

*STEPS TO*  
**SUCCESS**  
**SERIES**

*JOSEPH*  
**Fulfilling Purpose**

*JONATHAN C. CAREY*

# STEPS TO SUCCESS SERIES

*JOSEPH*

## **Fulfilling Purpose**

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## **PREFACE**

This series was developed to provide, in a workbook form, steps for personal and leadership success. It targets two groups: men and women who are in leadership positions globally who need leadership and life-coaching tools and believers who seek biblically based personal development study materials.

The steps are taken from biblical characters reflecting part of their life's quest and challenges. The author, on a limited basis, is available to conduct leadership-related coaching, workshops, and seminars.



## **BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE**

Successful personal leadership developmental steps flow from the pages of the Bible, but are these steps applicable to us today? Indeed they are. What, then, ought we to do with these biblical steps to success?

Perhaps the starting point is the creation and maintenance of an environment in our ministries and organizations where biblical steps to success are recognized, taught, and encouraged. Biblical steps to success take place when believers and leaders respond in obedience to God's call. They recognize the importance of total obedience and allow the Holy Spirit to develop their gifts and skills.

They carry out their kingdom roles with a deep conviction of God's will and a heightened awareness of the contemporary issues they and their peers face. Above all, they minister as stewards and servants.

We do not stumble across success. Success is a result of deliberate acts. To truly succeed, we must fulfill the will of God for our lives! The Bible teaches that we can succeed only when we are in a right relationship with God.



This right relationship is made possible by the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ and the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. This success is maintained by an ongoing, intimate relationship with God reflected in a life of obedience.



## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to this study series on *Fulfilling Purpose*. The principles and concepts are taken from the life of an Old Testament leader named Joseph and are found in the book of Genesis. They are timeless and timely for fulfilling purpose both personally and professionally.

Joseph was born in Palestine some 4000 years ago. He was the second youngest son in a blended family. He had the attention and affection of his father. He enjoyed special clothes and assignments and was basically the apple of his father's eye. As one can imagine, Joseph's brothers despised him for the preferential treatment he received at their expense.

Young Joseph knew at least two things: one, he was the favorite son. And, two that there was a special plan for his family. He realized that his clan received a generational calling from God through his great-grandfather Abraham. Abraham encountered God and was singled out by the Lord to be the father of many nations. Joseph wanted a special place in this generational calling, and his reasoning was quite simple: if God (in his family) was in the habit of blessing the younger son, then He might as well bless me.

Yes, he was one of the younger sons in a culture that favored the eldest son, but he knew his father and grandfather were both younger sons and had received their inheritance—so he thought, why not him?

It's important to be able to recognize the manifestations of God in your life and family and embrace the opportunities these trends present to leave a godly legacy.

In our study, we will look at the various stages Joseph navigates through in his quest to fulfill God's generational calling.

I highly recommend that you do not rush through the material, but approach it with our step-by-step method. The overall study format will be consistent. The method of study is derived from the acronym STEPS. See the next page for an explanation.

Also provided is a *Fulfilling Purpose Personal Audit*. This audit serves as an assessment tool and a goal-setting device. Take the audit at the conclusion of your study of each section in the book. Let's now take the first step!





# STEPS

➤ **S**tate the step

➤ **T**each the step

➤ **E**valuate the step

➤ **P**ractice the step

➤ **S**ee the success



**THE FIRST STEP**

# Putting It Together





# THE FIRST STEP

*“And when they saw him afar off, even before he came near unto them, they conspired against him to slay him. And they said one to another, ‘Behold, this dreamer cometh. Come now therefore, and let us slay him, and cast him into some pit, and we will say, Some evil beast hath devoured him: and we shall see what will become of his dreams.’ And Reuben heard it, and he delivered him out of their hands; and said, ‘Let us not kill him.’ And Reuben said unto them, ‘Shed no blood, but cast him into this pit that is in the wilderness, and lay no hand upon him’; that he might rid him out of their hands, to deliver him to his father again. And it came to pass, when Joseph was come unto his brethren, that they stript Joseph out of his coat, his coat of many colours that was on him; And they took him, and cast him into a pit: and the pit was empty, there was no water in it.”*

—Genesis 37:18-24





## STATE THE STEP

Recognition of one's gifts and one's calling will produce encounters with self, others, and God, and it often is the catalyst which starts the 'Putting It Together' process.

## TEACH THE STEP

Joseph knew that there was a generational call on his family and he embraced it as his own. For a teenager, this took a high level of insight and faith that normally is not associated with youth his age. Joseph heard of the voice of God in his great-grandfather's, grandfather's, and father's lives, and he desired the same. Joseph wanted to be used by God in an effective way.

The generational call was to use his family to become a great nation, one that reflects the heartbeat and pulse of Almighty God. The call was unique in that God chose the younger son in each generation as His instrument for *fulfilling purpose*.

Joseph was only seventeen as he started to flow in his divine gift of dreaming. His dreaming was the genesis and foundation of his prophetic gift. It was to become the fabric of his ministry's DNA. Joseph was also blessed with natural abilities and a growing awareness of his call. History reveals that, with all this, he still

made some initial blunders in dealing with God's revelation to him and the manner in which he shared it with his family.

The manner in which he shared his dreams displayed the immaturity of a youth and the knowledge of a novice. Yes, Joseph was sheltered, prideful, and undiplomatic, but how mature could a sheltered seventeen-year-old be? To further complicate matters, his father showed him special favor over his siblings.

The dreamer became intensely despised and God used reactionary events to start the maturing process in the life of Joseph the dreamer.

We all have, at one time or another, experienced reactionary events—what one might call a “domino effect.” The domino effect starts with one domino which strikes the next, which strikes the next, taking on a nature of its own. I call these situational triggers.

There are many triggers, positive and negative, that release the fulfillment process in one's life, but often it's the negative ones that are the catalysts for growth and upward-bound success. With negative triggers, situations and conditions appear to get worse before they level out or show significant signs of improvement.

Often, the combination of a negative trigger and immaturity serves as the source of a batch of opportunities the Lord uses to shape and fashion us.

At the tender age of seventeen, Joseph is about to enter a purpose-fulfilling opportunity, and is equipped with at least the following:

- ✓ Recognition of and a commitment to a generational calling
- ✓ A prophetic gift and natural abilities
- ✓ A situational trigger

Joseph was about to see his unique shape start to develop before his tender eyes. Every leader and ministry has a particular SHAPE.

A few years ago, I was one of two guest speakers at a church dedication in Nassau in The Bahamas. The other speaker was the late renowned global leader, Dr. Myles Munroe. During my presentation I spoke on the uniqueness of a ministry's DNA. As I exited the platform, Dr. Munroe jokingly said, *"Johnny, I will give you credit for that the first few times I use it, then it's mine."*

We all have a unique personal and professional-ministry DNA and the SHAPE concept explains the personal one well.

**S – Stands for spiritual gift(s).** Scripture tells that God gives spiritual gifts as He wills (see 1 Corinthians 12:10-11). Spiritual gifts are significant abilities given to believers by the Holy Spirit that allow the church to effectively serve. Some refer to spiritual gifts as ministry gifts. As we recognize the gift given to us, we should be willing to use them by God's grace to carry out the work of the church in our communities, and throughout the globe.

We are equipped with these gifts by God's grace, and our willingness to use them to build others should be as gracious. Joseph was given a gift of prophecy that was manifested as he interpreted dreams throughout his life.

**H – Stands for heart’s passion.** What you have a passion for is a great indicator where your calling may be. As a pastor, I often heard people say how the church should be doing one thing or another. They had an unending passion for a cause and believed others ought to share that passion. Often these precious folks became bitterly upset because others didn’t embrace the passion for that cause.

Passion here is an enthusiasm, or desire for something. What are you passionate about? And what are you doing with that passion?

**A – Stands for abilities.** Everyone is born with a unique set of talents. These talents give them the ability to perform certain kinds of tasks more easily than others can. It’s important to know what you have the ability to do best, and to develop that ability.

As leaders we often try to strengthen our weakness. Instead, when we should outsource them and *strengthen our strengths*. Understanding our talents, and improving and flowing in our abilities are fundamental to fulfilling purpose.

What natural talents and abilities do you think Joseph possessed?

**P – Stands for personality.** Your personality is unique to you, comprised of patterns of thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. Our personalities often remain fairly consistent throughout our lives, allowing us to act in similar ways in a variety of situations.

God wires us all in unique ways, and when our personalities are influenced by His truth and Spirit, we take on a godly personality. Personality may also be influenced by biological processes and needs.

Every leader and ministry has its unique personality and it ought to be periodically tweaked by the Lord. The “pit” greatly aids this necessary tweaking process.

***E – Stands for experiences.*** We all experience life in our own way and draw measurable knowledge from our life experiences. Life may be viewed as a school room, providing us many teachers and many potential lesson outcomes. Simply having experiences is not enough if we don’t learn from them. How we view life through our personal and professional lenses will influence vision, mission, goals, and action steps.

The projected fruit from experiences is so valuable that many universities give academic credit for it (when verified). What does your SHAPE look like?

I encourage you to complete the brief profile on the next page and contact the [www.ctcnetwork.org](http://www.ctcnetwork.org) if you seek life-and/or leadership coaching support in reaching your next personal or professional goal.

**S** – **Spiritual Gifts** *List your primary spiritual gift:*

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**H** – **Heart’s Passion** *What do you have a passion for?*

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**A** – **Abilities** *What abilities could you use in serving your passion?*

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**P** – **Personality Style** *Which option best represents you?*

( ) *Project/ Structured*                      ( ) *Project/ Unstructured*

( ) *People/ Unstructured*                      ( ) *People/ Structured*

**E** – **Experiences** *List significant life experiences that you have:*

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## UNDERSTANDING YOUR PIT

*It is often your pit experience in any season of your life that serves as an opportunity for personal and professional development and positioning.*

The written account states that Joseph's brothers stripped him of his coat—his father-given identity—and threw him in a pit. This occurred in Dothan which means 'Place of Two Wells.' It is believed that this pit was a dry well. A well without water could be seen as a place of no return, but for a visionary leader, it may be viewed as a place designed for a short stay.

In this dry place, God began the process of fulfilling His purpose for the present generation and generations to come through the developing and positioning of His servant Joseph.

It is probably accurate to say that few—if any—of us have been physically thrown in a pit by family members or peers. But it is also probably accurate that we all have had our share of "pit experiences", whether they are emotional, mental, financial, or spiritual. There are often 'Place of Two Wells' experiences in all of our lives, including leadership life.

Have you ever heard the phrase "*am in the pits*"? It describes negative feelings one experiences when situations are at their

worst. In the pit, we have feelings of *discouragement and despondency*. As a teenager, Joseph was in a physical and emotional pit. At some point, I believe he experienced both feelings.

There are a number of reasons why we find ourselves in the pits of life. Some are the doings of others, some are self-induced, and others are the hand of God. How we get there is important, but not as important as what the Lord can accomplish in our lives during each pit experience. A pit experience may serve as a vehicle and instrument for spiritual growth and maturity. Every pit experience can (and often does) level us off by taking the edge off our temperament and fitting us with a new spirit of empathy.

It's vital to understand the purpose of your pit. Understanding its purpose equips you with the mind-set of the Holy Spirit. God's ways are not ours (see Isaiah 55:9) and if we have the mind-set of the Holy Spirit we can receive God's thoughts to our spirit man.

It's in the pit that we often find the needed focus to see, hear, and perceive what the Spirit is sharing. Revelations outside the pit are often understood through the lenses of past experiences. However, in the pit there is the keenest of forward thinking as we attempt to shorten the distance between heaven and earth, God's thoughts and ways and ours.

Embraced properly, a pit experience affords us an opportunity to better get in touch with ourselves, others, and God.



# TIPS ON GETTING BETTER IN TOUCH

*Getting better in touch with ourselves, others, and  
God helps us develop and maintain the right focus  
for purpose fulfillment.*

## OURSELVES – INTRAPERSONAL COMMUNICATION

**I**ntrapersonal communications could be referred to as our inner monologue. We communicate intrapersonally when we sit down to think, reflect, or solve problems.

Intrapersonal communication may also include dreams, journal writing, studying the word of God, or talking aloud to ourselves.

The pit is a great place to get better in touch with your inner self. When thrown into the pit, Joseph was stripped of his very identity. In the pit, we are stripped of our egos and given an opportunity to learn to trust in the Lord (see Proverbs 3:5-8).

In 2009, I believed the Lord told me to move to Florida, and then to the island nation of Jamaica. Over the years, I had often ministered in both places, and I felt I would be launching a travelling teaching ministry from Florida then Jamaica. I knew I clearly heard the Spirit say Florida and Jamaica.

In Florida, my wife and I started by incorporating a nonprofit organization and serving the leadership of a local church as we went through the process of adjusting our immigration status.

Leaving The Bahamas was difficult, both emotionally and financially, but like the vintage Timex commercial, *“we took a licking but kept on ticking.”*

We found ourselves in a pit experience that lasted a little more than two years, and it served to help us get better in touch with our inner selves. Our cry was, did we hear the Lord clearly and what was He trying to strip us of? Clarity slowly and painfully came to us in our pit experience. Like the biblical character Job, we realized that it is the Lord who gives and takes away, and friends can’t accurately discern why you’re in a pit. Therefore advice can be tainted and limited.

In 2011, Shena and I became lead pastors of that very same church and moved into the church’s parsonage on Jamaica Drive, Key West, Florida. We realized that God was directing us to the church and not to the island of Jamaica. Clarity is a byproduct of pit experiences when pits are understood properly and embraced by faith.

## **OTHERS – INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS**

Interpersonal relationships have to do with our interaction with others. Relationships are designed to take us somewhere. Joseph couldn’t choose the family he was born into, which of course is true for everyone. Some pit experiences on the front-end are the results of dysfunctional families or relationships. Jacob, Joseph’s father, made numerous blunders as a father, and the

favoritism he showed toward Joseph created the environment for sibling jealousy that landed Joseph in a pit. The pit experience often helps us properly evaluate our interpersonal relationships and figure out where they are taking us.

Like Joseph, we are sometimes best served to be temporally separated from our kinfolk and inner circle until we can properly assess the foundational weaknesses in those relationships and be in a position to repair and restore them.

On another note, I have found that it's wise to maintain some form of healthy relationships with persons who are outside your core group and who have arrived at the growth and success destinations that you desire for yourself. This is the value of leadership cross-pollination and almost entirely eliminates the jealousy syndrome.

So, as you wait for your opportunity to serve in your purpose, try serving the vision of someone already successful. These relationships don't always have to be with people who are in your field. Remember, you want to learn concepts and principles from them that may be used in any field of endeavor.

Healthy relationships can provide a source of *equipping*, *encouraging*, and *empowering* encounters. I often see these relationships as potential destination-pointers.

## **GOD – OUR VERTICAL RELATIONSHIP**

Our vertical relationship with God brings all other relationships into proper perspective and balance. When this relationship is healthy and mature, it empowers us to manage the horizontal relationships we engage in.

It's a cross concept: our relationship with God is the vertical aspect and relationships with others are the horizontal. Jesus had a thief on either side of Him as He hung on the cross. One responded correctly, the other foolishly (see Luke 23:39-43).

How we respond to our relationship with God is a determining factor in our sustained success in life and our endeavors. For me, this concept came together when I embraced what Jesus is recorded as saying in Luke 9:23. *"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me."* In the pit, we begin to experience the power of the cross that, if embraced, brings us to the place of a *consecrated, crucified, and committed* life.

Pit experiences are part of the trek toward fulfilling purpose. In the pit, God often works from the inside out. God helps us evaluate ourselves, others, and our relationship with Him. In the pit we receive an opportunity to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling as God works situations and truth into our lives (see Philippians 2:12).

Successful personal development and character formation are associated with embraced pit experiences.

As a child, I often heard my father say that some experiences will either make or break you. I have learned throughout the years that the making is often in the breaking. It's important to remember that each pit experience can be used as part of God's *"breaking and making"* process for your life.



## SOME PIT POINTERS

*Pit pointers may serve to remind us that the pit is designed not only to repair and redesign us, but to be temporary. Here is my list of pit pointers.*

### YOUR PIT IS NOT MEANT TO BE PERMANENT

I am sure it was difficult for Joseph to come to grips with being thrown in a pit, separated from his father's love, protection, and gifts, and unsure of his fate. As the second-guessing and hindsight wisdom kicked in, Joseph probably ran different scenarios through his mind. The “*what if's*” are always a part of the pit experience. Joseph was naïve, immature, and lacked tact, but he was truthful and had a growing faith in God's plan for his life.

The pit provided the first of many defining moments in this teenager's trek. Despite his outward circumstances, the coatless young man remained covered by God's grace. Through the strength of God's grace, he waited for God's mercy to reveal itself concerning his future. Joseph would not allow the pit to become a permanent place in his heart. Therefore, it could not become permanent in his life. What is your disposition like when you discover that you have been thrown in a pit?

