

Being disciplined in our life and walk with the Lord

As Christians we need to be disciplined in every area of our life

In the secular world we see that all of the athletes that have achieved great results in their careers have been very disciplined in their training programs, diet and lifestyle choices. Likewise as Christians, if we are to be successful in fulfilling God's plan for our life we need to be also disciplined in the way that we live our lives. This is especially the case given that the Devil will be continually trying to prevent us from fulfilling God's plan for our life.

There are three primary influences that can so easily pull us away from the things of God and His best plan for our life and hinder us from growing in our walk with the Lord if we are not disciplined in our walk with the Lord:

- **The spirit of the world**

The Apostle Paul wrote,

“Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world – the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life – is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.” (1 John 2:15-17)

The spirit of the world is a very real enemy for Christians and has the potential to stop us as believers from growing in our faith and becoming all that God has planned for our life. The spirit of the world refers to the world system – to all its values, mind-sets, philosophies and priorities that are contrary to the ways of God. The spirit of the world would say that to be successful in life involves turning away from the path of godliness and deemphasizing the importance of developing our relationship with God. But Jesus made it clear that a life without God or the things of God is meaningless. (Mark 8:36)

- **The flesh (Our carnal desires and tendencies)**

In the book of James we read,

“Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am tempted by God”; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He himself tempt anyone. *But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed.* Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full grown, brings forth death. Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren.” (James 1:13-16)

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.” (Galatians 5:16-17)

Jesus Himself 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)

The flesh is also an enemy when it comes to Christians experiencing growth in their walk with the Lord. The flesh refers to our carnal inbred tendencies as a result of the fall of mankind, to continually seek our own desires in life. As Christians we are called to war against the flesh by choosing to continually submit to the unction and urging of the Holy Spirit.

As believers we experience an ongoing battle between the flesh and the Spirit in which our flesh urges indulgence, whilst the Holy Spirit constrains us to righteousness. Victory comes when we have learned to consistently walk in the Spirit.

AND

- The Devil

The Apostle Peter wrote,

“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.” (1 Peter 5:8-9)

The Devil’s ultimate agenda is not only to discourage and hurt us, but to destroy our lives and to prevent us from making a difference in our world for eternity. The Devil causes havoc in our lives when he gets us to bow to circumstances and pressures and when he tempts us with evil in order to get us to yield to him and to make poor choices in life. If he can achieve this agenda he will prevent us from experiencing the fullness of life that God has planned for every believer’s life.

Many well meaning Christians with so much potential have had their lives destroyed through making poor choices as a result of the strategies of the Devil to discourage them to give up on life and through temptations that have caused them to make poor choices in life.

As Christians to overcome the very real and constant opposition and temptations of the Devil as he seeks to get us to yield to him, we need to purposely do the opposite and B.O.W. to Jesus. To **B**elieve, **O**bey and **W**orship Him.

As Christians we will never realise our full potential in Christ unless we are disciplined in every area of our life. Sometimes we can be very disciplined in certain areas of our life, but undisciplined in other areas of our life.

The enemy will continually target us in our area of weaknesses to prevent us from realising our full potential in Christ

Ironically it is only as we learn to live disciplined lives as believers and continually put the Lord first in our life, that we experience true freedom in Christ.

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)

“Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.” (John 8:36)

The Devil will continually try and bind up and enslave believers again in sin and to get them to focus on the cares and pleasures of this world in order to complicate and compromise their lives, so that they are not in a position to share their faith freely with others.

If the enemy can sidetrack us and get us to focus on the things of this world, we will no longer shine for Jesus in such a way that draws people to Christ.

In short the Devil simply wants to render our Christian witness to others ineffective.

The Apostle Paul wrote,

“And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.” **(Romans 6:13)**

We have a continual choice day by day as to whether we yield ourselves to sin or to God.

This is why the bible is full of Scriptures that emphasize the importance of living a disciplined Christian 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)**

“For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and is himself destroyed or lost.” **(Luke 9:25)**

“If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.” **(Luke 14:26-27)**

Our loyalty to and love for Christ needs to be far higher than for any other human relationship. However, this whole-hearted commitment to Christ is the key to having good healthy relationships with others.

As we continually put Christ first in our own life we then gain His heart and love for others, which helps us to have good relationships with those who are in our life.

The Apostle Paul wrote,

“I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.” **(Galatians 2:20)**

The Apostle Paul also wrote,

“But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.” **(1 Corinthians 9:27)**

There are several areas in our life and walk with the Lord where we need to be disciplined. These include:

i) Our prayer life (Prayer less people are powerless)

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)

Prayer has the power to change our circumstances as we involve God in our struggles and circumstances.

