

## **LEADERSHIP STUDY: Being FOCUSED and FRUITFUL in our lives and walk with the Lord**

As Christians we have been saved for a purpose and have been given the ministry of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:18) As Christians we have a great message of hope that we can share with those in the world.

However we are now living in the last of the last days in a world which is becoming more and more ungodly. There are now so many influences in our world that have the potential to draw Christians off track in their walk with the Lord. Both the Apostle Paul and Jesus Himself made this very clear.

The Apostle Paul wrote,

“But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!” **(2 Timothy 3:1-5)**

Jesus Himself said in relation to the times that we are now living in,

“And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another.

“Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many.

“And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold, But he who endures to the end shall be saved.” **(Matthew 24:10-13)**

God’s desire is that our lives would bear much fruit and that our lives would make a great difference in this world for eternity. The bible makes this very clear.

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

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 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)**

In today’s leadership study I will be looking at how we can lead a focused and fruitful life as a believer. The bible makes it clear that God has a unique unfolding plan for every believer’s life.

The Apostle Paul wrote,

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

King David wrote,

“For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother’s womb. I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Marvellous are Your works, And that my soul knows very well. My frame was not hidden from You, When I was made in secret, And skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth (**that is your mother’s womb**). Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book they all were written, the days fashioned for me, when as yet there were none of them.” (**Psalm 139:13-16**)

God’s plan for our life continually unfolds over time. The Christian walk is a marathon and not a sprint.

King David wrote,

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

**I will now look at some keys that can help us as believers to lead a focused and fruitful life**

**1) The importance of knowing and following God’s will for our life.**

We need to have a clear God given vision for our life and an understanding of what God has called us to do in life. We will be most fruitful flowing in the will of God for our life. This is why the Apostle Paul emphasised the importance of knowing 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**)

Without a clear God given vision and purpose for our life we will invariably squander our lives on unproductive things and miss out on God’s best for our life.

In the book of Proverbs we read,

“Where there is no revelation, the people cast off restraint; But happy is he who keeps the law.” (**Proverbs 29:18**)

Having a clear vision for our life will help us to remain focused and fruitful in our walk with the Lord and help us to get through the trials of life that we will all encounter in life.

The LORD said to the prophet Habakkuk when he was struggling with discouragement as he looked at the circumstances around him,

“Write the vision and make it plain on tablets, that he may run who reads it. For the vision is yet for an appointed time; But at the end it will speak, and it will not lie. Though it tarries, wait for it; Because it will surely come, It will not tarry.” (**Habakkuk 2:2-3**)

## **2) We are *most fruitful* and energized when we operate in our own unique gifts and calling**

Every believer is uniquely gifted for a God given plan and purpose for their lives. It is when we flow in our own unique gifts and calling that we are most effective and fulfilled in life and most anointed. It is when we flow in what God has called us to do in life that we find that His yoke is easy and that His burden is light. (Matthew 11:30)

Jesus Himself said,

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

Knowing what our own unique gifts and calling are and faithfully using our gifts and talents is a great key to leading a life of great purpose and meaning and to being a great blessing to the body of Christ.

The Apostle Paul wrote,

“For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another.” **(Romans 12:4-5)**

“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)**

## **3) We need to spend time developing our gifts and talents. We should seek to become the best at what God has called us to do in life**

There is no greater cause than living our lives wholeheartedly for Christ. The eternal destinies of others will depend on us faithfully fulfilling God’s plan for our life and one day Jesus Christ will reward us for what we did for His Kingdom here on earth. (Matthew 16:27)

With this in mind it is good to spend time learning how to become better at what God has called us to do in life. Having a teachable spirit is a great key to becoming all that God has planned for our life.

In the book of Proverbs we 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)**

If we are called to preach the word of God it is important that we make the study of the word of God a great priority in our lives (2 Timothy 2:15)

As Christians we need to build our lives on the word of God to be truly effective in ministering to others.