On a sunny, spectacular Sunday in November 2013, a group of men from the church attended a NASCAR race in Homestead, Florida. I wanted to see Jimmy Johnson win his sixth title, while most of my friends wanted to watch him lose. The race was eventful with a few crashes and a number of timely pit-stops by the drivers. In the pit-stops, the pit crew recharged the car, did necessary repairs, and catered to the driver. The pit-stops were efficiently calculated, controlled, and completed. I was vividly reminded that pit-stops are never meant to be permanent.

There was a hold-your-breath moment on lap 193 when chain reactions led to Jimmy Johnson's car banging into another car from behind and sustaining fender damage. Uncorrected, it could have led to a tire blowout, but the No.48 crew pulled out the fender on the next pit-stop, and a possible crisis was averted. The rest, as they say, is history.

On that sunny, spectacular Sunday, I learned a lot about pits and their value to those who wish to or are forced to utilize them. It's important to remember that pits are not meant to be permanent. They're there to repair the bent fenders of our lives. One's attitude for and in the pit surely determines one's eventual altitude.

## **YOUR PIT EXPOSES PERSONAL WEAKNESSES**

It's safe to assume that we all have weaknesses. Joseph had his and so do we. Sometimes we enter the pit aware of weaknesses and at other times weaknesses are brought to light in the pit. We have a catchy saying in The Bahamas that "*Pressure busts pipes.*" It means that when water runs through pipes, it exposes cracks and leaks. If the crack or leak is substantial, the pipe will



come apart, and if the pressure of the water is great enough, the pipe can explode. At times, we don't know where the cracks and leaks are in our character until the pressures of life are applied to us.

When cracks and leaks are exposed and not dealt with the danger of us coming apart or blowing up is ever-present. For purpose fulfillment, character cracks must be addressed.

The favoritism displayed by Joseph's father, the immaturity of Joseph, the spirit of hatred displayed by his brothers, and the eternal wisdom of God all helped land the teenager in a pit. In the pit, family and character-related weaknesses are exposed. God used the pit to begin to prepare for family restoration and reconciliation.

The greater value of the pit experience is often measured by the success gained and maturity modeled outside the pit. It might have been too late for Joseph's father to modify his behavior, but not so for Joseph and his brothers.

If you trace the entrance to a pit to the deeds of others, perhaps one day you may be in a position to thank them. Hopefully, they will thank you for your spirit of forgiveness, but understand that the pit experience is used by God to have far-reaching implications for all involved. God is always at work building our futures both individually and collectively inside and outside the pits.

Some personal weaknesses also have the potential to land nations in pits. Leadership is critical to success, and if any level of leadership is corrupt, it derails the success of an organization—even a nation.

National Leader Joshua's defeat at Ai (see Joshua 7) was a national pit experience for Israel. Achan, one of Israel's leaders, took some of the spoils of war, disobeying a direct command of Almighty God. His sin, like Eve's, began with his eyes. Achan saw fine forbidden things, and hid them for later pleasure.

His sin, like ours, not only affects us but everyone connected to our sphere of influence. Achan and his entire family were destroyed for his misdoings. Personal sin in a leader's life will always result in personal and professional failure. No leader is an island—we are all interconnected and interdependent.

When we experience difficulties overcoming simple challenges in our personal lives and professional endeavors, it may not be a result of poor planning or ineffective strategies. It might very well may be the result of secret sin.

Sin, in the form of disobedience and greed, brings defeat to a nation warring against an inferior foe. Sin always eventually lands us in a pit. God, in His mercy and through His grace and wisdom, will present an opportunity to reconcile. (see 2 Chronicles 7:17). If you're in a pit for this reason, embrace God's offer.

## **YOUR PIT IS A SIGN OF POTENTIAL PROMOTION**

There was no water in the pit. It was a dry place. If it was meant to be permanent, God would have outfitted the pit with sustainable commodities. It's a personal and corporate tragedy when we attempt to make permanent the temporary places and positions we encounter.

Failure and fatigue may tempt us to settle and become pit-dwellers, but we must resist. If the pit is not viewed for what it really is, we can be tempted to import accessories into our pits, endeavoring to make them comfortable. It takes keen insight, obedience and a good dose of courage to not settle for comfort zones in our leadership development.

We must constantly lift the lid on our potential. It's difficult to grasp future positions if you settle for having a death grip on the temporary.

Never settle for anything outside of God's perfect will for your life and endeavors. What was God's will and place for you in one season may not be what He has for you in the next. Jesus endured the cross for the joy that was ahead of Him (see Hebrews 12:2). This Scripture encourages us to not only focus on our eventual happiness but also on our motivation. The cross for Jesus—like a pit for us—is meant to be temporary. God promotes us, and in turn, we are better equipped to add value to others. Pits are part of the process to reach promotions. We endure for the sake of what's ahead of us, not for what is presently a part of us.

The finish line is not in the pit—it's on the race track of our trek with God. A race car with fixed fenders, a full tank, and new tires has no value if it remains in the pit. The pit ought to be a sign to the temporary dweller that God is at work repairing and restoring for the promotion that lay ahead.

## **YOUR PIT RELEASES GOD'S PROVIDENTIAL CARE**

Joseph's brother, Reuben, comes to his rescue. God protects us both by His hand and through the influence of others. But

don't mistake His providential care for His divine purpose (see Deuteronomy 29:5). The nation of Israel was provided for in the wilderness, but they were there because of their unbelief.

Pits are challenges in themselves, but the ultimate challenge is developing the proper attitude with respect to your pit encounter and those people used by God in the process. We all face numerous possible pitfalls in our pits. Here are three:

- ✓ *Possibility of Bitterness.* Joseph's brothers were bitter towards their father and Joseph because of the favoritism Joseph enjoyed. Now Joseph was tempted with bitterness toward his brothers, and even perhaps towards his father, for what favoritism brought. Bitterness produces anger and dims our focus, and if not uprooted it will destroy the seed of potential planted in our lives by God. Forgiveness restores sight and quiets the personal spirit (see Genesis 42:21).
- ✓ *Possibility of Despair.* Joseph had no way of knowing how things would turn out. His future looked dimmer with each cry his lungs endured. He hoped his brothers would have a change of heart. He was stripped of his clothes, freedom, and perhaps his dreams. He faced a pitfall of despair. Scripture contains many stories of emerging leaders facing their pitfalls of despair. The prophet Jeremiah is one example (see Lamentations 3:18). The word "*lamentation*" conveys a deep sorrow and anguish. The book of Lamentations is referred to as a funeral song. Jeremiah was in the pits, but then, he found hope. He was rescued from the pitfall

of despair by his faith in God (see Lamentations 3:21-26). Everyone experiences pit seasons, but we must not allow the pitfalls to grip us while we are in our pits.

- ✓ *Possibility of Resentment.* It doesn't take a stretch of imagination to see that Joseph likely resented his brothers. Less certain is whether he might have had some resentment towards God. Often, when we believers are going through difficult times, we are tempted to become angry with ourselves, others, and God. Our pits ought to strengthen our trust and encourage our walk with God—not hinder it. May we embrace the principles found in 1 Peter 2:23.

*The next part of the book is interactive. It asks you to explore Scriptures and complete a profile. You may wish to complete the assignments as devotions if not completing them in a workshop setting.*

SCRIPTURE TO EXPLORE

*Why do you think Benaiah son of Jehoiada went into a pit in 2 Samuel 23:20?*

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*Where does a leader find the power to accomplish feats to Benaiah's?*

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## SCRIPTURE TO EXPLORE

*Compare Proverbs 3:4-6 and Philippians 4:12-13. What do these verses have in common?*

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## SCRIPTURE TO EXPLORE

*Read 1 Corinthians 10:13. Explain the importance of this verse as it relates to adversity.*

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## DIGGING DEEP

Overcoming adversity is one characteristic of temporary pit-dwellers. It is impossible to fulfill God's plan and purpose for our lives as it relates to leadership without the ability to overcome personal and professional adversity.

Our leadership roles present us with numerous opportunities in this area. Each stage or season of development as leaders may bring new issues that tend to cloud our thinking and hinder us, but we must continue to overcome.

During your personal study time, look up and list Scriptural references for the following topics and complete the exercise. This may seem difficult, but it really is not. You can get help in finding the Scriptures from a Bible concordance, a teacher, others, or the Internet. Discuss your findings with a friend. You may want to complete the entire exercise with a friend.

### ❖ **Godly Perseverance**

1. Scripture Text \_\_\_\_\_

2. Scripture Text \_\_\_\_\_

3. Scripture Text \_\_\_\_\_



a) What is godly perseverance?

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b) Name two biblical characters who displayed godly perseverance:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

c) Why is godly perseverance necessary for purpose fulfillment?  
Give an example.

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❖ **Godly Perspective**

1. Scripture Text \_\_\_\_\_

2. Scripture Text \_\_\_\_\_

3. Scripture Text \_\_\_\_\_

a) What is godly perspective?

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b) Give a biblical example of godly perspective.

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c) Give a biblical example of how godly perspective changed a situation.

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## EVALUATE THE STEP

**T**o evaluate means to look over or inspect and see the good and the bad in something. When we evaluate, we attempt to discover how we should respond in a godly manner to our pit seasons.

Joseph gives us a vivid example of how we can trust in God regardless of the situation we face. However, in this evaluation process, you will briefly evaluate other biblical leaders and their responses to difficult situations.

This evaluation step is designed to assist you in confronting any hindrances that may have a grip on your life and prevent you from properly responding to desired purpose fulfillment in a personal or professional matter.

### INSPIRING LEADERSHIP CHARACTERS

The leaders highlighted all show a remarkable depth of character. Regardless of the situational challenges, they overcome them with unwavering faith in God and a belief that they are embarking on a fulfilling purpose.

Any leader today can learn from these ordinary people who accomplished extraordinary feats. Successful leaders all display a high level of conviction and determination in and out of the pits of life.

LEADERS FACING THEIR PITS

❖ *Noah is labeled by God as being different than everyone in his generation. How and why was he different? (see Genesis 6)*

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❖ *Explain a leadership situation that required you to stand alone. What was the result?*

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❖ *David faced his giant with a godly perspective. What were his results? (see 1 Samuel 17)*

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❖ *How was David qualified for this encounter?*

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❖ *John the Baptist confronted ineffective leaders of his day. What do you think he meant in his remarks? (see Matthew 3)*

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❖ *Have you ever confronted leaders in a fashion similar to John? What was the final result?*

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❖ *Peter denies Jesus in front of a few people, but later preaches to thousands. What do you think changed in Peter’s life for this positive outcome? (see Acts 2)*

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❖ *Where do leaders find the strength to overcome personal and professional failures?*

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# PERSONAL DISCOVERY

❖ *What concerns you the most about personal pit encounters?*

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❖ *What concerns you the most about professional pit encounters?*

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❖ *Name three persons who you feel would give you godly advice in regard to this first step. Make an appointment to see at least one and seek advice on steps to overcome that which most concerns you about pit encounters.*

1. 

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2. 

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3. 

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## PRACTICE THE STEP

**A**s we learn and develop steps to success, it is important to consistently walk in these steps. By practicing, they become a part of our everyday life and ministry. The step we have just studied is the step *of putting it together in our pit experience*. How can we practice this step? We practice it by consistently evaluating our thoughts, relationships, and walk with the Lord.

Over the next few days conduct a daily personal inventory, allowing the Holy Spirit to search the inward parts, revealing what is in your heart. As revelation comes, write down your personal adjustments.

### YOUR PERSONAL ADJUSTMENTS

List 10 adjustments you will make to ensure you are successful in your pit experience. Be specific.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_



7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_

## **PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE**

It is important to practice this exercise of 10 and continually make necessary adjustments to ensure you continue developing in your process of *'putting it together.'* God is interested in us achieving success in our personal lives and ministry endeavors.

Practice this important step to success, maximize your opportunities, and the manage challenges that emerge in your life and ministry. Practice still makes perfect.



## SEE THE SUCCESS

Success may be both immediate and progressive. True success means responding to the call and to the challenges we receive in a fashion that is pleasing to God. Success is very much godly results—it's outcome-focused. Today, after years of practicing the step of *putting it together*, my intra-and inter-personal relationships are healthier than ever, and my walk with the Lord is deeper. As you commit your ways to the Lord you must believe that the word of God and the work of the Holy Spirit will ensure that the proper discernment is employed.

I encourage you to follow through on further developing this step in your personal life and leadership endeavors. You may wish to keep a journal. Document your steps, pause at times to reflect, re-adjust, and ready yourself for future success. Practice the step and see the success!



# FULFILLING PURPOSE PERSONAL AUDIT

Please read each of the following statements. Circle the number that best describes how true each statement is for you.

## KNOWING AND DEVELOPING

- 1.** I know my life's purpose and am fully engaged in fulfilling it.
  1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False
  
- 2.** I know my core team's life purposes and am fully engaged in coaching them to success.
  1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False
  
- 3.** I am always aware of the spiritual gifts of my core team and I always encourage their use.
  1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False

- 4.** I am always willing to develop my abilities regardless of the personal sacrifice involved.
  1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False
  
- 5.** I am always willing to develop the abilities of my core team regardless of the personal and professional sacrifices involved.
  1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False

## **UNDERSTANDING AND APPLYING**

- 1.** I fully understand the value of healthy intra-personal communication and I always practice it.
  1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False
  
- 2.** I always manage my ministry-related interpersonal relationship well.
  1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False

- 3.** I always strive to develop meaningful cross-pollination leadership relationships.
  1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False
  
- 4.** My relationship with the Lord always grows during my pit experiences. I always wait patiently on God's timing for my endeavors.
  1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False
  
- 5.** I always apply the clarity gained in the pit experience outside the pit.
  1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False

## **RECOGNIZING AND CONFRONTING**

- 1.** I am always able to recognize situational triggers in my personal life and apply my heart towards wisdom.
  1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False

- 2.** I coach my core team in recognizing situational triggers and serve as a mentor when asked.
  1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False
  
- 3.** I am always able to recognize my failures and seek restoration during a pit experience.
  1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False
  
- 4.** I always confront sin in my core team when recognized.
  1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False
  
- 5.** I always recognize the grace of God and allow it to be applied to myself and my core team.
  1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False

## TOTAL YOUR SCORE

Add the numbers and place them in the spaces provided. Then multiply them by the given number.

**True = 1**

**More true than false = 2**

**More false than true = 3**

**False = 4**

True 1 × \_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_

More true than false 2 × \_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_

More false than true 3 × \_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_

False 4 × \_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_

Add the numbers together and read the results of your audit.

**Total**\_\_\_\_\_

## IF YOUR TOTAL SCORE IS

- 15-25:** All three categories are engrained in your personal life and leadership role.
- 26-35:** You are practicing them well. If your total score is closer to 35, you must pay more attention to one or more categories.
- 36-45:** You must continue to work on developing all concepts.
- 46-60:** Others probably do not view you as an effective leader. You may want to rethink your motives for service.



# PERSONAL IMPROVEMENT STEPS

The purpose of this exercise is to identify areas that need improvement and develop a plan to address them.

**STEP ONE:** List an area where your score is a 3 or 4.

## KNOWING AND DEVELOPING

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My score is a \_\_\_\_

**STEP TWO:** Develop a plan for personal improvement. You may refer to your list of 10 personal adjustments for assistance in developing the plan.



## PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

[illegible]



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---

My score is a \_\_\_\_

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[illegible]



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---

My score is a \_\_\_\_

**STEP TWO:** Develop a plan for personal improvement. You may refer to your list of 10 personal adjustments for assistance in developing the plan.

## PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

[illegible]

You have now completed your personal development plan. As you begin to implement your plan, it will be wise to continually review it and seek guidance from the Holy Spirit. Your plan will help you move forward in your walk in the Spirit. It is important to strengthen your weak areas and build on your strengths. This process may be repeated as necessary.

## THE SECOND STEP

# Potiphar's

**H**oning Skills

**O**vercoming Obstacles

**U**nderstanding Favor

**S**piritual Sensitivity

**E**xit Strategies







## STATE THE STEP

A “Potiphar’s HOUSE” will always provide emerging leaders with the environment, opportunities, and challenges necessary for personal and professional development.

## TEACH THE STEP

Joseph was removed from a dark and dirty pit by his brothers and sold as a common slave to hardened slave traders. He was taken to Egypt and subsequently sold to Potiphar, an Egyptian officer of Pharaoh.

Stripped of his coat of many colors representing the favored son of an aging father, Joseph was first fitted with the attire of a slave intransient, and then that of a common house slave. Outer garments may depict our stations in life, but they should never depict our God-given identity and destination.

I am certain Joseph had doubts about what his future held; however, his new position and environment provided the necessary setting for development of character and skill, as well as the displaying of divine and human favor. His new position and environment also provided an exit to the next place on his trek from the pit to the palace, and ultimately purpose fulfillment.

