

THE IMPORTANCE OF HAVING CONSISTENCY IN OUR WALK WITH THE LORD

- **The Apostle Paul wrote,**

“And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.” (**Galatians 6:9**)

- **In the book of Revelation we see the importance of continually leading an overcoming Christian life – That we continually maintain our focus on things above and are not distracted by the things of this world. Jesus emphasised our need to overcome and persevere in our walk with Him,**

“But Hold fast what you have till I come. And He who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations – ” (**Revelation 2:25-26**)

“Because you have kept My command to **persevere**, I will also keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.” (**Revelation 3:10**)

“He who overcomes, I will make a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more. I will write on him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God. And I will write on him My new name.” (**Revelation 3:12**)

“**He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son.**” (Revelation 21:7)

- **WE NEED TO BE CONTINUALLY FAITHFUL IN WHAT GOD HAS CALLED US TO DO IN LIFE**

- **What we do for the Lord is never in vain. God has uniquely gifted every believer – As we commit to using our gifts for the Lord our lives will bear much fruit and impact the lives of many for eternity**

- **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)

- **In the book of Hebrews we read,**

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

“Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward. For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise.” (Hebrews 10:35-36)

- **We need to be simply committed to finishing the race that is set before us – God has much in store for every believer’s life but we need to be people of commitment and consistency if we are to fully embrace all that God has planned for our life**

The Apostle Paul at the end of his life wrote,

“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.” (2 Timothy 4:8-9)

- **We are now living in those perilous times that the Apostle Paul spoke about – times in which so many influences exist that can pull our heart away from the things of God if we do not stay focussed on things above**

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)**

“If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.” **(Colossians 3:1-2)**

The Apostle Paul also warned that in the last days some would depart from the faith

“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)**

Jesus Himself said,

“And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold, But he who endures to the end shall be saved.” **(Matthew 24:12-13)**

- **God has so much in store for every believer’s life – Given the uncertain times that we are now living in, we can all make a great difference in this world by living for Jesus**

- **If we simply remain consistent in our walk with the Lord over the period of our lifetime we have the potential to make a great impact in this world for eternity**

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)

- **However like Jesus we need to be committed to finishing all that God gives us to do in life – In doing this our lives will bear much fruit**
- **At the beginning of His ministry here on earth Jesus 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 said 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)**
- **In many ways the Christian walk is always one of continually rowing against the stream or tide of this world as we stand up for our faith in Jesus Christ. But as we do we will help many others to come to faith in Jesus Christ and to receive the gift of eternal life.**

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)

- **OVER THE NEXT COUPLE OF WEEKS I WILL BE SHARING ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF HAVING CONSISTENCY IN A NUMBER OF AREAS OF OUR LIFE AND CHRISTIAN WALK. HAVING CONSISTENCY IN THESE AREAS HELPS US TO LIVE FRUITFUL AND OVERCOMING CHRISTIAN LIVES**

1) The importance of consistently choosing to do the will of God for our life (Allowing God's plan for our life to continually unfold over time)

- **God has a unique plan for each 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)**
- **We must however on a daily basis be prepared to allow the Lord to direct our steps in life. In the book of Proverbs we read, "Commit your works to the Lord, and your thoughts will be established." (Proverbs 16:3)**
- **God's plan for our life unfolds progressively over time 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)**
- **Knowing the will of God in each season of our life is crucial to seeing His plan for our life unfolding over time. 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)**

- **The Apostle Paul also wrote,**
 “For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;” (Colossians 1:9-10)

- **As we simply consistently pursue the will of God for our life over a period of time, we have the potential to make a great difference in this world for eternity**

- **God never looks at our ability but simply our availability – As we continually live for Him He raises us up to do great things for His glory. 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)**

- **GOD’S WAYS ARE FAR HIGHER THAN OUR WAYS**

- **We must simply choose on a consistent basis to just to what Jesus tells us to do**

- **Brian Houston is the Senior Pastor for Hillsong in Australia. He has just recently celebrated his 60th birthday and 40th year in ministry. As he and his wife have simply allowed God’s plan for their lives to unfold over many years, their first church plant that started with just over 50 members has now grown to a mega church of around 20,000 in Sydney with many extension services.**