Continually involving God in all that we do in life is a great key to continually making right choices in life

We have a God who is always able to help us in time of need.

The Apostle John made this very clear when he 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)

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)

The LORD said to Jeremiah when he was languishing 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)

As prayer has the ability to transform our circumstances and to open up doors that no man can close, the enemy will continually try and distract us from praying and to keep our focus on our problems.

More than ever before, we need to be disciplined in praying for and interceding on behalf of our city and nation that so desperately needs a touch from God. (2 Chronicles 7:14) In the book of Ezekiel we see that when God was looking for someone to intercede in prayer on behalf of the land He found no one.

“So I sought for a man among them who would make a wall, and stand in the gap before Me on behalf of the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found no one.” (Ezekiel 22:30)

We must not be distracted or discouraged from praying for our city and nation to be saved. As we pray in faith we can be assured that God will move on our behalf.

For this reason it is crucial that we are disciplined in our prayer life and that we have a secret place where we can get aside with God to hear from Him, a place where we can hear from Him without distractions. For me, I spend time with the LORD in my van on a regular basis to hear from Him.

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)**

ii) **Meditating on the Word of God**

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,

“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)**

Meditating on the Word of God is a great to growing in our faith and in godly wisdom. There is power in the word of God to transform our lives.

In the book of Hebrews we read,

“For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.” **(Hebrews 4:12)**

The Apostle Paul also 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)**

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

As the word of God has the potential to bring transformation to our lives and to build up our faith, the enemy will CONTINUALLY try and distract us from spending time in His word.

The bible is full of wisdom to help us to make right choices in life. God will also continually speak direction into our lives as we mediate on His Word. (Psalm 119:105) (Psalm 119:133)

Being disciplined in BOTH reading ***and applying*** the Word of God to our lives is a great key to building our lives on a firm foundation and to fulfilling all that God has planned for our life

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.

But **everyone** who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand; and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall.” (Matthew 7:24-27)

iii) Being continually filled with the Holy Spirit

The Apostle Paul wrote,

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

In a world of increasing lawlessness and deception it is crucial that we are continually filled with the Holy Spirit (the Spirit of truth) which is a great key to remaining strong in our faith.

The Apostle Paul wrote,

“Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons,” (1 Timothy 4:1)

Being continually filled with the Holy Spirit empowers us to be effective in witnessing to and preaching the gospel to others. (Acts 1:8)

The Apostle Paul also 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)

Being continually filled with all the fullness of God is a great key to leading an overcoming and victorious Christian life.

As we give out to others we ourselves need to be continually filled afresh with the Holy Spirit. If we are not disciplined in this area we can become spiritually dry and lose our spiritual vitality

Jesus Himself depended on the Holy Spirit in His ministry here on earth and regularly drew aside to spend time alone praying to His Father in heaven.

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)

The Apostle Paul emphasised the importance of being filled with all the fullness of God when he 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)

“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)

I have now covered three very important areas of our Christian walk in which we need to be disciplined in. The Christian disciplines of prayer, reading God’s Word and being continually filled with the Holy Spirit

I will now look quickly at a number of other areas of our Christian walk and life in which we need to be disciplined in, if we are to realise our full potential in Christ and make a great difference in this world for eternity.

iv) Knowing and following the will of God for our life

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)

In the book of Proverbs we read,

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

God has a unique plan for every believer’s life. It is in following God’s will for our life that our lives bear much fruit (John 15:16) and that our lives make a great difference in this world for eternity

Being in the centre of God’s will for our life is the key to seeing God’s blessing and favour upon our lives (Isaiah 1:19) and to seeing our every need in life being met

Jesus made it clear that if we put Him and the things of the Kingdom first in our life, all the other things that we need 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)

v) In the use of our spiritual gifts

The Apostle Paul wrote,

“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.” (1 Corinthians 15:58)

The Apostle Paul also wrote,

“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)

Every believer has a unique calling and been given spiritual gifts to help see God’s Kingdom established here on earth

We all need each other in the Body of Christ. (1 Corinthians 12:12-28) As we are faithful and disciplined in the use of our spiritual gifts, we will help others to come to Christ and to fulfil God’s plan for their life

As we embrace God’s plan for our life and are disciplined in the use of our spiritual gifts, we will make an eternal impact on the lives of many. Other people’s destinies are so often attached to us being faithful in doing what God has called us to do in life and using our spiritual gifts to help see the Kingdom of God expanded here on earth.