The journey of fulfilling purpose has to start somewhere—even if it’s a place of suffering, uncertainty, and high stakes. We may have some control over the length of stay in each place, but in the end God is in control of the overall timeline. Therefore, it is wise to allow Him to design or authorize the circumstances necessary for successfully passing through each leg of the journey.

Like Joseph, we may initially determine that things are getting worse when removed from our pit. But, over time, we come to see the hand of God in our situation as we are outfitted with tools for both present and future success opportunities. Like Joseph, we must allow character to shine through every outward disadvantage we face. Godly character will gain us influence and favor, and may even shorten our stay. It’s important to know and remember that all things work together for the good for those who are committed to serving Almighty God and fulfilling His purpose (see Romans 8:28).

Potiphar is described as the “captain of the bodyguard.” It is believed that Potiphar was a member of an elite squad of military men and served as the “chief of the executioners.” Potiphar had the power of life and death in his hands. He was no master to test boundaries with, but was one to fear, respect, and obey.

I have often found in my life that after a pit experience, I am for a season placed in an environment and position where the stakes are high and the rules are well defined. For me, this provides an extra incentive to focus and measure up to internal and external expectations. Joseph not only survived his high-pressure environment, he thrived in it. God was with him.

This second step “Potiphar’s House” presents in an acronym form five vital elements necessary for fulfilling godly purpose:

- ✓ **H** – honing skills
- ✓ **O** – overcoming obstacles
- ✓ **U** – understanding favor
- ✓ **S** – spiritual sensitivity
- ✓ **E** – exist strategies



## HONING SKILLS

*A skill may be viewed as an ability that has been refined or sharpened. Joseph was provided an opportunity for skill honing.*

*And Joseph was brought down to Egypt; and Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him of the hands of the Ishmeelites, which had brought him down thither. And the Lord was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian. And his master saw that the Lord was with him, and that the Lord made all that he did to prosper in his hand. And Joseph found grace in his sight, and he served him: and he made him overseer over his house, and all that he had he put into his hand.*

—Genesis 39:1-4

There is a difference between ability and skill. A person may have the ability to jump high, but not willing or afforded the opportunity to develop the skill necessary to be a world-class high jumper. However, a person may or may not have natural tendencies or recognizable abilities of a manager or leader, but can acquire the skills necessary to become successful in either one. Managerial and leadership success is within the grasp of everyone.

It is true we might not be absolutely sure what Joseph's natural abilities were; however, upon examination of the overall account of his life, we can agree that he acquired the skill-set necessary for effectively managing and leading. History paints a picture of success.

It's important to look at your present circumstances and the situations they have presented through the lenses of the Holy Spirit. Ask why and what value may they present? As I look over my life, I can recognize some environments I wanted to escape that actually provided great opportunities for skill development and purpose fulfillment.

Like many of you reading this book, I was not in a position as a youth to enjoy ongoing opportunities for advanced studies, so I learned a lot through my version of the *"school of hard knocks,"* sports, limited career opportunities, and from leaders who took a vested interest in my personal and leadership development.

For example, my experiences as a shipping agent and a store clerk afforded me the opportunities to interact with diverse cultures. This greatly aided in my understanding of world views and improved my communication skills. Also, volunteering on days off at the church I attended provided opportunities to learn and glean from a successful leader. I am eternally grateful for my informal training.

Over the years, every ministry, community, and educational role has added value to my life and helped prepare me for what I am now doing. My advice is, see the skill honing and purpose fulfillment potential in your "HOUSE" experiences and commit to their realization.

Success is achieved as managerial and leadership skills are honed in at least the following two areas:

## TIME MANAGEMENT

There are only a few things we can do with time. Some waste it, others kill or spend it, but the correct use of time is to invest it. Time for a successful person or organization always brings a return on its investment. I am sure if we sample leaders in any field of endeavor, they would all agree that one of their greatest daily needs is for more time. Time is a precious commodity.

Psalm 90:10 states that we are given seventy years or eighty if our strength endures. Using seventy as a measuring point, my seven-year-old granddaughter has already lived ten percent of her life, and I have at fifty-six lived a whopping eighty percent. I didn't write this to alarm anyone, but to remind us of the value of time and the need for focus.

My personal approach to time management always begins with a simple prayer. *"Lord teach me to number my days and apply my heart to wisdom"* (see Psalm 90:12). Here's an acronym for time:

**T** – Time consciousness is not optional for a leader—it's a must. Effective leaders are always aware of how they invest their time. Joseph properly invested his time even though he was in a place and situation not of his choosing. This would have required a high level of emotional discipline and a commitment to purpose fulfillment. He had to maintain a keen focus.

Joseph invested his time wisely. He didn't invest his time on his hurts and disappointments, but on what was now required of him. The front windshield of an automobile is larger than the rear for a purpose. What's ahead of us and where we are going is more important than what is behind and where we have been. That's one of the reasons law enforcement and emergency vehicles have sirens. They alert us to look behind. It's necessary to look in the rear at times. However, the majority of our time ought to be invested on our present and preferred futures. When it's time to look back, we will be alerted by the Holy Spirit.

When I turned fifty, I decided that each subsequent birthday I would count backwards. This shift in thinking has brought a greater time consciousness. I view my responsibilities as a son, brother, husband, father, grandfather, and leader in a more focused, outcome-driven way. As I count down toward a heavenly bound blast off, as opposed to up toward retirement, I always strive to maximize the perceived time afforded me and invest in fulfilling purpose in the above-mentioned roles. Fulfilling purpose is my entire focus.

The skill of time consciousness greatly aids priority evaluations and encourages the setting of deadlines. Deadlines wisely adhered to become accountability partners. It's impossible to leave a godly legacy without effective time management skills.

- I – Identify personal time wasters. We all have time wasters in our personal and professional lives. A time waster may be as simple as leaving the *Facebook instant messenger* on as you try to write an important document, or as complex as

constantly allowing others to set your priorities because of their selfish agendas. It's important to determine what things unnecessarily consume our time and begin eliminating them one by one.

As managerial and leadership responsibilities increase, it will be necessary to identify work-related tasks that are eating up time that could be better invested on tasks of higher potential reward. This requires a commitment to delegation. We should always be adjusting our priorities as we develop and be willing to trust and delegate to competent members of our teams.

How we measure competence may differ, but if we are to eliminate time wasters at each responsibility level, then we must have a measuring strategy. Remember, one goal of personal time management is to invest in tasks and projects that bring the highest return. Another is the development of your team. It takes a team to fulfill a dream.

- M** – Manage your thoughts. No leader enjoys lasting success who leads with an undisciplined mind. A double-minded leader is unreliable and becomes unstable in all endeavors (see James 1:8). This type of leader exhibits restlessness and uncertainty in thought and often appears confused in action. Like a well-prepared carpenter, a leader can and must secure a proper tool box. The skill to manage thoughts is one well-valued and employed tool of successful leaders. If our tool boxes are minus discipline, we will derail the plan of God for us and the groups we lead.



Joseph was a focused, disciplined thinker. He managed his thoughts successfully. He understood where he was and what was presently expected of him by his God and Potiphar. Maintaining focus (*“follow one course until successful”*) allows us to major on majors and minor on minors. Another value is that it gives us the ability to dismiss good causes in order to embrace the best ones. This in turn enables us to fulfill the purposes God has called us to (see Philippians 3:12) and not simply the attractive opportunities we see. True success is to take hold of what God took hold of us for in a disciplined, focused manner.

- E –** Encourage assistance from your team. A significant part of effective time management is the utilization of team members. Successful leaders, by their training, mentoring, and hiring practices, secure a proficient support team. It is easy to get wrapped up in your vision and responsibilities and end up with tunnel vision. Or develop the view that no one else is qualified to carry some of the work load. We must create and maintain an environment where team work is encouraged and celebrated.

The scriptural account does not say, but I believe, Joseph was successful in part to the team he assembled around him. Joseph was a leader that managed his master's resources well (see Genesis 39:6). The greatest resource any leader has is human resources—your team. Part of managing others well is empowering them or giving them opportunities to use their skills. As they develop, so does the potential for continual success.

Effective leaders not only evaluate themselves by what they can accomplish on their own, but more importantly by what they can get done with and through others. The great leader Moses was introduced to this principle (see Exodus 18:17-27) by his father-in-law, Jethro. Moses followed Jethro's advice and developed an efficient team. He learned how to delegate the work load to others and position himself and his team for greater success. Is this not the desired outcome of leadership time management? I think so.

## RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

We are told in the scriptural account that everything inside and outside the house, except Potiphar's wife, was put under Joseph's watchful eye. He was entrusted with managing and growing his master's resources. Effective leaders develop the skill to accomplish both. A great portion of the resources entrusted to leaders today is money, and the Bible has more to say about money than one would think.

The Bible contains more than 2,000 verses on money and possessions. For example, sixteen out of thirty-eight of Jesus's parables deal with money and possessions matters. Joseph's overall success was due in part to his attitude and approach to managing the resources entrusted to him.

Joseph understood the biblical principle of stewardship, that God is the owner of everything. As leaders, it's vital that we understand this and manage from a godly disposition. Everything belongs to God, and our role is to manage it all for

His glory (see 1Corinthians 4:2) and not ours. Let me briefly share three biblical principles of stewardship.

**Ownership** – Psalm 24 begins by stating that everything and everyone belongs to God. The book of Genesis among other things informs us that God put man in the Garden of Eden to work it and care for it. Adam and Eve were to be caretakers of the garden and everything they were given dominion over. It is easy to confuse our roles. Even though we have dominion power, we must remember, we lead from the perspective of God's will, not ours. God is the owner and we are to function as His managers. Our desire must always be to fulfill His.

We were created to work and manage, so effective stewardship is being faithful regarding the administration of everything placed under our control. Joseph managed well, and that was recognized by his heavenly *Father* and earthly *master*. He was favored for it.

I constantly remind myself that God has the right of reverter or what is known as "*reverter rights*." This legal term simply means for the leader that God can take back what is given as He wishes or if His terms are not met. Job understood this principle (see Job 1:21). God can give and take away because He is sovereign. He answers to nobody.

The gift of our soul (mind, will, and emotions) is the ultimate resource entrusted to us. We must manage this resource in light of eternity (see Luke 12:20). It's rather easy with the demands of leadership to lose focus on the eternal because of the pressing concerns of the temporal. The Holy Spirit helps us maintain the needed balance. We must learn to rely on Him.

**Accountability** – As managers and leaders, we will give an account to God for how we understood Him, and managed resources, abilities, and opportunities entrusted to our care. This is the axiom taught by the *“Parables of the Talents”* (Matthew 25:14-30). Everyone is entrusted with something, and what we are entrusted with is given in measure to our abilities and skills. We can expect to realize a one hundred percent increase. This is a tall, but attainable order.

What is most interesting in this parable is that the unwise servant didn’t comprehend the nature of his master, therefore, he could not properly understand his responsibility with the resources entrusted to him. He believed his master was in the habit of reaping where he didn’t sow, so he hid the talent out of fear. He was unwise in his actions because of an incorrect assumption. This produced fear as the basis of the employer-employee relationship. This was doomed to fail.

We are not to operate from a base of fear, but rather from a place of ability, love, and soundness of mind (see 2 Timothy 1:7). The other servants had a correct read on their master and managed from that perspective. What’s your understanding of God and your responsibility of the things entrusted to you? Joseph correctly understood the nature of God and managed faithfully.

**Reward** – Colossians 3:23-24 says, *“And whatever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.”* As managers and leaders, we must embrace a view of biblical stewardship that goes beyond a local church concept. Many managers and leaders are employed outside

the local church or organizational setting. Our stewardship is designed to connect everything we do with the building of the Kingdom of God here on earth. We work and serve as if it's always unto the Lord, which in essence it is. Joseph, like many today, faithfully served in a workplace environment. He and Potiphar were both rewarded for his faithful stewardship.

Potiphar knew God was with his slave because of the increase gained. However, for the most part, the accumulation of rewards is a personal responsibility. We are encouraged to lay up for ourselves treasures in heaven. This is accomplished by serving God with right motives and attitudes. Rewards in heaven are not subject to decay or thieves (see Matthew 6:19-21). God rewards faithful service in house, field, and into eternity!

Rewards are important. However, many believers shy away from discussing the topic. We need not approach it as if for some reason the desire for rewards makes us immature or carnal. We can't earn our salvation, but we can secure rewards. We will be judged and rewarded according to what we have done. (see 2 Corinthians 5:9-10).

*Please complete the Scripture To Explore section before moving to the next chapter.*

SCRIPTURE TO EXPLORE

*What does Proverbs 22:29 say about skillful workers?*

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*Why are skill proficiency and success connected? Give an example.*

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# SCRIPTURE TO EXPLORE

*Explain the value of 1Corthintians 10:31 as it relates to time and resource management.*

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*Why is it important to consider our motives and goals in the use of time?*

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## OVERCOMING OBSTACLES

*Joseph was successful in part because of his dexterity to overcome the initial obstacles he faced in Potiphar's House.*

*And Joseph was brought down to Egypt; and Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him of the hands of the Ishmeelites, which had brought him down thither. And the Lord was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian. And his master saw that the Lord was with him, and that the Lord made all that he did to prosper in his hand. And Joseph found grace in his sight, and he served him: and he made him overseer over his house, and all that he had he put into his hand.*

—Genesis 39:1-4

Joseph found himself in a country he didn't know. Egypt presented him with the obstacles of an unfamiliar culture and language. This is not what he envisioned as the outcome of his dreams. It was an unexpected turn of events. Joseph the dreamer faced these potentially crippling obstacles, along with his understandable hurt, and found the strength to embrace a God-given perspective. Seeing our obstacles from God's view and not ours is an absolute must if we are to be successful. Our list of obstacles may be different than Joseph's, but what is the same is that we all have obstacles in our path to fulfilling



purpose. We can't achieve our dreams if we don't overcome our obstacles.

Successfully overcoming obstacles for a leader can be likened to the skill-set a hurdler has for clearing hurdles. Obstacles, like hurdles, are a part of the course we navigate through to fulfilling purpose. As a teenage athlete, I had many sporting heroes, but my favorite was Edwin Corley Moses. Edwin was an American track and field specialist in the 400 m hurdles who won 107 consecutive finals.

Edwin Moses employed a unique technique. He would take a consistent thirteen steps between each of the hurdles. This technique allowed him to pull away from his rivals in the second half of the race as they changed their stride patterns. He did not run against his opponents or the clock. He simply ran his system. At one point in his career, he didn't lose a race for nine years, nine months, and nine days.

Like Edwin Moses, managers and leaders must develop and maintain a system. Even if we brush or knock down a hurdle, we can stay on stride by *God's grace*, an *effective system*, and *good composure*. Our obstacles may not be as measurable as Edwin's were, and our system may not be as simple as his, but we do need a workable system if we are to be successful.

Back to Joseph. He was in a place not of his choosing, exposed to an unfamiliar culture, and needed to find an adequate way to communicate. He needed to develop a system. Effective leaders develop ways to solve problems, overcome obstacles, and correct mistakes. Everyone ought to have a personal "*Overcoming Obstacles*" system. I believe Joseph's personal system contained at least these three elements:

**Embrace** – Joseph was in a place and situation not of his liking or choosing. It was not his dream position. It is safe to assume he was emotionally distraught and confused. Just a few days earlier, he was enjoying the perks of being a favorite son, and now he is a common house slave in a distant land. As he pondered what his fate might be, he realized there were limited choices. Would he resist his new title of slave and attempt escape? Would he refuse to accept his plight and run the risk of punishment? Would he embrace his new station in life, assured that somehow and someday God was in it?

How we interpret the events of our lives will greatly determine the outcomes to the challenges we face. As believers, we are admonished to live our lives through the God-shaped lens of faith, and not by what we naturally see (see 2 Corinthians 5:7). This is not to say that we ought to dismiss what we see or feel, but that we should interpret meaning, impact, and purpose through the lens of faith. Like Joseph, our initial decisions will help create personal systems for dealing with the present and future obstacles of life.

We all have had jobs and situations that were not the best. Have you ever felt like a slave to your job? Joseph literally was. The text does not say how Joseph reached inner resolve, but we know he did. We also don't know from the limited account how long Joseph served before he was seen as successful. But what is known is that Joseph embraced his situation, was promoted, and honed skills necessary for both the now of his life and the later. When we embrace uncomfortable situations, we are in essence allowing God an opportunity to make known His will for our lives as our faith is being stretched.

Looking at the complete picture of Joseph's life, it's easy to appreciate how time invested in Potiphar's House provided the setting and occasions conducive for managerial and leadership development (see Romans 8:28). This was unlikely to happen in Jacob's house where he was favored and sheltered. If you believe God has given you a dream of your future, and you presently have an undesirable job, try looking at your job through Joseph's lens. Joseph saw limited options, but he also saw an unlimited God.