- They have also now helped to plant several other mega churches in London, Kiev, New York, Cape Town and many other areas such as Melbourne and Brisbane
- When we simply consistently live for the Lord over the period of a lifetime God can do much through our lives
- Nehemiah was an example of how God could do incredible things through a man who was focused on living for God – In just 52 days he co-ordinated the rebuilding of the wall around Jerusalem that had been destroyed. We see this in chapters 1-6 of the book of Nehemiah in the Old Testament
- As we live for the Lord we must also be careful to consistently operate within our gifts and callings
- As we flow in our unique gifts and callings we will be most effective in serving the Lord with our time and efforts and our lives will bear much fruit
- **The Apostle Paul 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)

2) The importance of consistently meditating on the word of God

- In a world in which the darkness is getting darker in so many areas and where lawlessness is on the increase, it is so important that now more than ever before, that we continually as Christians renew our mind with the Word of God
- **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)**
- In a world which is becoming more and more unsettled and in which there is now no certainty about many things, we can build our life on a firm foundation by being both hearers and doers of the Word of God. 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)

- CONSISTENTLY MEDITATING ON THE WORD OF GOD IS CRUCIAL FOR MANY REASONS

i) It is a key to receiving continual guidance and direction from God (The Holy Spirit will illuminate passages of Scripture to give us clear direction in life when we read the Word of God to seek guidance from the Lord) The Psalmist wrote,

“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.” (Psalm 119:105)

“Direct my steps by Your word, And let no iniquity have dominion over me.” (Psalm 119:133)

Meditating on the Word of God helps us to not stumble in our walk with the Lord and to consistently stay on track with what God has planned for our life

ii) Mediating on and speaking out the Word of God also helps to build up our faith and to set us free as we begin to embrace and build our lives based on the promises of God contained in His Word

The Apostle Paul wrote,

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

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)

MEDITATING ON AND SPEAKING OUT THE WORD OF GOD HELPS TO STRENGTHEN OUR FAITH AND TO LIBERATE US DURING TIMES OF GREAT TRIALS AND CHALLENGES – The truth makes us free

iii) Reading and studying the word of God helps us to make good choices which are based on God’s wisdom so that we are prosperous and have good success in life. God’s Word: We need to read it! Study it! Memorize it!

The Apostle Paul wrote,

“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)**

The LORD said to Joshua just before he led the Children of Israel into the land of Canaan

“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)**

iv) Meditating on the Word of God helps us to grow in Christlike character

The Apostle Paul said to the young pastor Timothy,

“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)**

3) The importance of having a consistent lifestyle of worship and prayer (We need to continually keep our focus on the Lord)

- OUR LOVE FOR JESUS IS THE KEY TO REMAINING STRONG IN OUR FAITH**
- Worship helps us to remain passionately in love with Jesus AND strong in our faith**
- King David was a worshipper who wrote many of the Psalms**
- He was the only one that God ever referred to as a man after His own heart. In the book of Acts we read, “And when He had removed him, He raised up for them David as king, to whom also He gave testimony and said, ‘I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after My own heart, who will do all My will.’ (Acts 13:22)**
- The Apostle Paul achieved much for the Lord but his primary pursuit in life was to know and to love Jesus Christ. Though he experienced much persecution and trials for his faith, nothing could stop the Apostle Paul from living whole heartedly for the Lord because of his great love for Jesus. 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)**

- **As Christians we are in a constant spiritual contest in which the enemy will try and distract and discourage us from fulfilling all that God has planned for our life – It is our unwavering love for Jesus Christ that helps us to remain strong during the trials of life**

- **The Apostle Paul wrote,**
“And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are 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)**

- **It is so important that we continually keep our focus on the Lord and that we spend time getting to know the Lord in a real and personal way.**

- **The Prophet Isaiah wrote,**
“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)**

The Apostle Paul 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)**

- **Worship and prayer helps us to keep our focus on the things of God and to maintain our peace**

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)**

- **As we worship God we usher in God’s presence into our circumstances and we gain a renewed perspective on our problems**

- **We see this with the Prophet Habakkuk,**

- **When the Prophet Habakkuk began focusing on the problems around him he became very burdened and cynical.**

- **We see this in verses 1-4 of chapter one of the book of Habakkuk**

“The burden which the prophet Habakkuk saw, “Oh LORD, how long shall I cry, And You will not hear? Even cry out to You, Violence!” And You will not save. Why do You show me iniquity, And cause me to see trouble? For plundering and violence are before me; There is strife, and contention arises. Therefore the law is powerless, And justice never goes forth. For the wicked surround the righteous; Therefore perverse judgment proceeds.” **(Habakkuk 1:1-4)**

