

BEING A PERSON OF FAITH – Who is prepared to embrace every God given opportunity in life



In Jesus' Parable of the Persistent Widow in Luke chapter 18 we read the response of the unjust Judge to the widow seeking justice:

“And shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them?”

“I tell you that He will avenge them speedily.

Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?” (Luke 18:7-8)

- Our faith is the most important thing that we have in life – It is eternal



- Our faith will keep us strong during the trials of life
- We now are living in those lawless days that Jesus spoke of where the love of many would grow cold (**Matthew 24:12**)
- The Apostle Paul also warned that in the days that we are now living in that some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits (**1 Timothy 4:1**)

- MAINTAINING A STRONG FAITH is a great key to fulfilling our full potential in Christ
- God has so much in store for every believer's life
- Just believe that your life can make a great eternal difference in the lives of many



- **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)**

The bible makes it clear that we have a God who is able to work things out when we allow Him to lead and to direct our steps in life



The angel Gabriel said to Mary the mother of Jesus, “For with God nothing will be impossible.” (Luke 1:37)

The word of the LORD came to the Prophet Jeremiah in prison, “Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know.” (Jeremiah 33:3)

**FAITH IS THE KEY INGREDIENT TO SEEING GOD'S
BEST PLAN FOR OUR LIFE UNFOLDING – THE BIBLE
MAKES THIS VERY CLEAR**



Jesus Himself said,

“If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes.” (Mark 9:23)

**WE NEED TO SIMPLY JUST TRUST GOD AND ACT UPON
WHAT HE CALLS US TO DO AND WE WILL SEE THE
MIRACLES AND ONGOING PROVISION IN OUR LIFE**



In the book of Hebrews we read,

“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)

- Our continual childlike faith is a great key to consistently receiving answers to our `prayers and to seeing miracles in our life
- WE MUST SIMPLY **JUST BELIEVE** WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS THAT “FOR WITH GOD NOTHING WILL BE IMPOSSIBLE.” **(LUKE 1:37)**

AN ONGOING LIFE OF FAITH AND TRUST AND SIMPLE OBEDIENCE IS ALSO A KEY TO SEEING GOD'S PLAN FOR OUR LIFE UNFOLDING



King David 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)**

WE NEED TO BE CONTINUALLY BUILT UP IN OUR FAITH SO THAT:

- We are always ready to step out and embrace every God given opportunity that comes our way in life, and
- We are always prepared for any major trial or struggle that may come unexpectedly our way in life



FOR THIS REASON WE MUST WIN THE BATTLE FOR THE MIND BY **CONTINUALLY REPLACING** ALL NEGATIVE AND UNBELIEVING THOUGHTS WITH THE TRUTH CONTAINED IN GOD'S WORD – **We have a God who is able to meet our every need in life**

The Apostle Paul wrote,

“For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.” (2 Corinthians 10:4-5)



We need to **CONTINUALLY** take all wrong and negative thoughts captive before they take us captive and become a stronghold in our mind

In this teaching I will be looking at some keys to maintaining a strong faith. We are now living in times when Christian's values are more and more under attack and where believers are being increasingly rejected for their faith

Maintaining a strong faith will help us to:

- i. Overcome our fears and discouragement
- ii. Remain strong during our trials and challenges in life, and
- iii. To step out by faith to embrace all God given opportunities that come our way in life



It is crucial that our faith is always built up so that we are prepared for any unexpected trials and tests that may come our way in life. The following keys will help you to be always built up in your faith to overcome life's challenges **AND to be prepared to step out by faith to do what God calls you to do in life**

1) We need to learn to build our lives based on the promises of God (To build our lives based on what God says about our life in His Word)

The Apostle Paul wrote, “For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us.” **(2 Corinthians 1:20)**



As Christians we are part of a different Kingdom. Jesus made it clear that if we put Him and the things of the Kingdom first, all that we have need of in life shall be added to us.