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)

#### **4) We need to learn to know what voices to listen to and what voices to reject**

Many people have opinions but we must always seek to only listen to wise counsel in our lives. The negative opinions of others have the potential to pull us away from what God has planned for our life and to destroy our God given dreams. There is life and death in the power of the tongue so what voices we listen to is crucial. (Proverbs 18:21) It is crucial that we only seek counsel from mature Christians and from people that are living out the Christian walk. Who inputs into our lives and what voices that we listen to will greatly impact the degree to which we fulfil God’s plan for our life

In the book of Proverbs we read,

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

The most important voice that we must seek to listen to and obey is the Holy Spirit speaking to us. Our greatest priority must always be to seek God for His counsel before we make decisions in life. God will often speak to us through people and through His word. (Psalm 119:105)

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)

#### **5) The importance of discontinuing those things in our life that are unnecessary and unproductive and which are stopping us from giving our time and energy to those things that God has called us to do in life.**

The enemy will always try and distract us from fulfilling God’s purpose for our life, even by getting us to do good works that are outside of God’s plan for our life. There are different seasons in our life.

We need to consistently evaluate what things that we are doing in life are outside of our calling and need to be discontinued, so that we can fully embrace the things that God has planned for our life.

This is why the Apostle Paul wrote, “Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is.” **(Ephesians 5:17)**

Especially when we come to a new season in our life we will have to let go of some old things to embrace the new things that God has planned for our lives and churches.

In the book of Isaiah we read,

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

## **6) We need to do all things with a right attitude and motivation of love**

It is not what we do in life but how we do things in life that has the greatest impact on the lives of others. Our attitude to life and our enthusiasm in doing those things that God has called us to do will greatly determine our altitude in life and what doors that God can open up for us.

The Apostle Paul wrote, “And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ.” **(Colossians 3:23-24)**

As Christians we should never lead defeated lives. (Romans 8:37) We have a God who is both willing and able to help us in time of need. (Psalm 46:1) (1 John 5:14-15) (James 1:5) As Christians we should always have a can do attitude given the mighty God that we serve. (Luke 1:37)

The Apostle Paul who achieved so much for God’s Kingdom wrote,

“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.” **(Philippians 4:13)**

It is our faith and trust in God that will help to inspire others going through struggles to come to faith in Christ. We need to learn to continually speak God’s promises in His word over our future rather than always complaining about our problems. Again our attitude will determine our altitude in 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)**

## **The Apostle Paul also emphasised the importance of all that we do in life and ministry being undergirded by an attitude of love**

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)

Continually having an attitude of gratitude will also help us to keep strong in our walk with the Lord and cause us to shine in the world that we are now living in. (Matthew 5:16) Our attitude in life will greatly influence our witness to others who do not yet know Christ.

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)

### **7) The importance of having Godly mentors in our life.**

We were never meant to live our Christian walk in isolation. We all need one another in the body of Christ.

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)

Having Godly mentors in our life helps us to grow more quickly in our walk with the Lord as we learn from the wisdom and experiences of other mature Christians. Being accountable to other mature Christians is also a great key to helping us to not make wrong choices in life. There is wisdom in a multitude of counsellors. (Proverbs 15:22) (Proverbs 11:14) Often we can be blind to our own faults in life, but other mature Christians can see them and lovingly help to bring correction into our lives so that we can experience all that God has planned for our lives.

Moses became far more effective in his leadership of the Children of Israel when he listened to and heeded the wise counsel of his father in law Jethro to delegate leadership responsibilities to others.

(We see this in Exodus Chapter 18)

## 8) We must distinguish between our career and our calling.

Our career is how we make a living and pay our bills, but our calling is what God has planned for our lives so that we can make an eternal difference in the lives of many people. We need to do both well so that we stand out as Christians in a positive way and glorify God in all that we do. As Christians we should be a shining light in our work places as we do things with enthusiasm and integrity.

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**)

However it is crucial that we understand that there is a big difference between our career and our calling and that we keep focused on storing up treasures in heaven during our life here on earth. (Matthew 6:19-21) We need to continually live our lives with eternity in mind and be focused on fulfilling our God given calling in life during our time here on earth.

## 9) Being faithful and persevering in fulfilling God’s plan for our life.

We must not allow opposition and challenges to stop us from fulfilling God’s plan and purpose for our life. We must simply just keep doing what God has called us to do in life. Nehemiah is a great example of what God can do through a person who is faithful and persevering in completing what God has put on their heart to do. Through Nehemiah’s inspirational leadership the wall around Jerusalem was rebuilt in just 52 days. (Refer to Nehemiah chapters one to six to read an account of this event)

The Apostle Paul made it clear that if we truly have a heart to live for the things of the Kingdom, that we would encounter persecution.