- **However in verse one of chapter two of the book of Habakkuk we see the Prophet Habakkuk then setting aside time to spend with the LORD who then speaks to him in verses two and three of this chapter**

“I will stand my watch And set myself on the rampart, And watch to see what He will say to me. And what I will answer when I am corrected.” **(Habakkuk 2:1)**

Then the LORD answered me and said: “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)**

- **After refocussing on the LORD the Prophet Habakkuk’s entire outlook changed to life. We see this in chapter three of the book of Habakkuk**

- **In verses 17-19 of chapter three of the book of Habakkuk we read,**

“Though the fig tree may not blossom, Nor fruit be on the vines; Though the labour of the olive may fail, and the fields yield no food; Though the flock may be cut off from the fold, And there be no herd in the stalls-Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation. The LORD God is my strength; He will make my feet like deer’s feet, And He will make me walk on my high hills.” **(Habakkuk 3:17-19)**

- **God inhabits the praises of His people
In Psalm 22:3 we read,**

“But You are holy, Enthroned in the praises of Israel.”

- **Worship helps us to connect with God in an intimate way**
In Psalm 100:4 we read
 “Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, And into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him, and bless His name.” **(Psalm 100:4)**
- **Worship helps us to get God’s heart for people and circumstances**
- **Worship helps us to have a clearer understanding of God’s will for our life and what to pray for. King David wrote,**
 “**Delight yourself also in the Lord, And He shall give you the desires of your heart.**” **(Psalm 37:3-5)**
- **Having a lifestyle of prayer helps to make our life uncomplicated. This is why the Apostle Paul wrote,**
 “**pray without ceasing.**” **(1 Thessalonians 5:17)**
- **If we continually prayerfully involve God in all that we do in life we will consistently be in a better position to make right choices in life**
- **In the book of Ephesians the Apostle Paul wrote,**
 “praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for the saints-” **(Ephesians 6:18)**
- **Having a lifestyle of worship and prayer helps us to stay close to the Lord and to remain connected to His plan for our life**

4) The importance of being consistently faithful in the little things

- **God is more concerned about our character and attitude than what we achieve in life**
- **We must never despise the day of small beginnings. In the book of Zechariah we read, “For who has despised the day of small things?...” (Zechariah 4:10)**
- **Whenever we start something new it is so important that we are consistently faithful in the little things**
- **God’s prerequisite for promotion in His Kingdom is always related to being humble and faithful in the little things**
- **When God sees our faithfulness in the little things He then entrusts to us greater responsibilities**
- **Jesus Himself emphasised the importance of being faithful in the little things. He said, “He who is faithful in what is least is faithful also in much; and he who is unjust in what is least is unjust also in much.” (Luke 16:10)**
“And if you have not been faithful in what is another man’s, who will give you what is your own? (Luke 16:12)

- **Jesus also emphasised the importance of being faithful over a few things in His Parable of the Talents. In this Parable Jesus said,**

“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)**

5) The importance of consistently meeting with other believers (The importance of having accountability to other mature Christians)

- **As Christians we need to have constant fellowship with other believers – especially given the ever increasing lawlessness that we now see in the world**
- **Receiving encouragement from other believers helps us to remain focused on what God has planned for our life. 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 fellowship with other believers helps us to also shine brightly for the Lord. In 1 John we read, “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)**
- **To walk in the light as He is in the light requires that we live a life of accountability both before God and man**
- **Having accountability with other believers is a key to remaining strong in our walk with the Lord.**

- **In the book of Hebrews we read,**
“Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; but exhort one another daily, while it is called “Today,” lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end,” **(Hebrews 3:12-14)**

- **It is so important that we have other mature Christians that are able to also speak into our life**
– **There is wisdom in a multitude of counsellors**
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)**

- **Being planted and connected to the life of a local church fellowship is also a key to bearing much fruit in our life. 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. **(Psalm 92:13-14)**

6) The importance of being consistently committed to making right choices in life (A key to walking in God's blessings is that we continually employ God's wisdom in our life and walk in obedience – God always wants the best for us)

