life to invest in the lives of others
- God has uniquely gifted every believer and has a unique assignment for every believer's life
- We are the most anointed and the greatest blessing to others when we flow in our own unique gifts and calling

The Apostle Paul wrote,

“And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the **EQUIPPING** of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the **knowledge** of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;” **(Ephesians 4:11-13)**





The Apostle Paul also wrote,

“For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.” **(Romans 12:3)** “Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: If prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith; or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.” **(Romans 12:6-8)**

- So, my encouragement to everyone today is that you would fully connect with your God given calling in this season by knowing the will of God for your lives and ministries



- **THAT YOU WOULD SIMPLY GIVE YOUR BEST TO WHAT GOD IS CALLING YOU TO DO IN THIS SEASON OF YOUR LIFE AND MINISTRY**

AND

2) How can we have a clear understanding of what God is calling us to do in this season of our lives and ministries. **HOW DO WE EMBRACE THE NEW THINGS!**

i. We need to be prepared to release the old things that are not part of the new season



The Apostle Paul wrote, Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, *forgetting* those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead,” **(Philippians 3:13)**

Again, in the book of Isaiah we read,

**“Do not remember the former things, Nor consider the things of old. Behold, I will do a new thing, Now it shall spring forth; Shall you not know it? I will even make a road in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.”
(Isaiah 43:18-19)**



ii. We need to commit our plans to the Lord. Not my will but they will be done



In the book of Proverbs we read,

“Commit your works to the Lord, and your thoughts will be established.” **(Proverbs 16:3)**

“Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.” **(Proverbs 3:5-6)**

iii. We need to draw aside and spend quality time with the Lord with an open bible to hear from heaven

Again, in the book of Jeremiah we read,



“For who has stood in the counsel of the LORD, And has perceived and heard His word? Who has marked His word and heard it?” (Jeremiah 23:18)

- Having a special time and place where we meet with the LORD is such a great key to hearing from heaven**

- When seeking God for direction in our lives it is important to have an open bible



- God will always speak clearly through His word to give us clarity of direction in what He has called us to do in life
- The Holy Spirit will highlight passages of Scripture that relate to God's plan and direction for our lives as we prayerfully seek God for His plan and purpose for our lives in every season

The Psalmist wrote, “Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.” (Psalm 119:105)

“Direct my steps by Your word, And let no iniquity have dominion over me.” (Psalm 119:133)

- As we spend quality time with the LORD, He will begin to birth things in our heart that He has planned for our lives in this season**



King David wrote, “Delight yourself also in the Lord, And He shall give you the desires of your heart.” (Psalm 37:4)

iv. We need to be continually guided by the Holy Spirit (God's plan for our life continually unfolds over time)

Jesus Himself said,

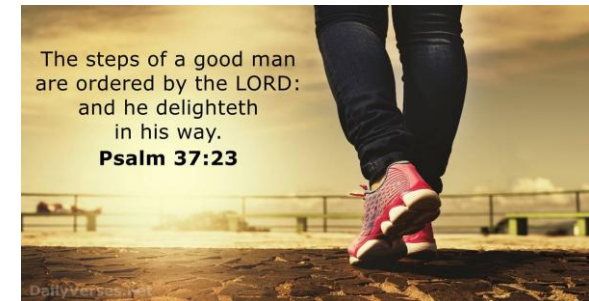


“However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.” **(John 16:13)**

King David wrote,

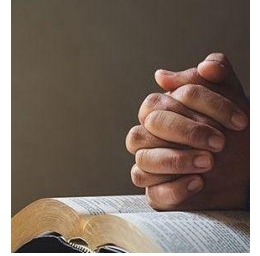
“The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD and He delights in his way.” (Psalm 37:23)

- **As God’s plan for our life unfolds over time, it is important to be continually guided by the Holy Spirit in all that we do in life and ministry**



- **This is such a great key to always being at the right place, at the right time, doing the right thing**

v. The importance of having a lifestyle of prayer

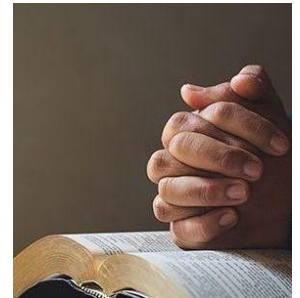


- Life is full of important choices. We continually need God's wisdom to make right choices that are in line with His will for our lives and churches
- Having a lifestyle of prayer helps us to continually stay connected to God's unfolding plan for our lives

This is why the Apostle Paul wrote, “pray without ceasing,” (1 Thessalonians 5:17)

In the book of James we read,

“If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. “But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.” (James 1:5-8)



vi. THE IMPORTANCE OF JOURNALLING WHAT GOD DIRECTS US TO DO IN LIFE



- It is so important that when God speaks to us, that we journal what He has spoken to us and what He has put on our heart to do
- This is such a great key to stopping the enemy from confusing us, when he later places other thoughts in our mind to sidetrack us from pursuing God's will for our life

vii. The importance of seeking guidance and input from other mature believers. There is wisdom in a multitude of counsellors



In the book of Proverbs we read,

“Without counsel, plans go awry, But in the multitude of counsellors they are established.” (Proverbs 15:22)

- Gaining wisdom and input from others can help to clarify what God is calling us to do in each season of our life

- One great key to hearing from heaven is that we always listen to people with our spiritual ears also open



- That is, that when people share thing with us, we can have spiritual discernment when the things that they are sharing relate to God's guidance and direction for our life
- The more intimate we are in our own personal walk with the Lord, the more clearly, we will also hear with our spiritual ears

viii. We need to be prepared to take steps of faith

In the book of Hebrews we read,



“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” (Hebrews 11:1)

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

- God’s plan for our life will always involve taking steps of faith. We must simply have the courage to do so, AND**

ix. We need to live a life of simple trust and obedience.
Just doing what Jesus tells us to do in this coming
season of our lives and ministries



In the book of Proverbs we read,

“Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.” **(Proverbs 3:5-6)**

- **SO, IN CONCLUSION, MAY I ENCOURAGE EVERYONE TODAY TO FULLY EMBRACE ALL THAT GOD HAS PLANNED FOR YOUR LIVES AND MINISTRIES IN THIS SEASON**
- **That you would simply know and pursue all that God has planned for your life and ministry in this season**

I will finish with the words of the Apostle Paul,

“Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us,” (Ephesians 3:20)