Many of us live in nations that afford an abundance of job opportunities. This is a blessing, but could also become a curse if we develop a restless spirit. We will never hone an effective skill-set if we have a habit of prematurely abandoning the present opportunities afforded us because of the obstacles we encounter. Sometimes we have to let it run its course.

Fresh out of high school, my best friend and I went job hunting and secured employment at the same establishment. He was in the computer room; I worked in the warehouse. Every day, I went to work in overalls, lifting boxes, and packing shelves, while he sat in an open office dressed in slacks, shirt, and tie. There was some jealousy on my part, but as a young believer I recalled:

Ecclesiastes 9:10. *"Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest."*

Ecclesiastes 9:10 during that season spoke to me concerning embracing where I was and what God could do if my approach and attitude were godly. I changed my attitude, embraced the

opportunity afforded me, and learned the business from the ground, or should I say the warehouse, up. I was rewarded with a number of promotions, while overcoming my jealousy.

Successfully hurdling my obstacle of jealousy would not have been possible if my initial reasoning of why I was placed in the warehouse didn't give way to absolute faith in God and His word. That hurdle cleared still serves me well today.

*“Start where you are”* has become the motto for my *“Overcoming Obstacles”* personal system. In the end, that job served as the catalyst for meeting my wife, Shena, and for positioning us for ministry. I discovered when you embrace your situation with the right attitude and rock-solid faith, it often warmly embraces you back.

**Engage** – Joseph not only had to engage his new position but also the culture it was nested in if he wanted to survive, much less be successful. He was from a rural culture and now found himself a slave under the roof of a sophisticated master. The adjustments he faced must have been extreme. It is always tempting to isolate from the different cultures we are being exposed to, but it's virtually impossible to enhance godly influence that way.

In order for Joseph to function as the manager of all his master owned, minus his wife, he would have to understand and interact with the different cultures he would be exposed to. The range would be from the culture of slavery to that of the workplace, and everything in between. Potiphar observed that God was with Joseph. As we engage our cultures, godly success is not derived from conformity. But as a result of the righteousness we exhibit in our stations of life.

Christian managers and leaders in the workplace would be the first to tell you that their culture is different from that of the church. We can declare that we are in the world, but not of the world and live on the fringes of society. Or we can take a closer look at cultural engagement, and what it may entail for us and the groups we lead. And engage. Cultural engagement is a relatively hot topic today and means different things to varying groups.

This three-fold approach to cultural engagement adequately defines what I think cultural engagement is:

***Reject what is evil.*** Rejecting what is evil in culture must be coupled with pointing to what should be, and offering a biblical solution. We are obligated to offer a biblical way. On the eve of His crucifixion, Jesus prays to His Father in John 17:14-19. These verses offer three principles:

*Jesus and His disciples are not of this world.* Believers are not of the world system. Their minds have been transformed by God's word. They operate by kingdom principles, and not by the philosophies of man. Believers embrace God's system, which is unchanging in an ever-changing world. They live by eternal God-given, never-changing principles.

*Jesus and His disciples are sent into the world.* Believers are sent into the world to effect change. They are change agents. Believers are commanded to go and make disciples of all people groups (see Matthew 28:19-20). Jesus said that the well don't need a physician, just the sick (see Luke 5:31). Our going into the world is to bring healing and reconciliation to the spiritually sick among us.

*Jesus prayed for His disciples to be kept from the evil one.* Believers are in the world as change agents, but must not allow the world system to get into them. Jesus prayed that believers be kept from the evil one and his influence. This is important if believers are to have godly influence in the various pillars of society.

Those who embrace Jesus are sent into the world to engage it. They are sent on the mission of advancing the gospel through discipleship and community transformation. They are sent to fulfill purpose—not theirs, but God’s.

***Receive what is good.*** There are times when believers can and ought to walk beside the community, acknowledging the good proposed and being accomplished. Sound efforts in social reforms, education, and environmental projects, to name a few, ought to be supported. Joseph was a slave, but recognized the good in his situation, engaged it, and walked in godly wisdom and integrity.

We are to receive the good without compromising our beliefs. Titus 2:11-12 is a fundamental Scripture for how I maintain balance. It explains the reach and teach of the grace of God:

- ✓ God’s grace has appeared to all.
- ✓ God’s grace brings salvation.
- ✓ God’s grace teaches us what to deny.
- ✓ God’s grace teaches us how to live.

We are the salt of the earth (see Matthew 5:13). Salt of the earth is a metaphor that is meant to paint a picture of believers purifying and preserving the earth. As the salt of the

earth, we are required to show our community that the good is not a result of social reform or the genius of man, but is the outworking of godly principles and the overall plan of God for mankind.

In doing this, we are to walk in wisdom and let our words always be seasoned with salt (see Colossians 4: 5-6). Speaking words seasoned with salt is to operate in spiritual wisdom. Spiritual wisdom only comes from above where all pure things originate. Spiritual wisdom is like salt in that it preserves.

***Redeem what is lost or broken.*** Redemption is a direct application of the gospel to the culture in which we live and nurture our families. There are many areas that are broken in our society mainly because of biblical truth that has been lost and replaced with humanism and selfishness.

We should believe that we can see God in Christ redeeming our communities through the work of atonement, and the obedience of His church.

2 Corinthians 5:19, states that God was in Christ “reconciling” the world to himself. The Greek word for reconciling refers to an exchange of equivalent values, a settling of accounts, with the goal being reconciliation of parties. Man’s alienation from God is likened to a situation of financial debt. God wants to cancel the debt.

## SOME BIBLICAL EXAMPLES OF ENGAGING CULTURE

- ✓ *Jesus* thought-provoking the culture by interacting with a Samaritan woman at Jacob’s well (see John 4).

- ✓ *Joseph* engaging his new culture in Egypt and instituting a national food conservation program (see Genesis 47).
- ✓ *Jeremiah* in exile, seeking the peace and prosperity of the city in which God's people found themselves (see Jeremiah 29).
- ✓ *Daniel* qualifying to function in the king's palace in pagan Babylon (see Daniel 1).

**Educate** – Joseph didn't understand the Egyptian language. He had to overcome this obstacle if he wished to be successful. You can embrace and engage, but if you can't communicate, you will experience limited success in your personal and corporate endeavors.

Recently on a visit to the Dominican Republic, I felt the Spirit's tug to embrace a ministry opportunity there. My messages and coaching sessions during the trip were translated for me, but it left me with an unsettling feeling. I was confident they were translated accurately, but because of the intense burden I felt and my commitment to future ministry on the island I desperately wanted to communicate from my lips to their ears. I had never experienced this emotional and spiritual intensity in a non-speaking English nation before.

When we commit to embrace and engage for the long term, it demands of us the commitment to improve weak areas. That night in my hotel room, I prayed a simple prayer asking the Lord to help me grasp the language. I suspect Joseph prayed a similar one.



## TWO BENEFITS OF EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

### ***Empowers Diversity***

Like Joseph, it's important for us to recognize that good communication skills assist in reducing the barriers and obstacles erected because of cultural, language, and other differences.

When we embrace communication training at any level, we position ourselves for greater opportunities for personal and professional growth. Competence puts us in an educated position to celebrate diversity. *Proverbs 16:23: The heart of the wise teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips.*

Companies and organizations that employ bilingual employees will almost instantly gain a distinct advantage in the local and international marketplace. Bilingual companies automatically enlarge their target group. My intense burden for effective communication with those in the Dominican Republic was mutual. By the end of the trip, I was asked if my books were available in Spanish. They soon will be.

Companies, ministries, and organizations can avoid many cultural hiccups by providing basic education and training in the areas of cultural diversity and effective communication skills. Along with the above mentioned, it increases workplace morale.

### ***Equips Teams***

Effective communication assists in the creation of proficient teams. I am sure part of Joseph's education came from on-

the-job training. Perhaps another slave helped groom him in cultural decorum and effective communication skills, or maybe he was given an Egyptian tutor. Joseph's future was in God's hands, his opportunity in Potiphar's, and his training in his team's hands. It takes a team to complete a dream. Joseph was being exposed to managerial and leadership principles that would serve him well for his entire life.

When communication is clear, everyone knows what's expected of them and will be better prepared to stay in their lanes. Effective communication fosters positive relationships, which in turn is one determining factor for personal and professional success.

Ecclesiastes 4: 9-12 points out some advantages of working as a team:

- ✓ Productivity is higher, therefore rewards are greater, see verse 9.
- ✓ Safety is provided in team dynamics, see verse 10.
- ✓ Companionship and comfort is provided in a team environment, see verse 11.
- ✓ Challenges are overcome by teams, see verse 12.

*Please complete the Scripture To Explore section before moving to the next chapter.*

SCRIPTURE TO EXPLORE

*When believers face obstacles that seem insurmountable, according to Zechariah 4:5, where does strength come from?*

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*Using the principle conveyed in the above Scripture, give an example of how you cleared a hurdle.*

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# SCRIPTURE TO EXPLORE

*According to 1 John 5:4, how can we overcome the world and our obstacles?*

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*What is your concept of an overcomer? Give a biblical example other than Joseph.*

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## UNDERSTANDING FAVOR

*Joseph was obedient to God in all things and it resulted in a powerful testimony that secured divine and human favor in and beyond Potiphar's House.*

*And his master saw that the Lord was with him, and that the Lord made all that he did to prosper in his hand. And Joseph found grace in his sight, and he served him: and he made him overseer over his house, and all that he had he put into his hand. And it came to pass from the time that he had made him overseer in his house, and over all that he had, that the Lord blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; and the blessing of the Lord was upon all that he had in the house, and in the field. And he left all that he had in Joseph's hand; and he knew not ought he had, save the bread which he did eat. And Joseph was a goodly person, and well favoured.*

—Genesis 39:3-6

Joseph maintained a great disposition and was constantly developing his skills, but the main reason for his continued success was God. God was intimately involved in his life, and it became apparent, especially to Potiphar. Potiphar saw something that testified to God being present with Joseph. He saw success. The foundation for Joseph's favor was obedience (see Isaiah 1:19). Willingness and obedience will always result

in success. Joseph had a willingness to embrace his new station in life regardless of the challenges it presented. This willingness to embrace was validated by his obedience to God and Potiphar.

I believe Potiphar observed the poise of a youth who should have been overwhelmed by his circumstances but to the contrary was productive—so productive, that whatever he did prospered. Now that’s true success. Potiphar greatly benefited from having Joseph around. It not only resulted in success within his home, but also outside the home. In time, Potiphar only concerned himself with what meals he wanted prepared.

Divine favor has far-reaching effects. It’s like a ripple in a stream—it widens. Potiphar was wise to attribute his new-found success with the arrival and positioning of his house slave Joseph. It’s amazing the value of one favored person in your employ.

It is wise to surround yourself with favored people. Potiphar’s new-found success was attributed to the steadying and guiding hand of God in Joseph’s life. Should this not be how we secure success? The right people in the right places are our greatest assets as leaders.

Personal and professional success is an effective witnessing tool to our faith in God. Joseph’s master recognizing the influence of the Hebrews’ God is a powerful example of being a light in a dark place (see Matthew 5:14-15). Believers are not asked to be lights, they are called lights. It’s part of their spiritual DNA. Lights grow brighter in darkness, but darkness has limits.

Our godly influence can and should grow as the gifts and fruit of the Spirit are manifested in and through our lives. For Joseph his master saw that God was not just present, but active in his slave's life. What is it that others see when you're in a difficult predicament?

## WHAT IS GOD'S FAVOR?

God's favor is a "*Divine Deliberate Design*" which rewards acts of obedience. These acts may or may not be visible to others, but are always seen by God (see Genesis 6:8). Favor then is God's attitude toward the obedient. Favor normally affects everyone in our sphere of influence, and often moves the hand of our superiors in kindness toward us. We really don't deserve God's favor. Even the ability to be obedient comes from Him. But the choice to obey is always ours, and when we choose to obey, favor moves our way. The bottom line is favor is God's system so we ought to embrace it. Joseph chose to be obedient and was rewarded. His obedience was noticed by Potiphar, and it resulted in a promotion which entailed a great deal of trust. Joseph didn't use his granted favor for personal gain no matter the circumstances. He honored God and God's principles in all he did.

Recently, after a Sunday night service, I called for a Monday night service that would focus on teaching and prayer for healing and deliverance. Tuesday morning I received a text message from one of the young adults that read "*Pastor, I heard of the supernatural move of God last night, and wanted to come. But in order to, I would have had to tell an untruth to my employer.*" My heart sang. I thought to myself, this person gets it.

I have come across numerous scriptural references on favor. The scriptural reference I wish to highlight and offer a short commentary on is Psalm 5. This Psalm contains important *favor* elements for consideration:

*Give ear to my words, O Lord, consider my meditation. 2 Hearken unto the voice of my cry, my King, and my God: for unto thee will I pray. 3 My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up. 4 For thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness: neither shall evil dwell with thee.*

*<sup>5</sup> The foolish shall not stand in thy sight: thou hatest all workers of iniquity. 6 Thou shalt destroy them that speak leasing: the Lord will abhor the bloody and deceitful man.*

*<sup>7</sup> But as for me, I will come into thy house in the multitude of thy mercy: and in thy fear will I worship toward thy holy temple. <sup>8</sup> Lead me, O Lord, in thy righteousness because of mine enemies; make thy way straight before my face. <sup>9</sup> For there is no faithfulness in their mouth; their inward part is very wickedness; their throat is an open sepulchre; they flatter with their tongue. <sup>10</sup> Destroy thou them, O God; let them fall by their own counsels; cast them out in the multitude of their transgressions; for they have rebelled against thee.*

*<sup>11</sup> But let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice: let them ever shout for joy, because thou defendest them: let them also that love thy name be joyful in thee. <sup>12</sup> For thou, Lord, wilt bless the righteous; with favour wilt thou compass him as with a shield.*



Psalms 5:1-4 contains three elements of prayer that all receiving divine favor would be familiar with:

- ✓ **Personal** – Psalm 5 is a morning prayer in which King David appeals to God as his king. King David, like every person attempting to fulfill godly purpose, is faced with opposition. What stands out to me most in this Psalm is the personal nature of his prayer. David used personal phrases: *my words, my lament, my cry, my king, my God, and my voice*. In this Psalm, King David, like Joseph, draws from an intimate relationship with Almighty God and makes his prayer personal.
- ✓ **Profound** – Words are spoken. There is value when we meditate and deliberate on what's happening to and around us, but God doesn't respond until we verbalize. We must at least utter in our hearts our desire. When we don't know what to pray for, the Holy Spirit prays for us (see Romans 8:26). When we know what to pray for and do verbalize, we tend to firm up the request and its desired outcome (see Luke 11:9-10). There is no excuse for not praying.
- ✓ **Passionate** – True prayer also has a passionate element. Passionate prayers become intense and often turn into cries. There are seasons in the lives of managers and leaders when passionate prayer is called for. When facing a potentially crippling challenge, we might need to alter our prayer protocol, adding additional actions. Often change does not occur in deep struggles without this element to our prayers (see Matthew 17:21).

*Psalm 5:4-6 presents God's attitude towards evil:*

- ✓ **No Pleasure** – God has no delight or pleasure in evil. It's comforting to know this. He doesn't even allow it to dwell with Him. When we approach our circumstances from God's perspective, we know the temptation to dwell on the cares of this world and those who oppress us does not originate with God. He has no pleasure in it. We are encouraged to seek God's kingdom first (see Matthew 6:25-34) knowing that the days are evil, and are warned against the sin of losing godly perspective because of the cares of the world.
- ✓ **No Patience** – Those who think and act foolishly can't stand in God's presence. Yes, God may be patient as to salvation, but He has no patience as it relates to foolish thoughts and ways. *Romans 12:2* "Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." This text has always been a benchmark for me. It is loaded with biblical principles. Favor is one by-product of a renewed mind.
- ✓ **No Pity** – There is no pity for those who speak and act deceitfully. Like Joseph, we must reject situational ethics. Situational ethics judge an act according to the context of the act, and not by absolute moral standards. I believe Joseph governed his words and deeds using the concept of absolutism. Absolutism affirms an absolute moral standard that is grounded in the Holy nature of God Himself, and its reach is made possible by faith in

Jesus Christ. With our renewed minds, we serve the Law of God. If not, we will succumb to the weakened nature within us (see Romans 7:25). That weakened nature has the ability to form its own perception of reality. It is deceitful and anti-God.

