

GIVING OUR BEST FOR THE LORD IN 2014 (Fully using our God given gifts and talents) - Two Further Keys

9) We must have courage to embrace all that God has planned for our life this year

- **God has much in store for every believer's life this year**
- **People that God wants to touch through our lives**
- **Doors of opportunity that He wants to open this year for us**
- **However the devil will use fear and intimidation to try and stop people from fully embracing all that God has planned for their life this year**
- **The enemy will also try and discourage us from fully pursuing all that God has planned for our life by getting our focus off God and onto our circumstances**
- **We are more susceptible to succumbing to discouragement if we allow the Devil to take our focus off the Lord and onto the challenges confronting us in our life – The Bible says that through many tribulations we enter the Kingdom of God**
- **As long as we keep our focus on the Lord we will never become overwhelmed and discouraged when we go through trials in life**

- **As long as we keep our love for Jesus our highest priority in life, we will never become bitter and discouraged in life when we are going through trials, but we will actually grow in Christlike character and become strengthened in our faith through the trials that we experience in life**

- **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**)

“And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.” (**Romans 8:28-29**)

- **No matter what we may go through in life we must learn to encourage and strengthen ourselves in the Lord**
- **In the book of 1 Samuel we see what King David did when he was confronted with great challenges and was himself deeply distressed.**

“Now it happened, when David and his men came to Ziklag, on the third day, that the Amalekites had invaded the South and Ziklag, attacked Ziklag and burned it with fire, and had taken captive the women and those who were there, from small to great; they did not kill anyone, but carried them away and went their way. So David and his men came to the city, and there it was, burned with fire; and their wives, their sons, and their daughters had been taken captive.

Then David and the people who were with him lifted up their voices and wept, until they had no more power to weep. And David's two wives, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess and Abigail the widow of Nabal the Carmelite, had been taken captive. Now David was greatly distressed, for the people spoke of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his sons and his daughters. **BUT DAVID STRENGTHENED HIMSELF IN THE LORD HIS GOD.**
(1 Samuel 30:1-6)

- **The enemy will try and use discouragement and fear to stop us from fully embracing all that God has planned for our life this year – A year of breakthrough and God's favour – There are many people who need to be reached with the gospel – There are multitudes in the valley of decision**

- **Fear is the opposite of faith. 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)**

- **Before Joshua led the Children of Israel into the Promised Land the LORD emphasised the absolute importance of having courage.**

“No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life; as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you nor forsake you. (Joshua 1:5)

“Be strong and of good courage, for to this people you shall divide as an inheritance the land which I swore to their fathers to give them. (Joshua 1:6) “Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go. (Joshua 1:7)

“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)

“Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.” (Joshua 1:9)

○ **AS CHRISTIANS WE CAN BE ASSURED THAT WE CAN ALSO EMBRACE THE PROMISES THAT GOD GAVE JOSHUA**

○ **That the Lord will be with us wherever we go**

Jesus Himself said to His disciples, “... and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. Amen” (Matthew 28:20)

○ **That we are more than conquerors in Christ Jesus**

The Apostle Paul wrote,

“...If God is for us, who can be against us?” (Romans 8:31)

“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

As it is written:

“For Your sake we are killed all day long;

We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.”

Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.” (Romans 8:35-37)

- **That God opens up doors that no man can close**

In the book of Revelation we read,

“These things says He who is holy, He who is true, He who has the key of David, He who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens”: I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name.”
(Revelation 3:7-8)

Nothing or no one can stop us from appropriating all that God has planned for our life except ourselves – WE MUST CHOOSE TO ENTER INTO ALL THAT GOD HAS PLANNED FOR OUR LIFE

- **That He will never leave nor forsake us,**

In the book of Hebrews we read,

“...For He Himself has said, ‘I will never leave you nor forsake you.’” So we may boldly say: “The Lord is my helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me?” **(Hebrew 13:5-6) and**

