

CHURCH OF HOPE 17 WEEK EVANGELISM AND MINISTRY TRAINING COURSE



**STUDY GUIDE: WEEKS SIXTEEN AND SEVENTEEN
(POWERPOINTS)**

**TOPICS THIRTEEN AND FOURTEEN: LAUNCHING OUT
INTO THE DEEP / LIVING IN THE MIRACULOUS AND THE
IMPORTANCE OF COMMITMENT – PART TWO**

THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMITMENT IN THE LIFE OF EVERY BELIEVER (TOPIC FOURTEEN)



- In part two of the study guide for weeks sixteen and seventeen we will be looking at the importance of being a person of commitment as we look at some areas in which commitment is so important if we are to live in the fullness of what God has planned for our life.
- Commitment is crucial if a believer is to fulfil God's plan for their lives and ministries during their time here on earth.

- The bible makes it clear that through many tribulations we enter the Kingdom of God. **(Acts 14:22)**



The Apostle Paul wrote to the young pastor Timothy,

“Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.” (2 Timothy 3:12)

- **The simple fact is that the Christian walk is like rowing upstream against the current of this world that would try and pull us away from our God given assignment here on earth**

- Vision and commitment are two important keys to fulfilling all that God has planned for our lives and churches.
- Commitment is a great key to seeing God's vision and plan for our lives coming to pass. Every believer and every church has the ability to make a great impact in this world for eternity.



In His explanation of the Parable of the Sower, Jesus said,

“Now these are the ones sown among thorns; they are the ones who hear the word, and the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things entering in choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful. But these are the ones sown on good ground, those who hear the word, accept it, and bear fruit: some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some a hundred.” **(Mark 4:18-20)**



In this Parable Jesus made it clear that many things can choke the Word in our heart and cause us to lead unfruitful lives.

Jesus Himself said, “The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.”
(John 10:10)



- *The Devil* (**1 Peter 5:8**), *The World* (the sphere of evil operating in our world under the dominion of Satan –the spirit of this world) (**1 John 2:15-17**) and *The Flesh* (our fallen human nature) (**Galatians 5:19-21**) will all try and oppose and prevent God’s plan from being worked out in our life as believers.

- FOR THIS REASON COMMITMENT IN OUR LIVES AS BELIEVERS IS CRUCIAL IF WE ARE TO SEE GOD’S PLAN AND PURPOSE FOR OUR LIVES AND CHURCHES UNFOLDING AND OUR LIVES BEARING MUCH FRUIT.

- God has so much in store for every believer’s life.



The Apostle Paul wrote, “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)**

We will now look at some areas in which commitment is so important if we are to live in the fullness of what God has planned for our life and churches and if our lives are to impact the lives of many for eternity.

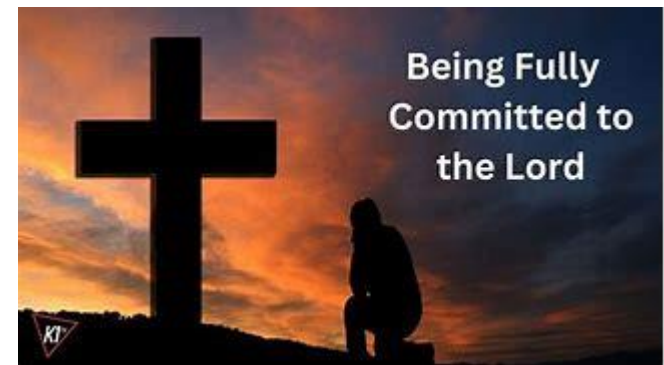


1) Commitment to living a life set apart for the Lord

- This needs to be a continual daily choice (Luke 9:23)
- Without this ongoing commitment to living a consecrated life, we are more likely to be distracted and discouraged from fulfilling all that God has planned for our life