True joy and purpose in life comes from knowing Christ intimately and in being faithful in the use of our spiritual gifts as we follow God’s plan for our life

Jesus Himself said in the Parable of the Talents,

“For the kingdom of heaven is like a man travelling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them. And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey. Then he who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents. And likewise he who had received two gained two more also. But he who had received one went and dug in the ground, and hid his Lord’s money. After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them.” (Matthew 25:14-19)

“So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, ‘Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them.’ “His Lord said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your Lord.’”

“He also who had received two talents came and said, ‘Lord, you delivered to me two talents; look, I have gained two more talents besides them.’ “His Lord said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your Lord.’” (Matthew 25:20-23)

vi) In the use of our time.

We need to set healthy boundaries in our life. We need to ensure that we give our best to those things that God has called us to do in life. For this reason prayerfully making plans for our life is crucial.

In the book of Proverbs we read,

“The plans of the diligent lead surely to plenty, but those of everyone who is hasty, surely to poverty.” **(Proverbs 21:5)**

vii) Completing the tasks that God gives us to do in life.

Because of Nehemiah's disciplined commitment to completing the task of rebuilding the wall around Jerusalem, the wall was completed in just 52 days. (Nehemiah 6:1-4) (Nehemiah 6:9-11) (Nehemiah 6:15) It is easy to start things but it takes courage and commitment to complete things. Jesus Himself was committed to completing His mission here on earth.

Jesus at the beginning of His ministry here on earth said,

“My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work.” **(John 4:34)**

Towards the end of His time here on earth Jesus prayed to His Father in Heaven,

“I have glorified You on earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do.” **(John 17:4)**

On the cross Jesus cried out “It is finished!” (John 19:30) He then bowed His head and gave up His Spirit. The work of redemption had been completed.

As Christians we are in a continual spiritual contest.

The Apostle Paul wrote,

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

For this reason we need to be disciplined and focused on completing what God has called us to do in life

viii) In maintaining an offence free heart.

In the book Proverbs we read,

“Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life.” **(Proverbs 4:23)**

We must choose to continually forgive others and ourselves if we are to fulfil God's plan for our life and ministry. Jesus emphasized the importance of forgiving others when He said,

“And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses. But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father in heaven forgive your trespasses.” **(Mark 11:25-26)**

ix) In the choice of our significant friends.

If we are to realize our full potential in life we need to have people of vision and purpose in our life. Wrong friendships in life have the potential to undermine our character and to pull us away from what God has planned for our life.

The Apostle Paul wrote,

“Do not be deceived: Evil company corrupts good habits.” (1 Corinthians 15:33)

x) Letting go of our past failures and disappointments.

We must keep looking to the future that God has planned for our life. We must refuse to dwell on our past failures so that we can fully embrace the future that God has planned for our life.

The Apostle Paul wrote,

“Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. 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, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 3:12-14)

xi) Being continually led and guided by the Holy Spirit

Jesus Himself said

“But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.” (John 14:26)

“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)

God knows the blueprint for our life. In this world there are many voices that can influence our decisions and choices in life.

The opinions of others, the thoughts that the enemy puts on our mind, the expectations of others and what the media says in relation to what success in life is can all influence us to make wrong choices in life that will draw us away from what God has planned for our life.

We must simply be disciplined in listening to and following the guidance and counsel of the Holy Spirit at all times.

In doing this we will continually make right choices in life that are in line with God’s plan for our life and that will help us to avoid much unnecessary pain and hardship in life

xii) Trusting God at all times

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)

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)**

We must simply be disciplined in trusting God at all times and not being moved by our circumstances to make rash decisions in life that can pull us away from God’s best plan for our life

We need to simply remain committed to trusting God at all times and to just doing what Jesus tells us to do

The enemy will continually try and get us to focus on our problems and circumstances and put fear in our heart to get us to make wrong and hasty choices in life

Often the greatest battles and challenges that we experience in life are at the point of a breakthrough in our life and ministry.

We need to be simply disciplined in continually doing what God has last told us to do and trust in His faithfulness during the winter seasons of our life.

WE MUST SIMPLY CHOOSE TO TRUST GOD AT ALL TIMES AND IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES AND TO LET HIM LEAD as we learn to live one day at a time with the knowledge that God is always going ahead of our tomorrows.

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)

In the book of Jeremiah we read,

“Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, And whose hope is the Lord. For he shall be like a tree planted by the waters, Which spreads out its roots by the river, And will not fear when heat comes; But its leaf will be green, And will not be anxious in the year of drought, Nor will cease from yielding fruit.” **(Jeremiah 17:7-8)**

xiii) Taking all wrong thoughts captive before they take us captive.