- **That we can do all things through Christ Who strengthens us**

The Apostle Paul wrote,

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

The Apostle John wrote,

“You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater that he who is in the world.”
(1 John 4:4)

SO HOW CAN WE REMAIN STRONG AND COURAGEOUS IN OUR WALK WITH THE LORD SO THAT WE CONTINUALLY OVERCOME THE WORM OF FEAR AND ALL ATTEMPTS BY THE ENEMY TO DISCOURAGE US

- **We must refuse to build our lives based on the negative things that others have spoken over our life in the past nor be moved to fear based upon what our current circumstances look like**
- **We must continually choose to set our mind on things above – To seek God for His wisdom and direction**

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)**

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

The Apostle Paul wrote,

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

“Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as being from ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God.” **(2 Corinthians 3:5)**

- **We must believe and know that God is sovereign in the affairs of this world – Nothing can happen to us apart from His will for our life**

Jesus Himself said,

“Are not two sparrows sold for a copper coin? And not one of them falls to the ground apart from your Father’s will.” (Matthew 10:29) “Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows.” (Matthew 10:31)

- **As believers we can tap into all of the promises of God in both the Old and New Testament. As long as we position ourselves to receive the blessing we can appropriate all of God’s promises by faith.**

For example 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 TITHE WE POSITION OURSELVES TO APPROPRIATE THE PROMISES CONTAINED IN MALACHI 3:10-11

“Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house, And try Me now in this,” Says the LORD of hosts, “If I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you such blessing that there will not be room enough to receive it.”

“And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, so that he will not destroy the fruit of your ground, nor shall the vine fail to bear fruit for you in the field,” Says the LORD of hosts;” (Malachi 3:10-11)

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)

- **We must refuse to entertain wrong thoughts in our mind. The battleground is the mind and our thought life. We must learn to continually take all negative and unbelieving thoughts captive and to replace them with what God says about our life and future in His Word**

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 must be careful what we mediate on**

The Apostle Paul wrote,

“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)

- **We must choose our friends wisely (We need to have people of faith and Godly vision in our lives)**

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)

The Apostle Paul wrote,

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

OUR SIGNIFICANT FRIENDS IN LIFE MUST BE PEOPLE WHO HELP TO BUILD US UP AND TO ENCOURAGE US TO BE ALL THAT GOD HAS PLANNED FOR OUR LIFE

- **We need to continually meditate on the Word of God**

The Apostle Paul wrote,

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

CONSISTENTLY MEDITATING ON AND SPEAKING OUT THE WORD OF GOD IS A KEY TO SEEING OUR FAITH CONTINUALLY BEING BUILT UP. THAT IS WHY THE LORD SAID TO JOSHUA

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

- **We need to continually maintain a loving and abiding relationship with the Lord**

In Psalm 37 we read,

“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 Acts we read,

“Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marvelled. And they realized that they had been with Jesus.” (Acts 4:13)

- **We need to simply just keep doing what God tells us to do in life – As we do we can be assured of His constant protection and provision**

The Apostle Paul wrote,

“And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.” **(Philippians 4:19)**

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)**

- **We have a God who both hears and answers all of our prayers that are in line with His will for our life**

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)**

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)***

○ **We need to be continually FILLED with the Holy Spirit**

Being continually filled with the Holy Spirit is a key to maintaining a continual boldness in our walk with the Lord and in our witnessing to others

The spirit of the world will continually try and dull our affections for Jesus and the devil will constantly use people to try and discourage us from living whole heartedly for the Lord – For this reason we need to be continually filled with the right spirit, 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)

On the day of Pentecost all of the disciples were filled and baptised in the Holy Spirit. The Apostle Peter then shortly after preached a message in the power of the Holy Spirit and three thousand people came to faith in Christ

However later on we see the disciples again seeking the Lord in prayer for boldness after being persecuted for their faith

Again we see the disciples being filled afresh with the Holy Spirit as they prayed. We see this in chapter four of the book of Acts