*Embedded in Psalm 5:7-12 are three aspects of favor:*

- ✓ **Shepherd** – The image of God as a shepherd points to continual *direction*, *leadership*, and *compassion* for His people. These three things equal divine favor. The 23rd Psalm contains the clause “*The Lord is my shepherd.*” All biblical leaders seem to understand the importance of the leading and caring nature of God. The New Testament points out that Jesus Christ is our shepherd in at least two ways. First, as shepherd, He laid down His life for His sheep and, second, His sheep know His voice and follow Him (see John 14:10-14).
- ✓ **Song** – The song of favor is sung by those who put their trust in the Lord. Those who trust in the Lord know that joy derived from relationship with God, not their gifts, achievements or situations depict strength (see Psalm 28:7). Joseph’s demeanor sung volumes in Potiphar’s house. It positively impacted the atmosphere. One of the greatest momentum builders for a group is a positively-impacted atmosphere. When we trust in the Lord, He gives us a song and that song confirms favor.
- ✓ **Shield** – Divine favor is a shield. This is the personal side to favor. It covers us personally, and is not affected by the organizational structure we are in. It is wise to

see God's favor as a shield that covers and protects us from ourselves, others, and the enemy of our soul. Favor guards our hearts and is granted in response to the obedient heart. A shield is also an offensive weapon that allows us to be assertive in the workplace. A shield allows us to move forward as we ward off the arrows of the enemy (see Ephesians 6:16).

*Please complete the Scripture To Explore section before moving to the next chapter.*

## SCRIPTURE TO EXPLORE

*How did Daniel receive favor? (see Daniel 1)*

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*Examine Daniel 1, and list elements of favor.*

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SCRIPTURE TO EXPLORE

*Rewrite in your own words the account of Esther 4:16.*

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*Why do bravery and favor go hand in hand?*

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## SPIRITUAL SENSITIVITY

*Joseph was spiritually sensitive. He understood that to sin is to disobey God and lose His favor. Joseph deployed a godly, practical approach to temptation.*

*And it came to pass after these things, that his master's wife cast her eyes upon Joseph; and she said, Lie with me. But he refused, and said unto his master's wife, Behold, my master wotteth not what is with me in the house, and he hath committed all that he hath to my hand; There is none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back any thing from me but thee, because thou art his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God? And it came to pass, as she spake to Joseph day by day, that he hearkened not unto her, to lie by her, or to be with her.*

—Genesis 39:7-10

Joseph was spiritually sensitive. With greater success comes increased responsibilities, and with that additional challenges. Often the tempter of our soul will target the most influential among us. Failure on this level has a devastating effect on all relationships associated to that person or organization.

Every ministry and workplace leader has to see himself or herself as a target of the devil. Not that we look for a demon under every rock, but we acknowledge that no one is immune

to attacks. We need to be spiritually sensitive. This warning is especially for the up-and-coming leaders and leaders presently at the helm of their organizations.

In the formative years, emerging leaders weather attacks that are different in scope and intensity than when operating in a recognizable level of influence. Each level of influence gained appears to present leaders as more attractive to others, and this consequently exposes them to heightened temptations. Joseph practiced spiritual sensitivity, and so must we.

Managing the hardships that come our way is a prerequisite for obtaining success and influence. Once obtained, leaders will tell you it's more difficult to manage the prosperity than it was the adversity. Prosperous leaders tend to develop an air of invincibility, which left unchecked often leads to their downfall (see 1 Corinthians 10:11-13). God always provides a way for us to overcome the hurdle of pride, but we have to know it's a hurdle and clear it God's way.

Besides being successful, the Scripture account states Joseph was also handsome. Every person is in some way uniquely gifted and eye-catching to others. This makes them stand-out and often provides the foundation for additional temptations. We are not to apologize for our God-given uniqueness, but should understand that temptations are associated with them. Being tempted has never been a sin. The sin is always in the yielding.

Joseph was faithfully minding his master's business when trouble came out of the blue. It was the kind of temptation that was repetitive and would not take no for an answer. Joseph



was not the only person of influence in the Bible to receive a repetitive temptation. Samson's (see Judges 13 & 14) life was one of contradiction. He was to be set apart for life unto God, but he often broke his vow. He willingly put himself in harm's way and consequently gave in to temptation. Know for certain that as you grow and develop as a leader you will face some repetitive temptations. Overall, temptations will grow more intense when you're successful and have admirable traits, so why, like Samson, go looking for them?

Recent history has compiled for our viewing numerous accounts of fallen leaders. Leaders who gave the appearance and acted as if they were invincible. These leaders fell on the sword of temptation and committed sins of greed, infidelity, and the like. Their failures have left a wake of destruction in their path.

God looks for leaders whose hearts are His completely. Everything is open and available to Him. Leaders who admit when they are wrong and lead with integrity. Leaders who are honest when nobody is watching. God always looks for the internal qualities. Those things take time to develop – that's one reason why youthful Joseph was such an excellent example of spiritual sensitivity. Joseph was able to keep a godly perspective on everything. His perspective allowed him to remain firmly grounded, and in the end provided for his exit from Potiphar's house, as we will see in the next chapter.

For Joseph, Potiphar's wife was like a telemarketer. She came when it was least convenient. She came back repeatedly, and would not take *no* for an answer. Let's take a look at a *four-step plan* for resisting temptation:

**Responsibility – Take it.** Joseph took full responsibility for his responses and actions. He could have employed the blame game, but he didn't. Leaders must take responsibility no matter their circumstances. When things go right, give credit to the team; when adversity rears its ugly head, take personal responsibility.

Paul writes to Timothy, his son in ministry, (see 1 Timothy 4:12) and encourages him not to see age as an excuse to not be a godly example. Surely by ungodly standards, Joseph had permission to enjoy a moment of embracing forbidden fruit. But he did not abide by those standards.

In all matters of the heart, leaders are to take responsibility. We should never imply that the devil, or pressure, or circumstances are responsible for our actions. Joseph had many possible excuses. After all, he was a slave who was youthful and abandoned by his brothers. But he took the noble path.

**Recognize Sin.** Even though he was a slave, he was free in his mind and heart. And being spiritually sensitive, he was able to recognize sin for what it was. Even if we are not gifted with a spirit of discernment, we still have God's word and His Spirit residing within us. This allows us to recognize sin and to reject it.

To live and work by godly principles may appear to be a two-edged sword at times. But sin robs us of a relationship with God and entrance in His kingdom (see Galatians 5:19-21). Our relationship with God and His promises are priceless. They must not be compromised regardless the cost.

You may be a manager or leader of an organization that tends to operate on the fringes of industry standards and ethics. Sin is

sin, no matter where it occurs and for what reason. Our ethics must be seen in light of eternity and not viewed from the lens of the temporal, which at best is fleeting.

**Respond To God.** Joseph understood that even though sin would affect him and others that he would be sinning against God. He understood the favor he had gained and what was at risk. He was not willing to risk God's approval and the trust he gained from Potiphar for any temporary pleasure. Joseph responded to God's plan and purpose for his life, knowing that the big picture is what really matters. I think we respond to God in tough situations when we learn the valuable skill of *anticipation*. This skill not only equips us, but also empowers us to have an answer for challenges before they occur. This skill if overused can also be negative. We are not to live always expecting the negative, but know your season and what may come your way.

An important aspect of witnessing is being able to resist temptation in the moment. Our actions always speak louder than our words. We are encouraged to always be ready to give an answer of the hope we have in Christ (see 1 Peter 3:15). Often this answer is given in how we resist temptation.

**Refuse to Be Present.** Joseph not only resisted, but he refused to be present with the source of his temptation. He understood that he must not enable temptation by hanging out with its source. We must all know our limits and triggers for temptation and neutralize them. At times the best defense is to remove ourselves from the equation. Removing ourselves from the equation may call for the creation of a safety-net.

A *safety-net* is a system and environment that includes among other things accountability partners. Those in leadership must have a system of accountability, not only for those they lead, but for themselves. Joseph as a slave had limited options to choose from in creating his net. Joseph risked his earthly position by leaving the place of temptation, but his heavenly position was kept intact. He didn't have the option of moving to another job or town, or confiding in Potiphar. But, we as he, always have the option of refusal.

Joseph also understood the nature of his temptation. He would have been sinning against his own body (see 1 Corinthians 6:18). All other sins are outside the body. Sexual sin between two people connects their spirits and produces soul ties. These are not easily broken, and are high maintenance. Joseph understood if he flirted with this, it would eventually get the best of him, so he kept his distance. It is wise to make a list of the things, places, and people we need to avoid. And make that list active.

*Please complete the Scripture To Explore section before moving to the next chapter.*

## SCRIPTURE TO EXPLORE

*What does it mean to be a person after God's heart? (see 1 Samuel 13:14)*

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*Give another biblical example to the above.*

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SCRIPTURE TO EXPLORE

*According to 2 Chronicles 16:9, what is God searching for, and what does He want to give?*

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*Why is integrity so important to leadership?*

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## EXIT STRATEGIES

*Exit strategies are necessary if we are to advance toward fulfilling purpose. The timing and circumstances are also critical.*

*And it came to pass about this time, that Joseph went into the house to do his business; and there was none of the men of the house there within. And she caught him by his garment, saying, Lie with me: and he left his garment in her hand, and fled, and got him out. And it came to pass, when she saw that he had left his garment in her hand, and was fled forth, That she called unto the men of her house, and spake unto them, saying, See, he hath brought in an Hebrew unto us to mock us; he came in unto me to lie with me, and I cried with a loud voice:*

*And it came to pass, when he heard that I lifted up my voice and cried, that he left his garment with me, and fled, and got him out. And she laid up his garment by her, until his lord came home.*

*And she spake unto him according to these words, saying, The Hebrew servant, which thou hast brought unto us, came in unto me to mock me: And it came to pass, as I lifted up my voice and cried, that he left his garment with me, and fled out. And it came to pass, when his master heard*

*the words of his wife, which she spake unto him, saying, After this manner did thy servant to me; that his wrath was kindled.*

*And Joseph's master took him, and put him into the prison, a place where the king's prisoners were bound: and he was there in the prison. But the LORD was with Joseph, and shewed him mercy, and gave him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison.*

*And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners that were in the prison; and whatsoever they did there, he was the doer of it.*

*The keeper of the prison looked not to any thing that was under his hand; because the LORD was with him, and that which he did, the LORD made it to prosper.*

—Genesis 39:11-20

Joseph maintained his integrity under trying circumstances. He ran when he needed to. It would have been easier for him to give in or give up, but he remained faithful to God and his values. The easy way is normally the wrong way. Joseph's exit from Potiphar's house was not planned; it was the result of a damaging allegation. Yet he was showed favor by God and Potiphar.

Potiphar had every right, as a master, to take Joseph's life for the alleged rape. Yet he showed favor and placed him in the king's prison. I think he knew what his wife was capable of, and in his heart believed Joseph was innocent. To save face he had to dispose of the young Hebrew slave, but he was not willing to



take his life as was the custom. Sometimes our exit is not in our control, and the outcome is uncertain. But even then we can find favor.

We all have had our share of career or ministry-related challenges. Challenges that have taxed us to such an extent that we wanted to tap out. Here, I wish to share exit strategies from the angle of career and retirement planning.

Exit strategies are a part of managing our journey as leaders. We can't get to another place if we stay in the present place, unless we are committed to staying put, developing leaders, and reaching those other places through them.

It's important to have an exit strategy, maybe not for the same reasons we see exit signs and read instructions on airplanes and buildings. It's not always about avoiding danger as in Joseph's case; it is often more about preparing for the next level or the last season in one's career or life.

We all know persons who overstayed in a position because they had tunnel vision (*which at times is good*) and didn't focus on the big picture, which included among other things their retirement. They were not personally prepared to embrace the next season, and staying damaged the health of the organizations they led.

Organizations all too often appear guilty of not providing definitive steps for employees, especially ministers, to ensure they have life after service. There has to be proper balance between faith and planning. One must have a proper perspective on exit strategies to fulfill purpose and to retire properly. Rev. Vernon Moses, former Superintendent of the Assemblies of

God in The Bahamas and Turks & Caicos often referred to retirement (re-tire) as rethreading. It takes planning to rethread properly, especially in light of a minister's calling being without repentance (see Romans 11:29).

Joseph was in a different position than most. He was a slave and his system was to be obedient to his master. His disposition was to more importantly be obedient to his God. Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 7:21 that if you are a slave, try to gain your freedom (exit strategy), but if you can't, be faithful. I think he is implying that God will *guide*, *comfort*, and *protect* us in all situations. Thankfully we don't have the limitations that Joseph operated beneath. Yet, Joseph was favored. What a testimony!

Years ago, my family lived on a property that was home to many tillandsias. A tillandsia, or what is commonly called an air plant, grows without soil while attached to other plants. The air plant is not parasitic; it attaches itself for support, not to gain moisture or nutrients.

Moisture and nutrients are gathered from the air through its leaves. When the wind is strong enough to blow the air plant, or the support system is no longer sufficient, it is taken to a new environment. There is food for thought here as it relates to structuring an exit strategy system.

Like the air plant, we need to be attached to a structure that offers support. This structure enables us to be stable, while giving us a place to work or minister from. It is important for us to not look entirely to our support system for our future needs. We have the ability through our gifting to create wealth. So like the air plant, we need to stabilize ourselves and have the skill-

set to draw from our atmosphere (see Deuteronomy 8:17-19). Let this remain consistent regardless of where the Holy Spirit takes us.

It is possible to misinterpret our roots, thinking they are for the soil, when in reality they are for holding onto something bigger than us for a particular season. If the roots are misapplied, there will be no planned exit strategy or proper retirement planning. No matter how gifted, talented, or anointed we are, we will hinder the wind of the Holy Spirit from blowing us onward. I think misapplying our God-given tools is life's greatest tragedy.

The air plant is fitted with leaves that have the potential to absorb from the air the leaves and insect particles it needs. God has fitted us also with the gifts we need to survive and thrive; He has not designed the air plant or us to be parasites. The responsibility to design effective exit strategies, which includes a retirement plan, is ours, and we are given the gifts and talents necessary for proper execution.

It's important for us to understand our responsibility to fulfill purpose and maintain our flexibility, so we can be blown on our way by the Holy Spirit. Use your roots wisely.

*Here is my approach to ministry-related exit strategies:*

## **PHASING DOWN**

The initial part of my exit strategy is the phasing down. When I know it's the season to begin preparing to transition out, I commence the phasing down process. For the organization

I lead, this involves a commitment to not launch any new programs or initiatives, but to firm up what is already in place. Any glitches in procedures, files, and systems are to be fixed. The organization is to be on firm footing in all major areas.

If you start a new project when phasing down, the motive is highly questionable. Launching new things in that season might give the impression that you're unsure of what you should be doing, or there is a mad last dash to the finish line, looking for a bang effect. Timing, obedience, and perception are all equally important in the phasing down. There is a time and season for everything, and in the phasing down it's important to strengthen the things that remain, and not launch new projects. Phasing down must have as few hitches as possible. Smooth transition for all involved is the goal.

Obedience is the key to everything for the leader. Am I being obedient to God? Am I willing to do it His way? Joseph was able to answer a resounding YES to those questions. Abraham, on the other hand, had a challenge in this department. God had a system to bless through Isaac. Impatience and cultural permission led to the birth of Ismael (see Genesis 16). What we create we are responsible for. It is devastating when we create from the place of impatience and disobedience. What we create remains long after we are gone.

Also during the phasing down, I commence building bridges to my preferred future. You have to know where you're going and build a path to it, and also test it. For example, if you're transitioning from pastoral to evangelistic ministry, start adjusting your thinking and booking engagements, don't wait until you phase out or over.

## **PHASING OUT**

This phase is based on two factors. Organizational structure and failure. There are organizations that hire leaders and at their departure for whatever reason normally rehire from without, but occasionally promote from within. A leader in this organizational structure may find the phasing out to be emotional and mentally taxing. Once the phasing down has begun, often the leader is viewed as a disregarded item. The organization is planning life without him while he is still in place. It can be an unsettling experience to say the least.

It's important that the exiting leader has planned well the building of bridges. This will allow for a shift in focus that will make the phasing out manageable. The length of the phasing out period ought to be negotiated. Sensitivity and mutual respect is a must especially to be exercised by the employer who has the leverage (see Colossians 4:1).

When the phasing out is sudden because of an unexpected resignation or firing, the dynamics change. It is wise for things to be swift, but also to include an exit interview. An exit interview can provide vital information for both parties. It always reveals blind spots. In a phasing out, no matter the circumstances, everyone should be in a position to better themselves. Fulfilling purpose is a journey for all.

## **PHASING OVER**

I am a real fan of phasing over. Phasing over is when an organization's approach to succeeding leadership is that leaders ought to emerge from within. I believe this has a number of benefits.

Organizations are afforded the opportunity to develop leaders who are aware of the uniqueness of the organization. This greatly allows for continuity within the *vision, values, and goals* of the group (see 2 Timothy 2:2). Every time a new leader takes the helm, there are expected changes in direction and operational procedures. These are reduced when the new leader comes from within the organization.

Organizations that develop leaders from within will maintain a higher level of loyalty. Emerging leaders exhibit a greater level of commitment because they realize there are opportunities for upward mobility. Their body of work becomes more than just entries on a resume; it becomes critical milestones in the development of the organization.