Jesus Himself said,

“Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ Or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.” **(Matthew 6:31-33)**

- **As we walk in simple humble obedience to the Word of God we position ourselves to appropriate the promises of God for our own life**
- For example, as we put the things of the Kingdom first in our life and pursue God's plan for our life, we can **expect all the other things that we need in life to be added to us** (Matthew 6:33)
- As we tithe we position ourselves to appropriate the promise that God will pour out for us such blessing that there will not be room enough for us to receive it and that He will rebuke the devourer for our sakes **(Malachi 3:10-11)**



2) The importance of **CONSISTENTLY** meditating on the Word of God



This is a great key to growing in our faith and to being prosperous and successful in life

The LORD said to Joshua just prior to him leading 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)

Meditating on the Word of God helps us to renew our mind and to transform our way of thinking so that we live our life based on what God says about our life – This is a great key to fulfilling our God given potential in Christ



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)**

Consistently spending time in God's Word is a great key to liberating us from our fears and to helping us to live overcoming and victorious lives



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)

Consistently meditating on and speaking out God's Word helps the Word of God to take root in our hearts, so that we grow strong in our faith



The Apostle Paul wrote,

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

3) We need to simply make a choice to ALWAYS trust God at ALL times and in ALL circumstances (We need to just believe what the Word of God says)



Jesus Himself said,

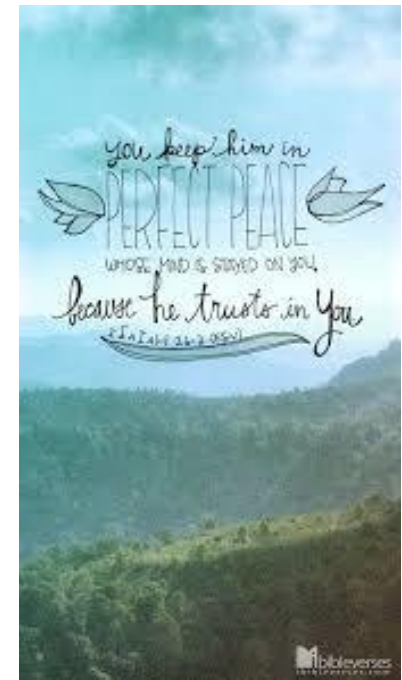
“... for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you.” (Matthew 17:20)

In the book of Isaiah we read,

“You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You. Trust in the LORD forever, For in YAH, the LORD, is everlasting strength.” (Isaiah 26:3-4)

You will keep in perfect peace
him whose mind is steadfast
because he trusts in You
trust in the Lord forever, for the Lord
THE LORD IS THE ROCK ETERNAL

Isaiah 26:3-4



Jesus also said,

“Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.”

(Matthew 7:7-8)



WE CAN TRUST IN GOD'S FAITHFULNESS TO HELP US IN TIME OF NEED – WE NEED TO SIMPLY ASK FOR HIS HELP

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)



4) We need to build our life on prayer

*Be anxious for nothing,
but in everything by prayer and supplication
with thanksgiving let your requests be made
KNOWN TO GOD.
And the peace of God,
which surpasses all comprehension, shall
guard your hearts and your minds
IN CHRIST JESUS.*

- We need to develop a lifestyle of prayer and always pray in faith

The Apostle Paul wrote,

“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” **(Philippians 4:6-7)**



We have a God who is both willing and **ABLE** to help us in time of need and who knows what is **best for us**

The Apostle John wrote,



“Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him. **(1 John 5:14-15)**



We have a God who is always willing to give us wisdom to help us in life – God knows how to best order our steps in life – We need to simply just ask in faith. God wants to help us in life



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)

The bible makes it clear that God is able to do the impossible in our life. Prayer is a great key to seeing the miracles and breakthrough in our life and to keeping our lives free of anxiety

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)**



5) We need to be planted in a local church fellowship



- More than ever before we need to have other Christians in our life – Without constant encouragement from other loving Christians we will bear little or no fruit in our lives



- Without being accountable to other mature Christians, we will invariably make more poor choices in life that will prevent us from being all that God has planned for our life

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)
- “The backslider in heart will be filled with his own ways, but a good man will be satisfied from above.” **(Proverbs 14:14)**
- “Without counsel, plans go awry, But in the multitude of counsellors they are established.” **(Proverbs 15:22)**
- **Having fellowship with other mature Christians helps us to stay focused on the things of the Kingdom and to remain strong in our walk with the Lord**