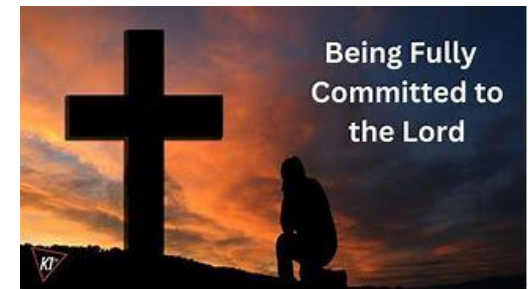
Jesus Himself said,

“If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it.” **(Luke 9:23-24)**



Jesus also said,

“Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it *produces much grain*. He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honour.” **(John 12:24-26)**



2) Commitment to doing the will of God continually for our life (A great key to fruitfulness in our Christian walk and to experiencing God’s favour upon our lives)

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**)

3) Commitment to walking in the Spirit and being continually led by the Holy Spirit (A great key to growing in the fruit of the Spirit and to consistently making right choices in life)



The Apostle Paul wrote, “I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.” (Galatians 5:16-18)

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)**



4) Commitment to meditating on the Word of God. It is important that we continually renew our mind with the Word of God to develop faith filled Kingdom thinking. The real battle ground for all believers is the mind.



The LORD said to Joshua before he was about to lead the Children of Israel into the Promised Land, “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)

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)

“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

(2 Timothy 3:16-17)



- Building our lives on the word of God is a great key to building our lives on a firm foundation (Matthew 7:24-25)
- God will continually give us wisdom and direction for our life through His word (Psalm 119:105) (Psalm 119:133)

The Apostle Paul wrote, “So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.” (Romans 10:17)



- So especially given the ungodly times that we are now living in, commitment to meditating on the word of God on a regular basis must be a great priority in our lives

Jesus Himself said,

“Therefore, whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the **rock**; and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock.” (**Matthew 7:24-25**)



5) Commitment to a lifestyle of prayer and worship

- This is a key to gaining God's perspective on things continually, to seeing breakthroughs in our life and ministry, (Acts 16:25-26) and to keeping our faith alive and active.



- Prayer and worship also helps to keep our love and passion for Jesus alive and our focus on living wholeheartedly for Him. (*Matthew 6:19-21*)

Jesus Himself said, “For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” (Matthew 6:21)



- King David was the only man referred to in the bible as being a man after God’s own heart. (Acts 13:22)
- Though he was very rich his greatest desire was to know God intimately.
- He was a great worshipper of God and wrote many of the Psalms

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)



The Apostle Paul wrote, “Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.” (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18)

- Having a commitment to a lifestyle of prayer helps us to consistently make right choices in life (James 1:5) and to see the breakthroughs that we need in life. “For with God nothing will be impossible” (Luke 1:37)



- Jesus Himself said, “Have faith in God. For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, ‘Be removed and be cast into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says. Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them.” (**Mark 11:22-24**)

6) Commitment to being accountable to other mature Christians

- There is wisdom in a multitude of counsellors.
- We must never become an island to ourselves.



In the book of Proverbs we read,

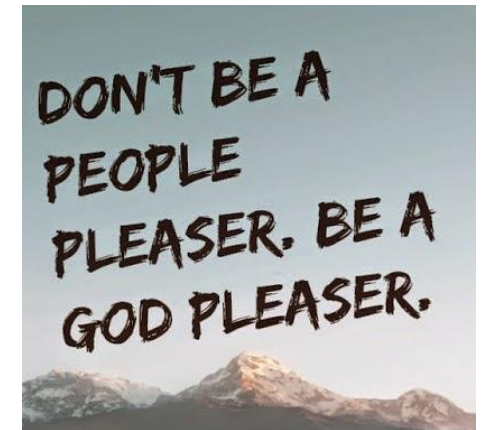
“Where there is no counsel, the people fall; But in the multitude of counsellors there is safety.” **(Proverbs 11:14)**

7) Commitment to always wanting to please God rather than men



- We must always choose to do the godly thing rather than the expedient thing.
- As we continually choose to live a God glorifying life in every area of our life, we will see all that God has planned for our life coming to pass.
- Our greatest priority should always be to love and please the Lord. We must refuse to compromise our values to gain favour from men.