- **Our reputation takes a long time to earn**
- **Can be quickly lost, and**
- **Hard to regain**

- **As we are constantly in a spiritual war we need to continually seek God for His strength and wisdom to make right choices in life. Jesus Himself said,**
“The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.” **(John 10:10)**

- **Being continually led by the Holy Spirit and walking in obedience to God's Word helps us to consistently make right choices in life. Jesus Himself said,**
“However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.” **(John 16:13)**

- **For some people we as Christians may be the only bible that they will ever read. This is why Jesus said,**
“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see you good works and glorify your Father in heaven. **(Matthew 5:16)**

- **Someone once wrote,**
Sow a thought, Reap an action
Sow an action, Reap a habit

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)**

HOW IMPORTANT IT IS THAT WE CONTINUALLY AS CHRISTIANS MEDITATE ON THINGS OF GOOD REPORT AND THAT WE LIVE OUR LIFE IN LINE WITH THE WISDOM CONTAINED IN THE WORD OF GOD – That we are both hearers and doers of the Word – That we cultivate healthy and godly habits in our life which cause us to consistently make right choices in life.

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

7) The importance of being continually filled with the Holy Spirit (It is so important that we are 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)**

As we minister out to others we ourselves need to be continually filled afresh with the Holy Spirit

Being continually filled with the Holy Spirit helps to keep us bold in our walk with the Lord and when witnessing to others

When we are being continually rejected for our faith, our confidence and passion for sharing our faith with others can be affected. The Devil will continually try and discourage Christians from sharing their faith with others through ongoing persecution and rejection from others

We see in the book of Acts that when the Apostles were making a great impact in the world with the gospel and people were experiencing miracles and healings through their ministry, they were threatened and persecuted for their witness to the Lord. (*Acts 4:15-23*)

They then raised their voice to God with one accord and prayed for boldness and were again filled with the Holy Spirit.

“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**)

AS CHRISTIANS IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT WE ARE CONTINUALLY FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT

8) The importance of **CONSISTENTLY** loving others

- **The Bible makes it clear that the greatest is love**
- **The world is desperately looking for love in many ways**
- **As Christians we can love all people because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit – *It is this Agape love of God that makes us shine out as Christians as we love others unconditionally***

The Apostle Paul wrote, “Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.” **(Romans 5:5)**

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

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

The Apostle Paul wrote,

“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)**

9) The importance of consistently choosing our friends wisely

- **The Apostle Paul wrote** “Do not be deceived: Evil company corrupts good habits.” **(1 Corinthians 15:33)**
- **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)**
- **WE BECOME LIKE THE COMPANY THAT WE KEEP**

- **In the book of Psalms 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**)

10) We need to consistently MAKE time to spend with the Lord. The Devil will continually try and rob us of our time with the Lord

- **We need to spend time with the Lord to seek His direction for our life, to be encouraged, to be strengthened, to maintain our joy and to get to know Him in a greater and deeper way**
- **The bible is full of Scriptures that emphasise the importance of making time to spend with the Lord**

In the book of Isaiah we read, “He gives power to the weak, And to those who have no might He increases strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, And the young men shall utterly fall, But those who wait on the Lord Shall renew their strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, They shall run and not be weary, They shall walk and not faint. (**Isaiah 40:29-31**)

King David wrote, “O GOD, You are my God; Early will I seek You; My soul thirsts for you; My flesh longs for You in a dry and thirsty land where there is no water. So I have looked for You in the sanctuary, To see Your power and Your glory. Because Your lovingkindness is better than life, My lips shall praise You.” (**Psalm 63:1-3**)

IN PSALM 16 KING DAVID WROTE,

“You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.” (**Psalm 16:11**)

- **If we do not spend time with the Lord we are more likely to become troubled about many things. Jesus Himself said,**

“Come to Me, all you who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.” (**Matthew 11:28-30**)

I WILL NOW FINISH BY LOOKING AT A PASSAGE OF SCRIPTURE IN THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

“Now it happened as they went that He entered a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha welcomed Him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary who also sat at Jesus’ feet and heard His word.