- We all need each other in the Body of Christ
- **God's plan for our life will be outworked in connection with other believers**
- More than ever before we need to be looking at encouraging our fellow believers to help them to remain strong in their faith
- **Working together in unity as believers the church has the ability to bring transformation to our communities**



Fellowship with other believers is crucial as we see the imminent return of the Lord

- How important it is that we FINISH well in our walk with the Lord as we live in a world that is becoming increasingly more ungodly



- More than ever before we can shine brightly in this world as passionate believers and make a great difference in our world for eternity

Fellowship with other believers helps us to remain strong and focused in our walk with the Lord



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)**

6) We need to be careful about what we focus on and listen to in life

- What we allow into our lives and what we focus on will greatly influence the degree to which we walk in victory as a believer
- To be people of faith we need to focus on things that will help to build us up in our walk with the Lord
- We must not allow the negativity in this world and the ways of the world to steal our affection for the Lord and our passion to live for the things of the Kingdom – **This needs to be a daily commitment**



Jesus made it clear in His explanation of the Parable of the Sower that a preoccupation with the things of this world will cause our lives to bear little or no eternal fruit

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 4:14-20)

What we focus on will greatly determine whether or not we fulfil our God given destiny

We see this in the book of numbers where a whole generation of the Children of Israel failed to ENTER into the Promised Land because of the negative report of just 10 people.



God was giving the land of Canaan to the Children of Israel – It was theirs to enter into

“And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, “Send men to spy out the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the children of Israel; from each tribe of their fathers you shall send a man, every one a leader among them.” **(Numbers 13:1-2)**

The land that God was giving the Children of Israel was very good and very fertile – We see this in the following passage of Scripture where we see what the 12 spies saw in the Promised Land



“Then they came to the Valley of Eshcol, and there cut down a branch with one cluster of grapes; they carried it between two of them on a pole. They also brought some of the pomegranates and figs. The place was called the Valley of Eshcol, because of the cluster which the men of Israel cut down there.” **(Numbers 13:23-24)**

So too what God has planned for our lives is very good, but we need to step out and embrace what He has planned for our life by taking steps of FAITH

However when the 12 spies came back, 10 of the 12 Spies who only looked at the giants and problems in the land, rather than on God's promise to them, began to sow a bad report that totally crushed the spirit of the Children of Israel. We see this in the following passages of Scripture



“And they returned from spying out the land after forty days. Now they departed and came back to Moses and Aaron and all the congregation of the children of Israel...” **(Numbers 13:25-26)**

“Then they told him, and said: “We went to the land where you sent us. It truly flows with milk and honey, and this is its fruit. Nevertheless the people who dwell in the land are strong; the cities are fortified and very large; moreover we saw the descendants of Anak there.” **(Numbers 13:27-28)**



“Then Caleb quieted the people before Moses, and said, “Let us go up at once and take possession, for we are well able to overcome it.” **(Numbers 13:30)**

Only Joshua and Caleb of the 12 spies had faith to enter into the Promised Land which they eventually did 40 years later – They never gave up on God’s promise to them

But the 10 unbelieving spies continued on with their bad report which was fuelled by their fear and unbelief

“But the men who had gone up with him said, “We are not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we. **And they gave the children of Israel a bad report of the land which they had spied out, saying, “The land through which we have gone as spies is a land that devours its inhabitants, and all the people whom we saw in it are men of great stature. There we saw the giants (the descendants of Anak came from the giants); and we were like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight.”**

(Numbers 13:31-33)



This bad report totally crushed the morale of the Children of Israel

“And all the children of Israel complained against Moses and Aaron, and the whole congregation said to them, “If only we had died in the land of Egypt! Or if only we had died in the wilderness! **(Numbers 14:2)**”

“Why has the LORD brought us to this land to fall by the sword, that our wives and children should become victims? Would it not be better for us to return to Egypt?” **(Numbers 14:3)**”