- As we continually stand up for what is right, we will see the fullness of what God has planned for our life coming to pass. **(Philippians 1:6)**
- When we look at the life of Joseph in the book of Genesis, we see how he refused to compromise when continually enticed by Potiphar's wife to sin. **(Genesis 39:6-13)**

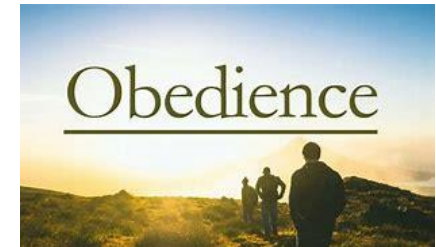


- After many years of testing and trials God raised Joseph up from the prison to the palace in just one day. **(Genesis Chapter 41)**
- Promotion in God's Kingdom comes from above.
- As we are faithful in the little things God will entrust to us greater responsibilities. **(Matthew 25:14-23)**
- **How important it is that we always have a commitment to pleasing God rather than man**



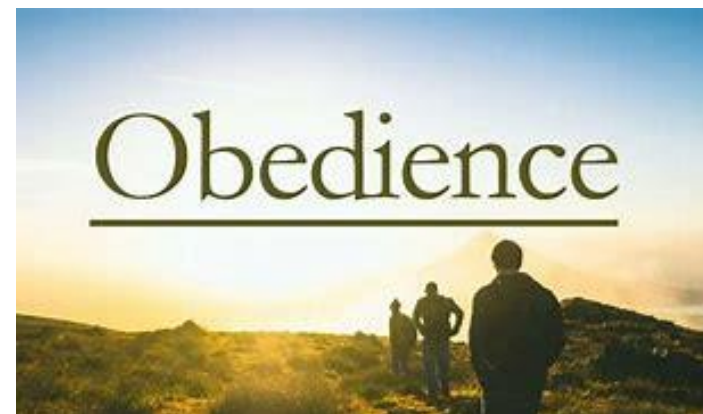
8) Commitment to living a life of obedience.

- This is a key to experiencing God's ongoing favour and blessing in our life and to seeing all that God has planned for our life coming to pass.
- God's ways are higher than our ways.
- When we live a simple life of obedience we see God opening up doors that no man can close. **(Revelation 3:8)**
- Ultimately we will be rewarded in heaven based on how faithful we have been in doing what God has called us to do in life. **(Matthew 16:27)**



In the book of Isaiah we read,

“If you are willing and obedient, You shall eat the good of the land.” (Isaiah 1:19)



Jesus Himself said,

“More than that, blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it!” (Luke 11:28)

The Apostle Paul wrote, “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)**



In the book of Hebrews we read, “For God is not unjust to forget you work and labour of love which you have shown toward His name, in that you have ministered to the saints, and do minister. And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end, that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.” **(Hebrews 6:10-12)**

Towards the end of his life here on earth, the apostle Paul wrote,

“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.” (2 Timothy 4:7-8)



10) Commitment to trusting God at ALL times and in ALL circumstances.



- We must simply just take God at His Word and refuse to be moved by our circumstances and what others may say negatively about our life and circumstances.
- We can be assured that what God starts in our life He will complete if we just keep trusting the Lord and allowing Him to direct our steps in life. **(Philippians 1:6)**

- **King David was a man who loved God wholeheartedly and who knew God’s character and faithfulness in a real and personal way**



King David wrote, “Whenever I am afraid, I will trust in You. In God (I will praise His word), In God I have put my trust; I will not fear. What can flesh do to me? (Psalm 56:3-4)

“In God I have put my trust; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me.” (Psalm 56:11)

King David also wrote,

“Trust in the Lord, and do good; Dwell in the land, and feed on His faithfulness. **Delight yourself also in the Lord,** And He shall give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the Lord, Trust also in Him, And He shall bring it to pass.” (Psalm 37:3-5)

“Many are the afflictions of the righteous, But the LORD delivers him out of *them all*.” (Psalm 34:19)



- In the book of Proverbs we get some great wisdom for how we should live our lives and believers



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**)

11) Commitment to spending quality time with our families

- It is important to keep our home front strong and united. Ministering to our children by example and teaching them to grow up in the ways of the Lord needs to be a great priority in our life as parents.