We must win the battle for the mind to fulfil our God given destiny. We must refuse to entertain wrong thoughts in our mind and be quick to replace them with Christ centred thoughts and what God says in His Word about our 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)

As the warfare on our mind will be continual until we go to be with the Lord, we must also be continually disciplined in taking ALL wrong thoughts captive before they take us captive and become strongholds in our mind.

xiv) Living a consecrated life where we choose on a daily basis to renounce all selfish ambition and to live for the cause of Christ and to serve others.

Jesus Himself 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)**

“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)**

xv) In always humbly giving all the glory to God when we are succeeding in life.

Pride always precedes a fall. We need to learn to be disciplined in always giving the glory to God, especially when we are doing well in life. It is God who gives us the ability to succeed in life as believers as He protects us from the schemes of the evil one and gives us favour in life

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)

In the book of Proverbs we read,

“Pride goes before destruction, And a haughty spirit before a fall.” **(Proverbs 16:18)**

xvi) In the words that we speak to others and over our future

There is life and death in the power of the words that we speak. With our words we can encourage and inspire others to be successful in life, or we can bring condemnation and discouragement to others through the words that we speak.

It is crucial given the power of the tongue that we are disciplined in the words that we speak to others and over our future. Our future is very much framed by the words that we speak over our life as they so often become self fulfilling

We need to learn to not speak words in haste but to be thoughtful about the words that we speak to others. Our words need to be life giving.

We need to become disciplined in only speaking words of life. This is a great key to enjoying healthy relationships and to succeeding in life and realising our full potential in Christ. The bible has many scriptures that relate to the importance of being disciplined in the words that we speak and how our words have a great effect on others, either for the positive or for the negative.

In the book of Proverbs we read,

“Death and life are in the power of the tongue, And those who love it will eat its fruit.”

(Proverbs 18:21)

“A man has joy by the answer of his mouth, and a word spoken in due season, how good it is!” **(Proverbs 15:23)**

“Pleasant words are like a honeycomb, sweetness to the soul and health to the bones.”

(Proverbs 16:24)

“A perverse man sows strife, And a whisperer separates the best of friends.”

(Proverbs 16:28)

In the book of James we read,

“So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath;” **(James 1:19)**

Especially as leaders we have greater accountability for the words that we speak as we influence the lives of many others.

In the book of James we read,

“My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment.” **(James 3:1)**

Given the effect that our words have on others and on our relationships, it is crucial that we are always disciplined in the use of our tongue and that we, with the help of the Holy Spirit, always endeavour to speak words of life and encouragement to others and God’s promises over our future

xvii) In living a balanced life.

We need to have enough sleep and to be spiritually, emotionally and physically healthy in life because we will only rise to the lowest ceiling in our life. We need to also have our finances in order as we learn to live within our means and to budget

A leader will rise to his LOWEST ceiling.

- **PHYSICAL (Diet, Rest, Sleep, Exercise, Health)**
- **EMOTIONAL (Healthy relationships, ability to deal with negative emotions, stability)**
- **MENTAL (Ability to deal with stress, ability to TRUST God, ability to prioritise, delegate)**
- **SPIRITUAL (Prayer life, Worship life, Knowledge of the Word, Faith / Resting in God)**

It is therefore crucial that we are disciplined in every area of our life so that we can reach our full potential in life and in our walk with the Lord. We need to learn to work on our weaknesses so that they also become strengths

And

xviii) In always looking for the best in others and choosing to love others UNCONDITIONALLY so that others will be drawn to Christ through our lives – THIS NEEDS TO BE A CONTINUAL CHOICE

Jesus Himself 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 made it clear that all that we do in life must be undergirded by love when he 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)**

So in conclusion:

Living a disciplined life is crucial to realizing our full potential in Christ and to fulfilling our God given destiny. Every sacrifice that we make for the Lord will never be in vain and as we commit to living a disciplined Christian life we will see God opening up great doors of opportunity for us to make a great difference in this world for eternity. As we remain disciplined in our walk with the Lord we will also experience the life and life more abundantly that Jesus spoke of in John 10:10

I will finish with the words of the Apostle Paul 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. Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership. Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all. Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. *Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.*” (1 Timothy 4:12-16)

“You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier. (2 Timothy 2:3-4) **IN OUR CASE IT IS TO PLEASE OUR PRECIOUS LORD AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST**

AND

“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” (2 Timothy 2:15)