“Now, Lord, look on their threats, and grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your word, ‘by stretching out Your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done through the Name of Your Holy Servant Jesus.” (Acts 4:29-30)

“And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness.” (Acts 4:31)

IT IS SO IMPORTANT THAT AS WE MINISTER OUT TO OTHERS THAT WE OURSELVES ARE ALSO BEING CONTINUALLY FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT

“...that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.”
(Ephesians 3:19) GOD IS LOVE

The Apostle John wrote,

“There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love.” **(1 John 4:18)**

- **WE MUST SIMPLY JUST BELIEVE WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS,**

“For with God nothing will be impossible” (Luke 1:37)

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)**

10) We need to be planted in a local church where God has placed us

- **God's plan for our life will always be worked out in connection with others who God brings into our life**
- **It is within the context of local church fellowships that God connects believers together for HIS purpose and plans**
- **As a united team we can achieve much for His glory**
- **In isolation we quickly grow cold in our walk with the Lord and can quickly lose our passion to live for and to serve Him**
- **Within the context of a local church we can be CONTINUALLY encouraged in our walk with the Lord and to flow in our spiritual gifts**

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)**

- **It is within the context of a local church that we can also have accountability with others which helps us to remain strong in our walk with the Lord.**
- **As we have fellowship with other believers we are also cleansed of our worldly attitudes and purified in our walk with the Lord so that we shine more and more brightly in the world for Jesus**

The Apostle John wrote,

“But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.” **(1 John 1:7)**

Jesus Himself said,

“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see you good works and glorify your Father in heaven. **(Matthew 5:16)**

HAVING REGULAR FELLOWSHIP WITH OTHER BELIEVERS HELPS US TO SHINE FOR JESUS AND TO LIVE FRUITFUL CHRISTIAN LIVES

Wanting to have fellowship with other believers should be a natural thing for us who love Jesus Christ. In the book of Acts we see that fellowship with other believers was a key factor in seeing the early church growing rapidly and making a great impact in the world, “*Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common,*” **(Acts 2:44)**

But in the book of Proverbs we read,

“The backslider in heart will be filled with his own ways, but a good man will be satisfied from above.” **(Proverbs 14:14)**

- **Within the context of Christian fellowship we can also receive wisdom from other believers to help us to make right choices in 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)**

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

- **It is within the context of being planted in a local church fellowship that our lives will continually bear much fruit**
- **As we actively engage in the life of a local church fellowship we will help others to fulfil their God given destiny as God’s plan for our own life continues to unfold – WE ALL NEED EACH OTHER**
- **The Lord gave me an analogy of the hand in relation to its place and role in the human body being like a local church fellowship within the Body of Christ**
- **Although it is only a part of the body, it is also made up of 5 members itself (fingers) that need each other**
- **In the same way those in a local church fellowship are only a part of the entire Body of Christ, but so too the members within that fellowship need one another**

- **WE ALL HAVE AN IMPORTANT PART TO PLAY WITHIN THE BODY OF CHRIST AS WE CONNECT WITH OTHER BELIEVERS**

The Apostle Paul wrote,

“But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased. And if they were all one member, where would the body be? But now indeed there are many members, yet one body. And the eye cannot say to the hand, “I have no need of you”; nor again the head to the feet, “I have no need of you.” No, much rather, those members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary.” **(1 Corinthians 12:18-22)** And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member is honoured, all the members rejoice with it.” **(1 Corinthians 12:26)**

“Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually. And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, variety of tongues.” **(1 Corinthians 12:27-28)**

- **It is God who raises up fellowships and connects believers together for HIS Kingdom cause**
- **When we are planted where God has called us to be, our lives will bear MUCH fruit and we will BE A BLESSING TO MANY. In the book of Psalms we read,**
“Those who are planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bear fruit in old age; they shall be fresh and flourishing, To declare that the LORD is upright; He is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in Him. **(Psalm 92:13-14)**”