- In the busy program of ministry it is important that we also schedule in quality time with our spouses and families.
- In doing this we will help to safeguard and protect our marriages and families from the attacks of the Devil.

- The Devil will always try and divide and conquer Christian families if he can.
- Jesus made it clear that a house divided against itself will not stand. **(Matthew 12:25)**



Jesus Himself said,

“Every Kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself will not stand.” **(Matthew 12:25)**

- Having stability in our home life is a great key to being able to effectively minister to others
- As Christian parents we have the opportunity of investing our lives in our children so that they will be the next generation of believers who can make a great difference in this world for eternity



- Praying together as a family is one great key to seeing families remaining strong and united.



- There is a saying those who pray together stay together.
- Some good Scriptures to meditate on in relation to family life are: **(Ephesians 5:19-33) (Ephesians 6:1-4) (Colossians 3:18-21) (1 Peter 3:1-2) (1 Peter 3:7)**

In the book of Proverbs we read, “Train up a child in the way he should go, And when he is old he will not depart from it.” (Proverbs 22:6)

The Apostle Paul wrote,

“Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. “Honor your father and mother,” which is the first commandment with promise: “that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth.”

And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.” **(Ephesians 6:1-4)**



The Apostle Paul also wrote,

“Wives, submit to your own husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives and do not be bitter toward them. Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing to the Lord. Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged.”

(Colossians 3:18-21)



12) Commitment to walking in humility and to having a humble dependence on God. We must always be careful to give all the glory to God, especially when God begins to bless our churches and ministries.



The Apostle Paul wrote,

“Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.” (1 Corinthians 10:31)

- **Pride can be very subtle so we must always be committed to walking in humility which is a great key to promotion in God's kingdom. God's Kingdom is an upside down kingdom.**



- The lower we get, (the more we humble ourselves) the more God can raise us up to do great things for His glory.

In the book of James we read, “Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.” (James 4:10)

Jesus Himself said, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those who are great exercise authority over them. Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave - just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”

(Matthew 20:25-28)



- **As Christians and particularly as pastors and leaders, *(teachers will receive stricter judgment – James 3:1)* we must always maintain a humble dependence on God knowing that apart from Him we can do nothing. (John 15:4-5) (Philippians 4:13)**



- **We must continually depend on God's enabling power in all that we do in life and ministry.**

The Apostle Peter wrote,

“If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen” **(1 Peter 4:11)**



The Apostle Paul wrote, “Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.” **(Ephesians 6:10)**

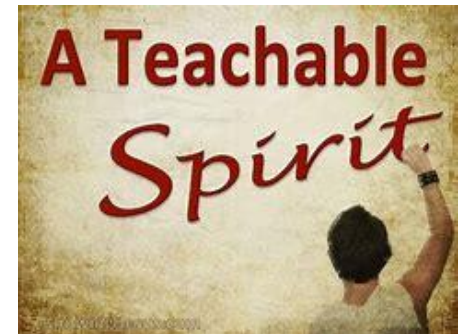
- It is so important that we always have a humble dependence upon God and that we always rely on His enabling power in all that we do in life and ministry



The Apostle Paul also wrote, “And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure. Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. And He said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.”... **(2 Corinthians 12:7-8)**

13) Commitment to always having a teachable spirit.