The exiting leader should within this structure have been serving as a mentor and coach. As the phasing over process commences, leadership roles are adjusted and coaching becomes more defined. This is a critical, but exciting season for all involved. The phasing over has a celebration aspect to it rather than a departure feel.

It is easy for the exiting leader to be open about his future plans, because the organization is like family, and exiting is expected and celebrated. Appreciation is always attached to this approach. When we *equip, encourage, and empower* emerging leaders, our ceiling of accomplishments become their floor base of operation. This, in my opinion, is lasting success.

Jesus identified His team, developed them, and entrusted them with the Father's mission (see John 17:18). He was and will always be the *Master* mentor and coach. Phasing over is tried and proven.

*The next part of the book is interactive. It asks you to explore Scriptures and complete a profile. You may wish to complete the assignments as devotions if not completing them in a workshop setting.*



## DIGGING DEEP

We have taken a look at five elements for consideration for fulfilling purpose. The digging deep exercise allows you to look at other individuals in the Bible and view these elements from different angles.

Our leadership roles present us with numerous opportunities to practice the principles contained in these five elements. We must continue to develop as leaders and fulfill purpose God's way.

During your personal study time, look up and list Scriptural references for the following topics and complete the exercise. This may seem difficult, but it really is not. You can get help in finding the Scriptures from a Bible concordance, a teacher, others, or the Internet. Discuss your findings with a friend. You may want to complete the entire exercise with a friend.

### ❖ Useful Skills

1. Scripture Text \_\_\_\_\_
2. Scripture Text \_\_\_\_\_
3. Scripture Text \_\_\_\_\_

a) What is meant by useful skills?

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b) Name two biblical characters who had useful skills:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

c) How were their skills useful to the work of the Lord?

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❖ **Finishing Well**

1. Scripture Text \_\_\_\_\_

2. Scripture Text \_\_\_\_\_

3. Scripture Text \_\_\_\_\_

a) What are some principles to finishing well?

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b) Give a biblical example of someone finishing well.

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c) Give a personal example of finishing well.

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## EVALUATE THE STEP

To evaluate means to look over or inspect and see the good and the bad in something. When we evaluate, we attempt to discover how we should respond in a godly manner to our “HOUSE” elements.

Joseph gives us a vivid example of how we can trust in God regardless of the situation we face. However, in this evaluation process, you will briefly evaluate other biblical leaders and their responses to difficult situations.

This evaluation step is designed to assist you in confronting any hindrances that may have a grip on your life and prevent you from properly responding to desired purpose fulfillment in a personal or professional matter.

## INSPIRING LEADERSHIP CHARACTERS

The leaders highlighted all show a remarkable depth of character. Regardless of the situational challenges, they overcome them with unwavering faith in God and a belief that they are embarking on fulfilling purpose.

Any leader today can learn from these ordinary people who accomplished extraordinary feats. Successful leaders all display

a high level of conviction and determination. They manage well the situations they face.

**LEADERS EMPLOYING THE ELEMENTS**

❖ *God approaches Abraham and tells him to “Go form his country.” Abraham obeys. Which elements did Abraham use? (see Genesis 12)*

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❖ *Why do you think Abraham in spite of the uncertainty obeyed?*

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❖ *Jesus washes His disciples’ feet. What was the lesson and what were the results? (see John 13)*

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❖ *From Jesus's example, what element does this display?*

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❖ *Why was Ruth willing to leave everything she had? (see Ruth 1 :16-18)*

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❖ *How does spiritual sensitivity apply here with Ruth?*

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❖ *How did Esther exercise her faith? (see Esther 4)*

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❖ *What role did favor play in Esther's success?*

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## PERSONAL DISCOVERY

- ❖ *What concerns you the most about the “HOUSE” concepts in your personal life?*

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- ❖ *What concerns you the most about the “HOUSE” concepts in your professional responsibilities?*

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- ❖ *Name three persons who you feel would give you godly advice in regard to this second step. Make an appointment to see at least one and seek advice on steps to overcome that which most concerns you about the “HOUSE” concepts.*

1. 

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2. 

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3. 

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## PRACTICE THE STEP

As we learn and develop steps to success, it is important to consistently walk in these steps. By practicing, they become a part of our everyday life and ministry. The step we have just studied is the step of the “HOUSE” concepts. How can we practice this step? We practice it by consistently evaluating our thoughts, relationships, and walk with the Lord. We must look at all five elements and strive to have the concepts and principles imbedded in our walk.

Over the next few days, conduct a daily personal inventory, allowing the Holy Spirit to search the inward parts, revealing what is in your heart. As revelation comes, write down your personal adjustments.

### YOUR PERSONAL ADJUSTMENTS

List 10 adjustments you will make to ensure you are successful in the “HOUSE” concepts. Be specific.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_



6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_

## **PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE**

It is important to practice this exercise of 10 and continually make necessary adjustments to ensure you continue developing in your “HOUSE” concepts. God is interested in us achieving success in our personal lives and ministry endeavors.

Practice this important step to success, maximize your opportunities, and manage challenges that emerge in your life and ministry. Practice still makes perfect.



## SEE THE SUCCESS

Success may be both immediate and progressive. True success means responding to the call and to the challenges we receive in a fashion that is pleasing to God. Success is very much godly results—it's outcome-focused. After 35 years of ministry, I still marvel at the example of Joseph. He is an example of faith in God without the privilege of the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit. This has to encourage us to strive for faithfulness in all things. As you commit your ways to the Lord, you must believe that the word of God and the work of the Holy Spirit will guide you in all matters of the heart.

I encourage you to follow through on further developing this step in your personal life and leadership endeavors. You may wish to keep a journal. Document your steps, pause at times to reflect, re-adjust, and ready yourself for future success. Practice the step and see the success!



# FULFILLING PURPOSE PERSONAL AUDIT

Please read each of the following statements. Circle the number that best describes how true each statement is for you.

## HONING SKILLS

- 1.** I take every opportunity available to use my skills.
  1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False
  
- 2.** I know my core team's abilities.
  1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False
  
- 3.** I always provide opportunities for my core team to use their skills.
  1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False

- 4.** I am always willing to develop my leadership skill-set regardless of the personal sacrifice involved.
  1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False
  
- 5.** I am always willing to develop the skill-set of my core team regardless of the personal and professional sacrifices involved.
  1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False

## **OVERCOMING OBSTACLES**

- 1.** I fully understand the importance of clearing my hurdles and I always try to clear them.
  1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False
  
- 2.** I always manage my predicaments well.
  1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False
  
- 3.** I always strive to help my team recognize their work-related obstacles.

1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False
- 4.** My relationship with the Lord always grows during my challenges.
1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False
- 5.** I always apply the clarity gained in overcoming my obstacles to all areas of my life.
1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False

## UNDERSTANDING FAVOR

- 1.** I am always able to recognize God's favor in my personal life.
1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False
- 2.** I coach my core team in recognizing God's favor in their situations and serve as a mentor when asked.
1. True
  2. More true than false

3. More false than true
  4. False
- 3.** I am always able to recognize favor extended to me by others and seek to honor it.
1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False
- 4.** I always submit to God's will in difficult circumstances.
1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False
- 5.** I always try not to manipulate favor for personal gain.
1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False

## **SPIRITUAL SENSITIVITY**

- 1.** I am always able to resist workplace temptations.
1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False
- 2.** I coach my core team in recognizing workplace temptations and serve as a mentor when asked.

1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False
- 3.** I am always willing to walk away from my job to preserve my integrity.
1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False
- 4.** I always confront sin in my life and in the lives of core team members when recognized.
1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False
- 5.** I always recognize the grace of God and allow it to be applied to myself in workplace situations.
1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False

## **EXIT STRATEGIES**

- 1.** I am always planning for my retirement.
1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False

- 2.** I coach my core team in recognizing the value of effective exit strategies.
  1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False
  
- 3.** I understand the importance of stability and always use it wisely.
  1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False
  
- 4.** I always look to develop emerging leaders.
  1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False
  
- 5.** I always strive to improve my “phasing skills.”
  1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False



## TOTAL YOUR SCORE

Add the numbers and place them in the spaces provided. Then multiply them by the given number.

**True = 1**

**More true than false = 2**

**More false than true = 3**

**False = 4**

True 1 × \_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_

More true than false 2 × \_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_

More false than true 3 × \_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_

False 4 × \_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_

Add the numbers together and read the results of your audit.

**Total** \_\_\_\_\_

## IF YOUR TOTAL SCORE IS

**25-35:** All five elements are engrained in your personal life and leadership role.

**36-55:** You are practicing them well. If your total score is closer to 55, you must pay more attention to one or more categories.

**56-75:** You must continue to work on developing all concepts.

**76-100:** Others probably do not view you as an effective leader. You may want to rethink your motives for service.



# PERSONAL IMPROVEMENT STEPS

The purpose of this exercise is to identify areas that need improvement and develop a plan to address them.

**STEP ONE:** List an area where your score is a 3 or 4.

## HONING SKILLS

---

My score is a \_\_\_\_

**STEP TWO:** Develop a plan for personal improvement. You may refer to your list of 10 personal adjustments for assistance in developing the plan.

## PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

[illegible]



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## OVERCOMING OBSTACLES

---

My score is a \_\_\_\_

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---

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## EXIT STRATEGIES

---

My score is a \_\_\_\_

**STEP TWO:** Develop a plan for personal improvement. You may refer to your list of 10 personal adjustments for assistance in developing the plan.

## PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

[illegible]

You have now completed your personal development plan. As you begin to implement your plan, it will be wise to continually review it and seek guidance from the Holy Spirit. Your plan will help you move forward in your walk in the Spirit. It is important to strengthen your weak areas and build on your strengths. This process may be repeated as necessary.

## THE THIRD STEP

# Preparation for Promotion





## STATE THE STEP

Preparation for promotion often contains a combination of testing, measuring, and fine tuning of leadership skills.

## TEACH THE STEP

Joseph is falsely accused of attempted rape but is shown a measure of mercy by his master by being placed in the *King's Prison* as opposed to being executed. The prison was a dungeon or pit of sorts, so Joseph as a young adult is about to experience his second pit experience on his trek to fulfilling purpose. This pit experience will differ from the previous in that he is equipped with a measure of success. This gives Joseph an opportunity to climb the leadership ladder again. In his first pit encounter, Joseph was taken out of it by rope and sold as a slave. This one will also be aided by others but in a different manner. Each pit experience is unique to leaders.

It's important for me to clarify what I mean by climbing the leadership ladder. When a leader enters a new place of service, often that leader will have to gain influence with those he attempts to lead. This is especially true if he is appointed from outside the organization. He might be positioned by title at the top of the organization or one of its divisions, but influence is

gained not assumed, thus the climb. Every leader will secure varying levels of influence within an organization. It is the climb and re-climbs to gain and maximize influence that successful leaders are willing and capable of taking.

Purpose fulfillment for the leader is often realized at the top of the climb or re-climb, but proficiency is often gained and measured during the process. To continue being successful leaders must often embrace that process. Are you committed to the process? Joseph was.

Leading up to Joseph's re-climb, he is stripped of his outer garments for the third time and fitted with new ones, this time with garments befitting a prisoner. In his young life, he was labeled a *favorite son* and *slave*; now he is an *inmate*. But more importantly, his attitude and actions earned him the label as a young man with the Lord's favor upon his life. This is the greatest label a godly leader can be tagged with. So, once again in spite of his predicament, the Lord is with him, and success awaits Joseph the dreamer and climber.

Leaders may have different circumstances to navigate through, but what remains common to all godly leaders is that their use of skill-sets will be measured each step of the way. This section focuses on preparation for promotion elements and how they are developed, tested, and measured.





## JOSEPH'S LADDER

*And Joseph's master took him, and put him into the prison, a place where the king's prisoners were bound: and he was there in the prison.*

*But the LORD was with Joseph, and shewed him mercy, and gave him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison.*

*And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners that were in the prison; and whatsoever they did there, he was the doer of it.*

*The keeper of the prison looked not to any thing that was under his hand; because the LORD was with him, and that which he did, the LORD made it to prosper.*

—Genesis 39:20-23

**T**he written account states that Joseph was placed in the *King's Prison*. Often we live, work, or minister in and from places not of our likening or doing. However, if our perspective of why we are in these undesirable places is formed through the revelation of the Holy Spirit and God's word, then these places aide in personal growth and professional development.

Godly perspective then is vital for leaders. It is important for us to pray for godly perspective in regards to all that is happening

around us and to us. Our environments may not always be to our liking, however we can rise above the discomforts through a godly disposition.

Godly perspective gives a clear understanding of why or what is happening. Leaders without a godly perspective often become discouraged and bitter toward others and even God. This will undoubtedly derail the plan and purpose of God for the leader.

Without godly perspective, purpose is virtually impossible to recognize much less realize. Godly perspective allows us to embrace God's will and process with hope and steadfast confidence in Him who holds all things together by His power.

## **LEADERSHIP IS A PROCESS AND JOURNEY**

Leadership is a process and journey that often occurs in various *environments, settings, and situations*. This process and journey often has a repetitive nature to it. *Principles, concepts, and methods* are frequently repeated within the context of development, but the experiences are never meant to be stagnant. We are not to live in the past or relish present experiences, but glean from them and continually move forward in our leadership development. The process and journey is meant to take us somewhere purposefully.

Leadership as a process and journey enjoys movement and life. It changes because the leader does. Joseph was in a new place that would allow him an opportunity to re-climb the leadership ladder. He would grow and change in his new environment and responsibility if he properly embraced the opportunity. I have discovered that new environments often

aided the development of my skill-sets as a leader. I refer to this process as a *stretch*.

We may be given an official position or title as a leader, but that in itself does not guarantee success. Leadership is positioning yes, but more importantly, it is results and measurable-outcomes oriented. Many stunt their personal and professional growth because of embracing the misconception that leadership is all about acquiring the next title or position. They strive to get to the top and then realize they are alone with no one to lead, or celebrate success with. The results and measurable outcomes should never be about *personal goals* at the expense of *group vision*. However, both may be realized if approached correctly.

## **LEADERSHIP IS A PROCESS AND JOURNEY WITH OTHERS**

If no one is journeying with you as a leader, you're just on a stroll, often going nowhere significant. There might be activity and some meaningful enjoyment by strolling alone, but you can't achieve sustainable results by yourself. You need a team—others to lead and walk the journey with. If you were able to achieve all your goals by yourself, it would probably not be the fullness of God's purpose for you or the organization you lead. Leadership is a process and journey meant to be engaged with others if results are to be maximized.

I must admit it is often easier to walk alone. When you walk with others, you are committed to the pace of the slowest person. This calls for patience and longsuffering that we are not always desirous to exhibit. As a grandparent, I am reminded of this often. Even the older grandchildren become restless with the

clumsy steps of the youngest sibling. I allow my older grands to assist the younger ones on our strolls. This helps create teamwork and brings a teaching and learning dimension into our walk. Even the fun walks now are outcome-focused.

Every new place we venture to demands of us positive results, and our overall effectiveness as a leader is measured by those results. Our styles and methods may not be alike, so how we get there (positive results) may differ, but all godly leaders ought to secure a vision, (God's Positioning System) GPS. Along with the vision address and navigation tools, you must have a competent team. Joseph developed his team, and we must, too.

The leadership-development process continued for Joseph in a different place with different options. Like Joseph, all leaders are given numerous opportunities to repeatedly climb the leadership ladder. No two climbs are exactly alike. Successful leaders make the climb often, understand their options, and are appreciative for their opportunities.

Opportunities that come our way may be carved out by God, others, us, or circumstances. When *preparation* meets *opportunities*, success is often created. The two go hand in hand. We can't embrace all opportunities by ourselves; we need to empower our teams. Together we can achieve the fullness of every opportunity presented.

## **LEADERSHIP IS A PROCESS AND JOURNEY OFTEN REPEATED**

Because leadership is a process and a journey it can be repeated at different times in various places by the same leader. The more

skillful we become as leaders allows for an easier climb or re-climb. We might be starting over again, but our skill-set allows for influence to be satisfactorily secured. Many of my leadership roles have been with organizations where I had to start from ground zero in the influence department and make at times a grueling climb. Each climb afforded me a wealth of experiences and the opportunity to develop a *Personal Leadership Climb System*. Each climb ought to better prepare us for future climbs.

All successful leaders have mastered the skills necessary to climb and re-climb ladders, often in different places, and under varying circumstances. Joseph was positioned for a re-climb and was equipped with some valuable tools he developed in Potiphar's house. These tools were transferable to his new environment. He would also be required to develop new tools and influence in his present situation. This in essence is the re-climb. The written account is careful to point out the following about Joseph's re-climb:

- ✓ He enjoyed God's approval.
- ✓ He earned man's trust.
- ✓ He was given responsibilities.
- ✓ He had permission to develop a system.
- ✓ He delivered positive results.