But Martha was distracted with much serving, and she approached Him and said, “Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore tell her to help me.” And Jesus answered and said to her, “Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her.” (**Luke 10:38-42**)

HOW IMPORTANT IT IS THAT WE HAVE BALANCE IN OUR LIFE AND THAT WE ALLOW THE LORD TO REFRESH US ON A CONTINUAL BASIS – EVEN JESUS IN HIS MINISTRY HERE ON EARTH “OFTEN WITHDREW INTO THE WILDERNESS AND PRAYED.” (Luke 5:16)

11) That we consistently look for opportunities to lead people to Christ (That we continually seek to have God's heart for the lost)

- **The Bible makes it clear that God's desire is that none would perish but that all would come to faith in Jesus Christ and receive the gift of eternal life.**

The Apostle Peter wrote,

“The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.” **(2 Peter 3:9)**

The Apostle Paul wrote,

“For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.” **(1 Timothy 2:3-4)**

- **As Christians, God has given us the ministry of reconciliation to help people come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ**

The Apostle Paul wrote,

“Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God.” **(2 Corinthians 5:18-20)**

- **The greater our love for the Lord, the more we will have God's heart to see people being reconciled to Himself through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.**

- **Jesus made it clear that God has a great love for every single person. In the parable of the lost sheep Jesus said,**
“What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he loses one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness, and go after the one which is lost until he finds it? And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders rejoicing.
And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbours, saying to them, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which is lost!’ I say to you that likewise there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance. (Luke 15:4-7)
- **In the gospel of Matthew we see the incredible compassion of Jesus for lost and hurting people**
“Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.”
“But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd.” (Matthew 9:35-36)
- **Jesus also made it clear that there is a hell to shun and a heaven to gain. Jesus said,**
“He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.” (John 3:36)
- **In the book of Revelation we see the final destiny of ALL unbelievers whose names are not written in the book of life**
“And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things written in the books. The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.” (Revelation 20:11-15)

- So given this eternal reality it is so important that we are consistently open to being used by the Lord to help people come to Christ – How important it is that we are continually praying for our loved ones and friends and for opportunities to share our faith with others.
- Gaining a clear understanding of the gospel message helps us to be ready at all times to share our faith with others. In the book of Proverbs we read, “The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, And he who wins souls is wise.” (Proverbs 11:30)

The Apostle Paul had a great love for the Lord and a great passion for seeing people come to Christ. He wrote in the book of Colossians,

“Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. To this end I also labour, striving to His working which works in me mightily.” (Colossians 1:28-29)

We must never allow the rejection of others when sharing our faith with them, to cause us to become insensitive to the plight of the lost

BEING A WORSHIPPER IS ONE GREAT KEY TO HELPING US TO ALWAYS HAVE GOD’S COMPASSION FOR THE LOST. As we open up our heart and worship the Lord we will be filled with His compassion for lost and hurting people

IF WE ARE SIMPLY JUST CONSISTENTLY AVAILABLE TO BE USED OF THE LORD TO WIN PEOPLE TO CHRIST, GOD WILL GIVE US MANY OPPORTUNITIES TO LEAD PEOPLE TO CHRIST

12) That we consistently do all things as to the Lord

- **As Christians we will all at times be let down by others**
- **We will not always be appreciated for what we do for others**
- **The Devil will also always look for an opportunity to try and offend us as believers to push us away from what God has called us to do in life**
- **A key to always maintaining a healthy attitude in life and to remaining strong in our walk with the Lord is that we always do everything as to the Lord.**
- **In doing this we will never become overly discouraged when people reject us for our faith, or fail to appreciate us for what we have done for them**
- **The Apostle Paul gave us great wisdom in terms of how we should do things in life in the book of Colossians. The Apostle Paul wrote,**
“And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.” **(Colossians 3:17)**

“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)**

- **Whilst people may not always appreciate what we do for them, God rewards us for all that we do for Him. Jesus Himself said,**

“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 12:26)**

“For the Son of Man will come in the glory of his Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works.” **(Matthew 16:27)**

- **When we continually seek God’s approval rather than man’s approval, we will maintain a right attitude in life and never become bitter when we are either rejected for our faith, or when others do not appreciate what we have done for them**
- **Continually doing all things as to the Lord helps us to maintain a sweet spirit in life and to continually do all things with a right motivation which is based on having a genuine love for all others, no matter how much we may be appreciated by others**
- **Consistently doing everything as to the Lord is also a key to longevity in ministry and to remaining emotionally, physically and spiritually healthy**
- **The Apostle John wrote,**
“Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers.” **(3 John 2)**