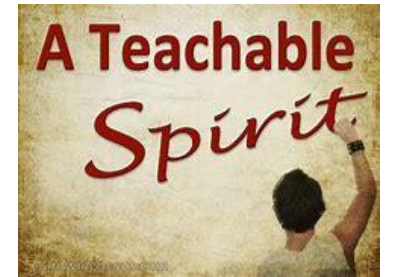
- We come into the world knowing nothing.
- How important it is that we are always teachable and open to others speaking into our lives.
- There is wisdom in a multitude of counsellors.
(Proverbs 11:14) (Proverbs 15:22)
- It is far better to learn from others than to learn from our own mistakes.



In the book of Proverbs we read,

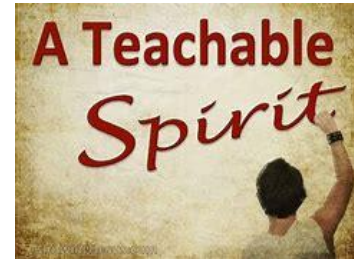
“Where there is no counsel, the people fall; But in the multitude of counsellors there is safety.” **(Proverbs 11:14)**

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



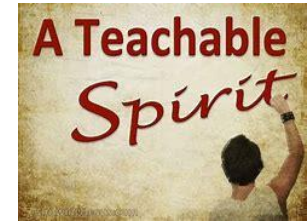
- It is far better to learn from others than to learn from our own mistakes. If we are teachable we can prevent much heartache in our life.

- If we are continually teachable we will grow in knowledge and wisdom and consistently make good choices in life that are in line with God's will for our life.
- The bible says much about the importance of having a teachable spirit.



In the book of Proverbs we read, “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, But fools despise wisdom and instruction.” (Proverbs 1:7)

In the book of Proverbs we also read, “Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be still wiser; Teach a just man, and he will increase in learning.” (Proverbs 9:9)



“Whoever loves instruction loves knowledge, But he who hates correction is stupid.” (Proverbs 12:1)

“Listen to counsel and receive instruction, that you may be wise in your latter days.” (Proverbs 19:20)

In the book of Hosea we read, “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge...” (Hosea 4:6), AND

14) Commitment to loving others at all times.



- As Christians our unconditional love for others is our greatest witness.
- All that we do in ministry and for others should always be undergirded by love
- **The Apostle Paul made it clear that without love even the most magnificent manifestation of gifts and the most heroic self sacrifice mean nothing**

The Apostle Paul wrote,



“Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing.” **(1 Corinthians 13:1-3)**

Jesus Himself emphasised the importance of loving others when He said,

“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.” (John 13:34-35)



The Apostle Paul wrote to the church of the Thessalonians,
“We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is fitting, because your faith grows exceedingly, and the love of every one of you all abounds toward each other, so that we ourselves boast of you among the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that you endure,” **(2 Thessalonians 1:3-4)**



- **In 2 Thessalonians 1:3-4 we see that those in the church at Thessalonica had to endure persecutions and tribulations.**



- However due to the great love of all Christians for one another, their faith grew exceedingly.
- How important it is that we are continually committed to loving one another in the body of Christ and to reaching out to the lost with the love of Christ.

- As we remain committed and disciplined in these 14 areas of our Christian walk and choose to never give up on what God has called us to do in our life and churches, God will use our lives to greatly impact the lives of many others in the days to come.

- God never looks at our ability but simply our availability



- Are we prepared to fully break open our lives for the Kingdom Cause

- We can learn much from the Apostle Paul's great commitment to seeing the gospel being preached to all people.

In his farewell address to the Ephesian elders, the Apostle Paul wrote,

“And see, now I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that will happen to me there, except that the Holy Spirit testifies in every city, saying that chains and tribulations await me. But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.”
(Acts 20:22-24)



- To compliment this study guide a further teaching from our Church of Hope Leadership Training Manual called “An overview of what is important for all church leaders” can also be downloaded from our Church of Hope Website.



- This teaching is also on our Leadership studies page (Teaching number 29). Following is the link to the page on the Church of Hope website that has this teaching:
<https://coh.org.au/Leadership Studies>

- Before finishing this fortnight's study and this course with some questions for self evaluation for the topics for weeks 16 and 17 we will finish with some final thoughts on the importance of having Christian character.