Successful leaders not only re-climb leadership ladders, they often determine where ladders are placed for others to climb within the organizations they lead. This is an important privilege and responsibility given to leaders and must not be overlooked or mishandled.

Where are you placing the ladders for others? Is it factored in and recognizable in your leadership-development system? When leaders invest too much time managing and not leading and growing the organization, they are likely to neglect placing ladders for their teams to climb. It is important for leaders to constantly invest in their team's development. If no one is climbing as you climb, who will be in position to succeed you?



## Joseph Enjoyed God's Approval

*But the LORD was with Joseph, and shewed him mercy, and gave him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison.*

—Genesis 39:21

The written account is careful to point out that Joseph enjoyed the Lord's presence and favor. This, I believe, equals God's approval. It is reassuring to lead from a place of good standing with God. You enjoy leadership leverage when others can attest that God is with you each step of the way. It's a confidence and trust builder for all. Godly leaders welcome the approval of those they value. It's incredibly invaluable and reassuring then to experience God's approval on one's life and ministry. An awareness of God's approval will keep you motivated in the valley experiences of leadership. All leaders have had to lead at one time or another from an internal valley position.

God's approval gives *courage, strength, and hope* in the valley seasons of leadership. To enjoy both God's and your team's approval is a firm leadership foundation to serve and build from. What you build can never be stronger than the base or foundation it is fitted on. Approval is a great foundational building block. Approval does not mean that all you're doing is brilliant or the best use of *time, talents, and treasures*, but it does mean God is actively involved in your process and journey

and your overall efforts are approved by Him. This brings me to the subject of character.

## CHARACTER COUNTS

I believe character is the single most important element in a leader's life, and counts for more than one may think. Godly character counts even more because it attracts the presence and favor of God, and helps secure the approval and support of others. Godly character is a commitment to consistently do the right thing, at the right time, in the right way, for the right reason. People follow leaders who are both competent and trust worthy. Character matters. How many times have you heard it said that a leader's actions seemed out of character? May the breakdowns be few and far between for us.

Those we lead are likely to overlook some leadership weakness when godly character is intact. Without godly character, influence is limited and effective leadership can't be sustained. Limited influence always produces limited results. Influence and productivity go hand in hand in leadership. Godly character brings a healthy balance to both. Leaders exhibiting godly character do what is in the best interest of those they lead.

Joseph had proven in Potiphar's house that he was a man of integrity, and modeled it in prison as well. Integrity is doing what is right in God's eyes not ours or those we lead. It is not just concerned with what is right or wrong, but what God's will is. Joseph's reputation was damaged with others, but was intact with the Lord. Reputation is what we may bring to a matter, position, or community, but character is what we truly are.



Character is who we are when no one is watching. Joseph's reputation was damaged by the false allegation, but he was given an opportunity to rebuild it in prison because of his godly character. As godly leaders we are blessed when falsely accused for Christ's sake. We are admonished to count it all as joy. We are encouraged when this occurs to rejoice because it adds to us a great heavenly reward (see Matthew 5:11-12). Godly character has temporal and eternal rewards. Godly character has rewards that are truly out of this world, and eternal in nature and value.

## CHARACTER SECURES

Godly character will always secure the favor of the Lord and win out in the end. The timing for this to occur may be short or long, but the Lord will always position leaders exhibiting godly character. He will not only position them, but also sustain them. Character, whether unrighteous or righteous, will eventually become visible to all. Some leaders will be skimmed off, while others cherished and enjoyed. Character is then likened to cream; it will always eventually rise to the top whether it's sweet or sour.

The main ingredients necessary for rebuilding one's reputation are God's *approval* on one's life and *steadfastness*. When these become visible to others, reputation then has a chance to be restored. However, there will be those, for whatever reason, who will not accept you even when there is evidence of change and God's blessings on your efforts. Normally when this happens, God gives a new venue and new people to serve. Joseph was given prison and the keeper and inmates to serve.

## BLESSINGS CONNECTED TO GOD'S APPROVAL

There is an amazing event in the New Testament that shares some blessings connected to God's approval. Let's examine it from Matthew's account recorded in Chapter 3:13-17.

*Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*

## CHARACTER SUBMITS

Jesus submits to the Father's will and is baptized by His cousin John. To submit is not always easy, and it's more difficult when it's to those perceived to be of lesser statute, rank, or ability than you. I believe this is one of the reasons why some job seekers are told they are overqualified for a position. It is not so much the job description, but rather the concern that the overqualified person may not be able to submit to a less-qualified supervisor. Submission is not easy given the fact that we were created to have dominion over the earth.

It is interesting to note that Jesus was completing part of the assignment given to Him. That part of the assignment was confessing sin on behalf of the people. Moses, Nehemiah, and

Daniel did the same. Sometimes submission to the assignment produces submission to others who seem inferior. Jesus was able to adjust for the sake of the big picture. I think successful submission ought to be the result of understanding the big picture and bending one's will and efforts towards it. Are you a big picture thinker?

Leaders are example setters. Leaders never ask of others what they are not willing to do themselves. A part of leadership is functioning as the lead example whether it is in the home, workplace, leisure place, or ministry. Whether it is being in charge or being a subordinate. We are called to lead by example. The leadership process and journey provide many opportunities in this area.

Recently, I was appointed to a leadership position within a religious organization and given a team to work with. Each person on the team bore a title greater than mine, but I was appointed as the team leader. The success of this team was based in part on our collective ability to see the big picture. Big picture thinking at times requires leaders to look beyond titles and positions. We must be committed to our God-given roles and assignments in each season of service if we are to experience godly success.

In submitting to John to be baptized, Jesus was also endorsing John's ministry of baptism. As a matter of fact when John was put in prison, Jesus took up the ministry of preaching repentance (see Matthew 4:13-17). We must see the value of the ministry of others, and never strive to serve in isolation. Everything given from heaven is interconnected and should be honored. It is wise as leaders to serve from this perspective and

strive to understand connections and their mutual benefits. For Jesus and John, they both understood Heaven's message for that season and were committed to delivering it. It is glorious when ministries strive to complement and complete each other as opposed to competing.

A few years ago, I knew the Lord had shifted our outreach focus from serving the homeless to serving struggling families. Reluctance to embrace this shift on our part resulted in competing with other organizations that were better equipped to offer services to the homeless community. This was unhealthy and underachieving for all involved. The day we embraced Heaven's will we were recipients of Heaven's favor.

Today, we are building and maintaining healthy ministry partnerships, and offering homeless service providers within the community monetary and equipment support, as we focus our logistic efforts on serving struggling families. Both target groups are enriched by a commitment to Heaven's way. We have gained the trust of other ministries and the corporate community. Donations to our efforts continue to grow as our ministry's DNA takes shape and is effectively modeled.

John the Baptist resisted at first to baptizing Jesus, but after dialogue quickly submitted to big picture thinking. The big picture of the plan of God at times will require us to shift from our personal assumptions and embrace Heaven's way when the two oppose each other. This is not easy, but is necessary for success. Jesus as a servant leader understood the protocols of Heaven, adhered to them, and fulfilled all righteousness. He is the most successful big picture thinker and doer.

The water baptism was also the occasion for launching His earthly ministry and part of that launch was affirming John. What an example for modern leaders of honoring other leaders and their efforts. Every ministry launch should add value to existing ministries within our communities. The cities we serve are God's, not ours, and this truth should be reflected in our commitment to unification of purpose. It was only when John baptized Jesus that he recognized Jesus as the Savior (see John 1:26-36). This is food for thought. Could it be that others will only recognize our validity when we submit to Heaven's way and not ours? Obedience among other things brings clarity.

*The written account of Jesus's baptism contains some powerful elements for our consideration, let's explore them now:*

**The Heavens opened.** There will always be an open heaven in the life of an obedient servant leader. An open heaven speaks of the availability of God's resources and favor. All good gifts come from above (see James 1:17). So, we should strive to lead from an open heaven approach. Heaven's blueprint for our lives and the ministries we lead are available to the godly leader. Leaders ought to embrace them.

It is wise to build on earth what is scripted in heaven. When we attempt this we are sure of God's involvement. One group tried to build from earth's blueprint and was dispersed by God (see Genesis 11). Our organizations may have unity and energy, but we secure success when we follow heaven's blueprint. Joseph and Jesus were recipients of an open heaven because of their *awareness, faith, integrity, and obedience*. An open heaven is within reach of all leaders. I have learned that godly purpose

is always created in heaven, birthed on earth, and fulfilled through God's empowerment and man's obedience.

Almighty God wants us to enjoy and serve under an open heaven. He desires for us to accomplish His will by His means. How sad and disappointing it must be to God when leaders reject His system. We reject His system and void His provisions through acts of disobedience. Disobedience will always shut up heaven's resources and quiet the voice of God (see 2Chronicles 7:14). Repentance, which is turning from our sinful ways and walking in God's truth, results in earth being healed. The healing of the nations can't take place in the absence of an open heaven. Godly leaders are aware when they are and are not operating under an open heaven. An open heaven is a gateway for heaven's transferal of favor and resources to others.

How important is an open heaven for you? We all need to answer this question from time to time. Our answers will signal our level of commitment to fulfilling godly purpose. The more I walk in the purpose of God for my life, the more I treasure an open heaven. Godly leaders must always treasure and guard this blessing.

***The Spirit of God Descended.*** Heaven's empowerment is always available to the leader who pleases the Lord. We are able to do more by the power of God than we can with leadership skills alone. The Spirit accomplishes more than we can *think, imagine, and desire* (see Ephesians 3:20). The Holy Spirit descended as a dove.

*Spirit-Led Leaders* have a gentle but influential effect on those they lead. They understand the difference between managing

and controlling the lives of others. Godly leaders know they are not called to control others, but to lead from positions of *respect, godliness, and competence*. They lead by self-control (Spirit-control) and are easy to engage. Their meekness should never be interpreted as weakness, but rather as power under control. Godly leaders like the Holy Spirit are agents of peace. They are to have a dove effect upon those they lead, serve, and attempt to reach.

*The subject of doves in the Bible is rich with symbolism and interpretations. Here are two for consideration:*

**Atoning Sacrifice.** Jesus is the atoning sacrifice for our sins. In the Old Testament, doves were a symbol of this. (See Leviticus 12:8). Godly leaders understand the principle of sacrifice and often engage it on behalf of those they lead. They can never replace the sacrifice of Jesus (see Hebrews 3:1), but do often stand in the gap for those they lead. Leadership is often about personal sacrifice on behalf of others.

Standing in the gap on behalf of others as a leader is a sacrificial lifestyle. It is a part of a successful leader's DNA. Ezekiel 22:30 states that God looked for someone to stand in the gap but found no one. May this never be said of us as leaders. May we always be willing to follow in the example of Moses and be gap leaders when the season and circumstances call for it (see Psalm 106:23). This calls for a willingness to sacrifice one's personal welfare on behalf of others. Many know they ought to but are unwilling to because it calls for purity in thought and actions. As the dove is a symbol of purity, so are godly leaders (see Romans 12:1-2). Jesus sacrificially ministered from a disposition of purity and so must His leaders.

**Sign from God.** As doves are interpreted as a sign from God, so are godly leaders. Jeremiah 3:15 states clearly that God will give us leaders after His heart. Leaders given by God lead with *knowledge, understanding, and wisdom*. Jesus said the Holy Spirit will come to lead us and guide us into all truth (see John 16:13). As the Holy Spirit speaks not His own thoughts but what He hears, so must God's leaders.

The Scripture says the Holy Spirit will tell of the future. I find this interesting. Vision is a picture of an organization's preferred future. All *Spirit-Led Leaders* must at least perceive and do the following as stated of the Holy Spirit in John 16:13:

- ✓ Understand that they are sent.
- ✓ Guide others into truth.
- ✓ Operate in God's authority, not their power.
- ✓ Have the ability to hear heaven's conversation.
- ✓ Share Heaven's vision for earth.

**He Received His Father's Validation.** Leaders all seek or are at least open to validation of their life's work. How blissful it must have been for Jesus to hear God say this is my son and I am well pleased in him. God's affirmation is the highest form of validation of anyone's character and labor. When a person receives ordination to ministry they are set apart as clergy. But the call to ministry comes from God.

A few years ago when Shena and I started pastoring in North America, we had to go through the process of being vetted by the religious body we were serving under. When informed that I might only be able to enter their ranks as a licensed minister, I



was pleasantly surprised by my response. It really didn't matter to me that I had been ordained 30 years prior. Shena and I knew we were in God's will, and His validation was intact. We also knew in time we would gain influence. We didn't mind re-climbing that ladder. To submit to Heaven's will is to assure oneself of Heaven's attention and grace. In the end they granted ordination and recognition of my previous years as an ordained minister. All things do indeed work out for the good to those who trust the Lord (see Romans 8:28).

*Please complete the Scripture To Explore section.*

SCRIPTURE TO EXPLORE

*What may happen if a leader’s first priority is securing the approval of others? (see Galatians 1:19)*

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*Write your definition for the phrase “A Servant of Christ.”*

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SCRIPTURE TO EXPLORE

*Using 1Corinthians 9:24-27 as a reference base, how do you think Paul wanted to be remembered as a leader?*

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SCRIPTURE TO EXPLORE

*Explain the importance of the above Scripture verses as they relate to God’s approval.*

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## Joseph Earned Man's Trust

*And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners that were in the prison.*

—Genesis 39:22

Joseph was starting over again. It might very well be true that as long as we have life we can start over. But starting over is not always easy. It's a season that is not at all times welcomed. Joseph's successful track record in Potiphar's house as a manager might have been common knowledge, but Joseph still needed to earn the trust of the keeper of the prison. Often we have to earn permission and opportunity to serve on a larger scale. This is one of the privileges of earned trust.

Joseph had served as a manager in Potiphar's house, but he was also developing into a competent leader. Competent leaders have the necessary determination and are continuously improving on their skills to re-climb ladders of influence. Among other truths, they understand that influence is earned not given. The proper mind-set and acquired skills often shorten the time between each re-climb. Leaders secure trust through their level of *competence, character, and interaction* with those they lead.

Competence includes personal and professional *capabilities, skills, results, and track record*. People will only consistently and confidently follow competent leaders. Character among

other things includes motives for leading. Those we lead will sooner or later figure out our intent. If intent is not in their best interest, influence will not be earned by us, or granted by them. This is the main reason why leadership is a journey and process as opposed to a position. Limited success is derived for merely holding a position or title, while greater success is gained through influence. The latter takes time when the leader enters a new environment. We are not told by the account how long it was before Joseph received the nod of approval, but am sure it didn't happen the first day. There had to be buy-in before trust was awarded. The keeper of the prison had to protect his position and influence with those above him, as well.

Many leaders make the mistake of assuming a title secures loyalty. That might be true in a few settings, but not so across the board. People follow those who have earned their trust. Earning trust takes time but can be shortened when one enjoys a successful track record. Remember, Joseph was in prison because of a perceived crime, that of attempted rape. Being accused of rape was not a glowing resume by any means. It might have won him style points with the other inmates, but surely not with the authorities. Successful leaders all develop a behavioral system for securing trust. Here is my list of trust-building practices:

**Talk straight—but listen first.** I have discovered the hard way that it's better to talk straight. By that I mean say what you mean and mean what you say. However, the key for me is to listen to the other person first. And I mean really listen. Not the type of listening where you're developing your rebuttal while they are speaking. Gather your thoughts and get the mind of Christ and be clear

with what you say, and how you say it. When you talk straight you leave no wiggle room. Wiggle room often is seen as indecisiveness, and can back you into a corner with others.

I have experienced that wiggle room tends to raise doubts concerning your firmness and convictions as a leader. The team will not faithfully follow a leader who tends to always have an escape route. This can be viewed as double mindedness and with some will render you untrustworthy.

**Show loyalty-extend trust.** Loyalty and trust go hand in hand in group dynamics. At times I am told my weakness is loyalty. Loyalty is extremely important to me. I want those I serve to know I am reliable and won't jump ship for a better one that steams by. This may cause me to miss out on a great opportunity, but I like to finish what I start, and be loyal to others and the mission for the season.

I have discovered that extending trust to my team secures greater buy-in from them. It's important to me for those I lead to know I trust them. I try not to micromanage my team. My safeguard is that I will have a number of progress meetings, and I use these occasions to coach my team members if needed. When we inspire trust, we harvest greater output and morale. Loyalty and trust are the glue that holds teams together.

**Demonstrate respect.** There are a number of ways we as leaders can demonstrate respect. For me the number-

one way is to *preserve dignity*. When someone on your team makes a mistake, and we all do, don't correct them openly. Praise openly and correct in private. Everyone wants to feel respected, and even in a miscalculation you can find a positive aspect to build upon.