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

Jesus Himself said,

“If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.” (**John 15:18-19**)

**The bible makes it clear that to fulfil our God given destiny we must be over comers in our walk with the LORD** (Revelation 2:11, Revelation 2:17, Revelation 2:25-26, Revelation 3:5, Revelation 3:10-12)

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**)

## **10) We must avoid time wasters.**

We need to have healthy boundaries in our life. If we are not careful we can allow people to waste our time and disorganize our days. The enemy will continually try and get us distracted and off track in our walk with the Lord so that we do not realize our full potential in Christ. Our time is our most precious resource. Every day once gone cannot be reclaimed. We only have so many days in our life to make an eternal difference in the lives of many. For this reason we must not have poor boundaries in our life and allow others to waste our time.

In the book of James we read, "...For what is your life? It is even a vapour that appears for a little time and then vanishes away." (**James 4:14**)

The Psalmist wrote, "So teach us to number our days, That we may gain a heart of wisdom." (**Psalm 90:12**)

## **11) The importance of prayerfully making plans**

Without making plans we will not realise our life's potential in Christ. Plans help us to keep focused on fulfilling what God has planned for our life. Each week and every day it is good to seek the Lord for what He has planned for our week and day. This is a great key to being focused and fruitful in our walk with the Lord. Making plans helps to see God's vision and plan for our life unfolding over time.

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**)

## **12) We need to regularly draw back and look at the bigger picture. What am I or we trying to achieve?**

So often we can get so caught up with doing things that we can lose perspective of why we are doing things. For this reason it is good to regularly draw aside with the Lord and look at what we are doing, to see how it relates to what God has called us to do in life. It is also good to start every day with a time of reflection of what are the important things to achieve that day before you commence each day's activities.

As a church we exist to help people to come to Christ and to help all believers to become mature disciples within a loving Christian community, so that they in turn can help others to become mature disciples. (2 Timothy 2:2) So whatever we do as a church must help to see these two key purposes being accomplished in the life of our church.

**13) Continually being led by the Holy Spirit in all that we do in life.**

This is a great key to remaining in the will of God for our life and to seeing our life bearing much fruit. God's unfolding plan for our life is much bigger than ours. (Isaiah 55:8-9) (Ephesians 3:20) How important it is that we are intimate in our walk with the LORD so that we can hear and follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

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)**

**14) Our love for Jesus must always be our highest priority in life.**

All fruitfulness in our life comes from remaining in an intimate and abiding relationship with Jesus Christ. Having an intimate relationship with the Lord will help us to have God's heart for people and will give us the strength, guidance and love to continually follow God's plan for our life, even during the times when we experience great trials and persecution for our faith.

Jesus Himself said, “Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.” **(John 15:4-5)**

All that we do in life and ministry needs to flow out of an abiding relationship with Christ if our lives are to bear much fruit.

It is our love for Christ that will compel us to wholeheartedly pursue God's plan for our life. The Apostle Paul achieved much during his time here on earth including writing around one third of the New Testament. His life was characterized by his great desire to know Christ.

The Apostle Paul wrote, “But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ.” **(Philippians 3:7-8)**

**AND**

## **15) The importance of having a lifestyle of persevering prayer**

Prayerless people are powerless. Prayer is a great key to fulfilling our full potential in life. There will continually be need for wisdom to make right choices in life. God always knows what is best for us. Prayer helps us to get wisdom from God to make right choices in life that are in line with His will for our 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)**

We will be consistently confronted with challenges and hindrances from the enemy to try and stop us from fulfilling God’s plan and purpose for our life. Prayer helps to remove those obstacles and mountains in our life that would try and discourage us and stop us from realizing our full potential in life. It is so important that we learn to instinctively take our needs and concerns to God in prayer. He is always capable of helping us and knows how best to meet our every need in life.

This is why 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)**

### **Jesus Himself emphasised the importance of being persevering in our prayer life. (Luke 18:1-8)**

Jesus also made it clear that prayer has the power to change our circumstances when He 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)**

**FINALLY Prayer is the key to seeing revival in our cities and in our nation of Australia. So how important it is that we are persevering in our prayer life so that we can see the miracles and breakthroughs in our own life.**

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