CHARACTER FIRST



- God is more concerned about our character being developed before He entrusts to us significant ministry roles and responsibilities.

- God is continually doing a work of change in our lives as believers as He develops Christlike character in our lives and prepares us for each new season of our lives and ministry. (Romans 8:29)



- As Christians we are continually works in progress. We will never be perfect until we get to heaven
- Developing godly character in our life is crucial for many reasons

Some of these reasons include:

- i. Because it helps us to shine for Jesus in our Christian walk. The way that we live our lives matters**

Jesus Himself said,



“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.”

(Matthew 5:16)

ii. Because it helps us to remain strong in our Christian walk in the ungodly and lawless times that we are now living in



In the book of James we read,

**“Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.”
(James 1:12)**

iii. Because the way that we live our life has the greatest impact on the lives of others



The Apostle Paul wrote to the young pastor Timothy, “Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity.” (1 Timothy 4:12)

And

iv. Because it will help us to finish our Christian walk strongly



Towards the end of his time here on earth the Apostle Paul wrote, “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.” (2 Timothy 4:7-8)

So just quickly some important aspects of Christian character that help us to become strong and fruitful in our Christian walk are:

- 1) Having humility (1 Peter 5:5-6)
- 2) Having a teachable spirit (Proverbs 12:1)
- 3) Being faithful in the little things (Luke 16:10)
- 4) Letting our 'Yes' be 'Yes,' and our 'No,' 'No.' (Matthew 5:37)



5) Having integrity in the stewardship of money. That money is always our servant (1 Timothy 6:10) (Matthew 6:24)



6) Being faithful first in what is another man's vision (Luke 16:12)

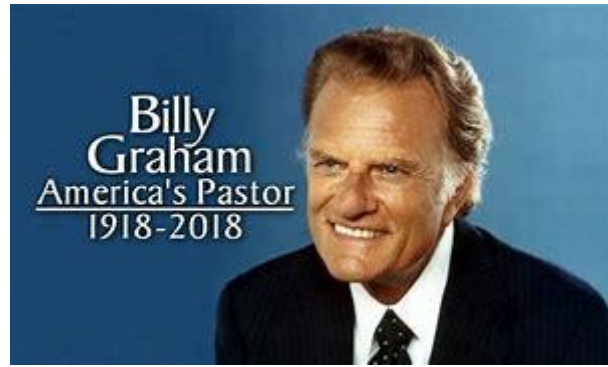
7) Being always truthful and honest in our dealings with others (Having integrity in the way that we do things)

- 8) That we live a life of simple trust and obedience (Proverbs 3:5) (Luke 11:28) (Isaiah 1:19), and
- 9) That we always speak well of others and refuse to engage in gossip and slander - (This is a great key to seeing unity in the body of Christ)



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.” (Ephesians 4:29)

- When we look at the lives of two of the greatest evangelists, Billy Graham and Reinherd Bonnke, they both had great character and finished their ministries here on earth well.



- **We will now finish this fortnight's study and this course with some questions just for self evaluation that relate to the topics that we have covered for weeks 16 and 17**

QUESTIONS:



- 1) Have there been times when I have ignored the prompting of God to do something due to circumstances not appearing right?
- 2) Am I committed to always stepping out of my comfort zone to take on new challenges as the Lord leads?
- 3) Do I continually look to God first to meet my every need in life?



- 4) Do I actively encourage others to take steps of faith?
- 5) When reflecting back on the past, write down on a piece of paper the times that you have seen God's supernatural provision for your life and church (You will be surprised how many times God has helped you in the past)
- 6) When confronted by challenges do I always seek first the counsel of the LORD for guidance and direction?



- 7) Am I totally committed to allowing the Lord to direct my every step in life?
- 8) Am I prepared to make sacrifices to see God's plan and purpose for my life and churches come to pass?, And
- 9) Am I open and accountable to other mature believers?
Can people speak correction into my life?