As a result a whole generation of the Children of Israel never received what God had planned for their lives and never entered into the Promised Land



So what we focus on and listen to will greatly affect our faith and the degree to which we embrace all that God has planned for our lives

The Apostle Paul emphasised what we should focus on in life,



“Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy- meditate on these things.” **(Philippians 4:8)**

7) Your choice of friends will greatly influence the degree to which you embrace the fullness of what God has planned for your life

- **If we want to soar like the eagles we need to spend time with people of faith and vision**
- **The company that we keep in life will greatly impact our walk with the Lord**
- **We become like the company that we keep**
- **This is why we must not allow people into our circle of friends who will drag us down in life and in our walk with the Lord**



In Psalm one we read,

“Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful; But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and in His law he meditates day and night. He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf also shall not wither; and whatever he does shall prosper.” (Psalm 1:1-3)



In the book of Proverbs we read,

“The righteous should choose his friends carefully,
For the way of the wicked leads them astray.”
(Proverbs 12:26)

“He who walks with wise men will
be wise, but the companion of fools
will be destroyed.” **(Proverbs 13:20)**



Having godly faith filled mentors speaking into our lives helps us to realise our full potential in Christ and to be encouraged to step out to be all that God has planned for our life – GOD HAS SO MUCH PLANNED FOR EACH OF OUR LIVES – Life and life more abundantly

I will now briefly look at some things to consider in relation to being a person of faith

- i) **Being in the centre of God's will for our life is the key to seeing God's blessing and favour upon all that we do in our life in the long run**



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,

“Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ Or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.” **(Matthew 6:31-33)**



ii) We need to learn to simply do things God's way and just do what Jesus tells us to do. God's ways are higher than our ways. As we do things God's way we see the miracles in our life. We see an example of this when we look at Jesus performing the miracle of turning water into wine at the wedding feast



“On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there.

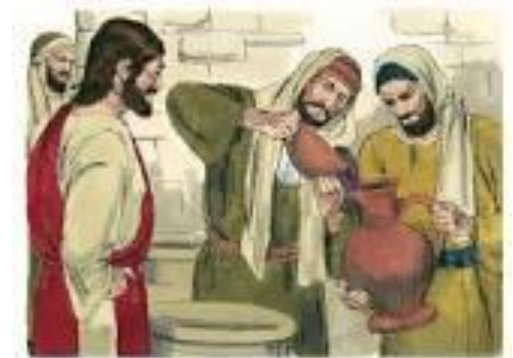
Now both Jesus and His disciples were invited to the wedding. And when they ran out of wine, the mother of Jesus said to Him, “They have no wine.” **(John 2:1-2)**

“Jesus said to her, “Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me? My hour has not yet come.”

His mother said to the servants, “Whatever He says to you, do it.” Now there were set there six waterpots of stone, according to the manner of purification of the Jews, containing twenty or thirty gallons apiece. Jesus said to them, “Fill the waterpots with water.” And they filled them up to the brim.

And He said to them, “Draw some out now, and take it to the master of the feast.” And they took it.

(John 2:4-8)



“When the master of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and did not know where it came from (but the servants who had drawn the water knew), the master of the feast called the bridegroom.

And he said to him, “Every man at the beginning sets out the good wine, and when the guests have well drunk, then the inferior. You have kept the good wine until now!”

This beginning of signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory; and His disciples believed in Him.” **(John 2:9-11)**



iii) When God calls us to do something, we need to simply start with what we have. As we do God will begin to multiply what we have in our hands

When we step out by faith to start what God calls us to do, He then begins to guide and direct our steps in life



God will also often get us to first sacrificially sow into what He has called us to do for Him ourselves, before we see His abundant provision to meet our every need.

We see this in Jesus' miracle of feeding the 5,000 with just five loaves of bread and two fish



¹⁵ When it was evening, His disciples came to Him, saying, “This is a deserted place, and the hour is already late. Send the multitudes away, that they may go into the villages and buy themselves food.”

¹⁶ But Jesus said to them, “They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat.”

¹⁷ And they said to Him, “We have here only five loaves and two fish.” **(Matthew 14:15-17)**

¹⁸ He said, “Bring them here to Me.” ¹⁹ Then He commanded the multitudes to sit down on the grass. And He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, He blessed and broke and gave the loaves to the disciples; and the disciples gave to the multitudes. ²⁰ So they all ate and were filled, and they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments that remained.

²¹ Now those who had eaten were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

(Matthew 14:18-21)



iv) **God's plan for our life will always involve taking steps of faith** - Where we have to depend on God and face and overcome our fears in life

It is when we step out by faith to do what God has called us to do **that we experience God's miracles.**
(Peter walked on the water when he stepped out of the boat)



We can be assured that as we step out by faith to do what God calls us to do in life, He will not let us down

God begins to move when we begin to move
and step out by faith to do what He is calls us
to do in life



FAITH is
confidence in what we
HOPE for and
assurance
about what we do not
SEE
Hebrews 11:1

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)

When Peter stepped out of the boat at the command of Jesus he began to walk on the water whilst his focus was on Jesus.

We see this in the gospel of Matthew

28 And Peter answered Him and said, “Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water.”

29 So He said, “Come.” And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus. **30** But when he saw that the wind *was* boisterous, ^[a] he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, “Lord, save me!” **(Matthew 14:28-30)**



³¹ And immediately Jesus stretched out *His* hand and caught him, and said to him, “O you of little faith, why did you doubt?” ³² And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased.

³³ Then those who were in the boat came and^[b] worshiped Him, saying, “Truly You are the Son of God.” **(Matthew 14:31-33)**



v) What God has called us to do will only be accomplished through His help and enabling power. God will always anoint and empower and resource us to complete the tasks that He gives us to do in life.



In the book of Zechariah we read,

“So he answered and said to me:

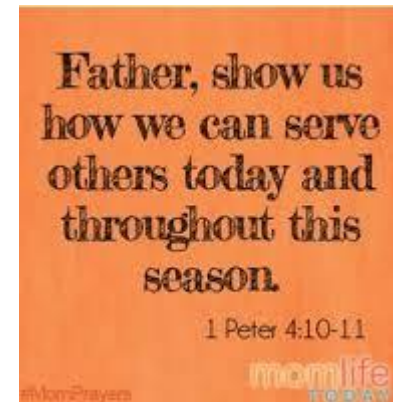
“This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel:

‘Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,’

Says the LORD of hosts.” **(Zechariah 4:6)**

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)



God will always grace and empower us to do all that He calls us to do in life – We need to simply learn to DEPEND on His enabling power in all that He calls us to do in life. He will never let us down

vi) As we are faithful in the little things God will entrust to us greater responsibilities

We see this *illustrated* in Jesus' parable of the Minas. Jesus in this parable emphasised that responsible service is rewarded with greater authority. This can be seen in the response of the nobleman to the faithful servants in this parable: ¹⁶Then came the first, saying, 'Master, your mina has earned ten minas.'¹⁷ And he said to him, 'Well *done*, good servant; because you were faithful in a very little, have authority over ten cities.'¹⁸ And the second came, saying, 'Master, your mina has earned five minas.'¹⁹ Likewise he said to him, 'You also be over five cities.' (Luke 19:16-19) AND



vii) The bible makes it clear that God will meet our every single need in life when we simply commit to following His plan for our life. WE CAN DEPEND ON THE FAITHFULNESS OF GOD TO MEET OUR EVERY NEED IN LIFE

The Apostle Paul wrote,

“And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.”

(Philippians 4:19)



I will finish again with the words of Jesus,

“Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ Or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.” **(Matthew 6:31-33)**

**There is no better place than
being in the centre of God’s
will for our life**



Today you can surrender your life and future into God's hands and receive the gift of eternal life by saying the following prayer



“Dear Father God, today I choose to turn from my sin to live for You. I believe that Your Son Jesus died for all my sins and arose from the dead three days later. Today I invite Jesus Christ to come into my heart and life to be my Lord and Saviour and best friend from this day on. Today fill me to overflowing with the Holy Spirit – Baptize me with the fire of the Holy Spirit. Today I commit to following Your plan for my life from this day on, Amen.”