So when you correct, speak to the issue or problem, but never attack the person, and as much as possible do it in private. Your team member is less likely to become defensive when you use this approach.

**Right wrongs.** I must admit this takes courage. Because Shena and I often are given assignments that include to a large degree restructuring of ministries, we often have to right wrongs. The challenges may be in areas of *procedures, protocols, or ill treatment* of others. The bottom line is the leader has the responsibility to right wrongs. Your efforts may meet stiff resistance at the beginning. With patience and a spirit of gentleness, you can convey the right sentiments on fair play and proper protocols.

A ministry that is unwilling to right wrongs will never operate under an open heaven. When wrongs are righted, it's as if the blockage is removed and the blessings are not trapped or suspended in space anymore. Positive things happen quickly, and have an opportunity to be sustained.

Every ministry has caterpillar struggles that tend to spill over into hurts or wrong operational practices. Righting wrongs assist in the emergence of the butterfly. Approach it as a growth process and not a blame naming exercise.

**Deliver results.** Delivering positive results is a trust and confidence builder for acceptance of your leadership role. Results do matter, and those who follow you want to see and expect you to be the lead person delivering results. Expectations are high, and trust is gained when you can be used by the Lord to bring the organization forward in its mission and goals.

I have found it wise to tackle a project that does not demand a large team and has great visible appeal. When we do, it allows for *show and tell* moments, and gives those you lead an opportunity to *see, hear, and touch* a success story. Others will soon join new efforts, and momentum will start to build.

**Clarify expectations.** I failed miserably at this in the early years of leadership, and occasionally still do. Whether it is a new hire, or a new project, we must clarify our expectations. It's important to have your team also clarify theirs. Others will never trust us if they are unsure of what we expect from them and what they can expect from us. Clarity will make the journey smoother for all.

When we fail to properly clarify, we run the risk of creating the environment for division within the ranks. I have lost great middle leaders because of my inability to clarify their roles, timelines, and my expectations.

**Keep commitments.** This at times is so difficult to do and not always attainable. As much as possible keep your commitments. I am speaking primarily of commitments that are time related. There is a tendency of leaders to



over commit and then back out and this places doubts in the minds of those you lead of your trustworthiness.

My approach is simple. I set my calendar first with my priorities and then let others vie for the open slots. This keeps me in the driver's seat and makes it easier for me to maintain balance. My goal is to first keep my commitments to myself, then the core team, and then others I serve.

**Constantly lift the lid on your potential.** A leader stops effectively leading when he stops growing as a person and a leader. Never let it be said that one of your team members outgrew you while you were leading him or her. All leaders must be committed to lifting the lid on their potential. My grandmother would often say to her grandchildren that the greatest room in the world will always be the room for improvement. It has been said that you can't take anyone further than where you have been. Pay special attention to your growth patterns. Are they consistent?

Commitment to growth ties in with the previous practice of *keeping commitments*. Your commitment to yourself must be to become the best you that you can be for the Glory of the Lord and the benefit of the team and its mission.

**Practice accountability.** Can you be trusted? Who are you accountable to? A gigantic and I mean a gigantic part of systems I put in place have accountability safeguards. I want to be held accountable for my actions. If I don't practice accountability, then I can't confidently demand

it of others. There is a board that I am accountable to as a pastor. We hold monthly board meetings rain or shine and have a policy of transparency.

There are colleagues in ministry who I have made myself accountable to. Even the Lone Ranger had his Tonto. My accountability partners have my permission to inquire of anything in any area of my life, and a few sure do. For the past seven years I have been a part of Friday night prayer and dialogue with a group of leaders. We meet by SKYPE and serve each other as accountability partners.

I have throughout the years tried to model these trust-building practices within the organizations I serve.

*Please complete the Scripture To Explore section.*

# SCRIPTURE TO EXPLORE

*What is one way leaders can earn the trust of others? (see Proverbs 14:22)*

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*What are some good deeds leaders can do to earn trust?*

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SCRIPTURE TO EXPLORE

*Using Hebrews 13:7 as a reference base, how do you want to be remembered as a leader?*

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SCRIPTURE TO EXPLORE

*Explain the importance of the above verse as it relates to setting a godly leadership example.*

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## Joseph Was Given Responsibilities

*And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners that were in the prison.*

—Genesis 39:22

Joseph was given responsibilities, which included oversight of the other inmates. Joseph led from a unique position. He led from the *middle*. He was not the top leader but a middle leader chosen from among the inmates. This position allowed him to connect with the prison keeper above him and also the inmates and any other staff below him. I have never read anything about the keeper, but he was keenly insightful to employ this strategy. The keeper was insightful in that he understood the value of placing Joseph in a middle leadership position. Joseph was a link or bridge, allowing a flow of information both ways.

As an inmate Joseph was able to connect with the other inmates in a practical not just a theoretical way. He understood the prison from their view point because he was there and one of them. It is wise to appoint some *middle leaders* from the rank and file of your organization. Middle leaders are in a better position to articulate your vision to those you are responsible for because of the influence they enjoy. Often greater buy-in comes from this approach. As a middle leader, Joseph was able to draw on the support from fellow inmates and the approval of

the keeper. He led from the middle, which is always a strategic position of influence. Influence tends to win out in the end.

I served in the field of education for over 15 years and came to the conclusion that the greatest person of influence in an educational institution is the vice-principal. The vice-principal can only serve effectively with the nod of the principal and acceptance of staff members. When those nods are given, success follows. Often the vice-principal is called upon to run the day-to-day operations and is only successful if the support of the administration, staff, and educators is secured.

The potential influence of a vice-principal is best used to convey concerns both ways, from the principal to stake holders-staff and from stake holders-staff to the principal. Once promoted to a principal post, my top priority was hiring the right vice-principal. This hiring process was slow and deliberate and the first place a potential vice-principal was sought was from within the organization. The right educational leadership team is a win-win situation for everyone, especially for students and parents.

The choice of a middle leader is extremely important. If that person under consideration has the following they may be a great fit for you and the organization you lead:

**A proven leadership track record.** A proven track record is a must because of the place of influence a middle leader commands. A middle leader can build or tear down the influence of upper leadership. A proven track record is not a guarantee in itself of expertise; however it's a great indicator. A middle leader should not be a newcomer to leadership roles.

**A high commitment level.** It is imperative that middle leaders have a high commitment level. They must be willing to fuel the vision and motivate those they have influence with. No organization can be successful that receives low and limited commitments from its middle leaders. Middle leaders are the heart and soul of the organization. They regulate the energy and define the character of organizations.

**A loyal disposition.** I look for loyalty in and from my core team. Middle leaders are very talented and want to succeed. You must account for this in working with your middle leaders. Can they be faithful to you and the vision you have? Not all middle leaders can wait for their turn or opportunity to lead. Some will use their influence to undermine the leader. This is why the first quality I look for is a proven track record.

Make an informed decision at all times. Not only is the health of the organization dependent on it, but yours as well.

*Please complete the Scripture To Explore section.*

SCRIPTURE TO EXPLORE

*Why do faithfulness and the giving of greater responsibilities go hand in hand? (see Luke 16:10)*

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*Name at least three small things a leader ought to be faithful in that will eventually result in receiving increased responsibilities.*

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# SCRIPTURE TO EXPLORE

*Using Romans 8:13 as a reference base, what does the concept of Spirit Reliance Leadership mean to you?*

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# SCRIPTURE TO EXPLORE

*Give some examples of leading from the perspective of the flesh. What is the ultimate outcome of this leadership approach?*

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## Joseph Had Permission To Develop A System

*And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners that were in the prison; and whatsoever they did there, he was the doer of it.*

—Genesis 39:22

The keeper of the prison displayed at least two excellent qualities of an effective leader. He was a great *assessor* and *releaser*. We don't know the duration between Joseph's entering prison and being placed in his leadership role, but I am sure there was a vetting process and period. It didn't happen overnight. Success never occurs overnight nor should the vetting process of an emerging leader.

The keeper would have assessed Joseph, looking for the qualities needed to manage the overall prison responsibilities. The qualities of good managers and leaders always include good people and communication skills. Joseph had a great vertical relationship with God, confirmed by heaven's favor he enjoyed. He also was above reproach, and when falsely accused, was extended grace by his master. One can't enjoy this kind of favor without right standing with God and communication skills. These are a must if godly leaders are to successfully lead.

Once the assessment was completed, the appointment followed. For this to happen in our organizations we must have a measurable system in place. I am sure the keeper of the prison got feedback from Potiphar. Information from reliable sources would have been gathered and evaluated.

How do I evaluate persons without giving them a try at the new position? This question I frequently asked myself in the earlier years of ministry leadership. My answer in part is if they have been successful in the past and continue to raise their level of proficiency as a leader, I am inclined to promote them. (See Luke 16:12).

The account is careful to state that whatever was done, Joseph was the doer of it. The keeper of the prison *released* Joseph into his role. It's unfair to give a middle manager or leader responsibility without a measure of authority. Joseph was allowed to develop his personal system for running the prison. Many employees are never given this privilege, but rather are asked to simply run the system they find in place, or at best are allowed to offer suggestions for its improvement.

A system is a set of methods and procedures that are used to carry out a specific activity. The value of an effective system is great. An effective SYSTEM saves you *stress, time, energy, and money*.

Joseph developed a system for running the prison as he had developed one for Potiphar's house. I am sure some components of both systems were identical. Everything the inmates did, he either designed or accomplished. Many years ago, I was hired by a major company as a consultant. I was allowed to develop

a system for our interaction. That system was extremely successful—so successful that I modified it and use it today with all my clients. Are there other systems of equal value? Yes, but when given the opportunity, use what God’s gift in you has crafted.

Joseph’s system was efficient to the point where his overseer was able to attend to other things. Once again this shows the maturity level of the keeper of the prison. He chose the right person and didn’t micromanage Joseph, but released him into his role. I am sure he had some form of accountability system in place for Joseph, but micromanagement was not a part of it. I will coach my middle leaders but try to never micromanage them. However, there are times when micromanagement is advantageous. I use it when I am training new personnel, and trying to control high-risk situations. But long-term micromanagement is a bad idea. It increases the chances of staff turnover due to, among other things, low morale. No one wants a leader constantly looking over his or her shoulder.

Part of my leadership system has an acceptable failure component. I allow and welcome failure. Using failure properly allows for personal and leadership growth. Determining the areas where failure is permitted becomes a teaching and learning tool. Leaders who are constantly micromanaged will not grow as leaders or grow the areas they are responsible for. Micromanaged leaders are not stretched. Those who micromanage others often find themselves at considerable risk of burnout, so long-term micromanagement is unhealthy all around.

*Please complete the Scripture To Explore section.*

# SCRIPTURE TO EXPLORE

*What kind of system is I Corinthians referring to, and what is its value?*

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*What challenges do you think this system experiences, and why?*

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SCRIPTURE TO EXPLORE

*The system called creation is ordered and sustained by Jesus Christ. How do you think He sustains it? (see Colossians 1:15-20)*

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SCRIPTURE TO EXPLORE

*Read Genesis 11:1-9 and list system characteristics that you discover in these verses.*

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## Joseph Delivered Positive Results

*The keeper of the prison looked not to any thing that was under his hand; because the LORD was with him, and that which he did, the LORD made it to prosper.*

—Genesis 39:23

Joseph delivered. The account says the Lord made it prosper. The word prosper implies continual success. Effective leaders produce results over and over again. The Lord makes things prosper when we at least are *obedient, trustworthy, and when we employ an effective system*. Leadership is about results. Effective leaders produce. Results do matter. Joseph was a producer and so must we be. What is sadly missing in most leadership training is an emphasis on results. We often focus on *vision, competencies, and character*. These three are essentials. But what's the use of being a leader if it doesn't produce results? A results-oriented leader always asks and answers the question "*what is really needed?*" before they figure out how to meet it. Even the GI Joe animated cartoon understood this principle as depicted in the phrase "knowing is half the battle."

Joseph was assessed, and I am sure he assessed the prison keeper and the prison, too. Perhaps Joseph came to the conclusion that the prison keeper wanted to better utilize his last few years of his career and prepare a replacement for his

position. Our perception of need helps craft our efforts and targeted results. Don't overlook this process.

My wife and I for the duration of our ministry (thirty-five years and counting) always seem to be given assignments that require a great measure of rebuilding. That is, rebuilding or creating effective systems. We have discovered the importance of assessments and results-focus planning. We found that measuring results helps in many ways. We measure achievements against goals. This in turn allows us to effectively evaluate personnel and systems. All of this factors in to how we appoint and track leaders' individual growth, and how we design leadership-development programs within the organization. Results is not everything but a great part of it. You have to find a balance between attributes and results.

**I look for godly leaders possessing the following:**

*Initiative - leaders with startup ability is the first quality I look for.* Effective leaders take initiative because they are able to see the big picture. They are able to see opportunities and embrace them. Initiative is doing the right thing without a directive. It's the ability to think and act on one's feet. Leaders with initiative don't have to be told every time what to do. Once I was blessed to have an assistant who was so in tune with what needed to be done that all I had to do was add my signature to prepared documents. Those who take initiative act instead of reacting.

Not everyone is born with initiative, but the good news is it's a skill that can be developed. You can develop the skill of initiative by:



*Commitment to a career path.* When we commit to a career path, we are taking initiative and it often transfers to our work environment. When we clearly understand our career path and what is expected of the role, we are in a better position to act and not simply be reactionary. Commitment helps build informed risk-taking, and in turn self-confidence. People with high commitment to obtaining their preferred future often develop initiative.

*Developing Resolve.* It's important to develop resolve. Persistence is the art of continuing even when you are faced with difficulties or inactivity by other team members. Also important is the understanding that resolve doesn't mean you're not willing to change or modify your ideas and actions. Success is attained in part from the ability to adjust while moving forward. Resolve is commitment to continually move forward regardless of challenges.

*Maintaining Balance.* Maintaining balance is an art that is imperative for leaders. Wisdom must be employed in using initiative. Some situations will not call for it, and if used can hurt rather than assist a team's effort. Balance is ensuring initiative doesn't develop into a spirit of aggression. It's impossible for one person to have all the great ideas. Emotional intelligence or the ability to properly read the emotions of others is a wonderful tool for assisting in keeping balance. This skill helps us do the right thing in the situation. A wise person never says everything he knows all of the time. Allow others an opportunity at times to shine.

*Inspiring leadership* - Strive to be a leader who doesn't intimidate but rather who motivates. Intimidation is a fact

of life. It is present in some form in every organization, but strive to eliminate it completely from your leadership style. Intimidation inhibits others from performing to their full potential. It's a desperate tactic of weak and insecure leaders. Godly leaders motivate through inspiration. I think we inspire those we lead when we put their welfare first and they realize it. We not only believe in the project but more importantly in them. Make the people you lead the engine of your success. They are indeed the greatest resource you have as a leader. I look for leaders who can inspire others to not only embrace the vision and goals of the organization, but inspire them to strive to reach their full potential.

*Influencing leadership* - Successful leaders always use their sway to win for the organization's sake. Influence is power, and effective leadership is influence. How influence is used greatly determines outcomes. Use your influence for the betterment of the organization and not your personal goals or desires. It is important to remember that God gives us influence to fulfil His purpose, not ours. Influence like everything else we gain or is entrusted to us is only for a season. I look for leaders who practice influence wisely.

*Implementation - leaders capable of executing systems.* Your organization may have a great system in place, but is it being utilized properly? I am attracted to leaders who are able to implement systems. They are not lazy or simply relying on their sheer talents to lead. Leaders capable of this understand that systems are designed to bring stability and growth patterns. An example of this is *fast food chains* that are in position to effectively train staff

and deliver customer services because of assembly line and drive-through systems.

Do you have what it takes to effectively run systems? As a pastor, I am more of a shepherd of systems as opposed to one of the people. Part of my system involves the raising up of emerging leaders who assist me in leading and caring for others.

I believe Joseph exhibited these traits and more.

*Please complete the Scripture To Explore section.*

SCRIPTURE TO EXPLORE

*What was Noah’s attitude toward God? (see Genesis 6:22)*

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*What results did Noah produce and why?*

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SCRIPTURE TO EXPLORE

*Using Esther 4:14 as a reference base, what did Esther have to overcome?*

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SCRIPTURE TO EXPLORE

*Read Acts 8: 25-40. What elements for positive results are contained in these verses?*

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*The next part of the book is interactive. It asks you to explore Scriptures and complete a profile. You may wish to complete the assignments as devotions if not completing them in a workshop setting.*



## DIGGING DEEP

Preparation for promotion can be overwhelming at times, and the process will definitely stretch the person who is on this journey. There are in the Bible many examples of men and women who have walked out this process. Their examples ought to give us the needed insights to be successful in our own treks. Sometimes to see their examples we have to dig deep into the Word of God with this as our purpose.

Our leadership roles present us with numerous opportunities to leave godly examples for others to follow. All can build upon the efforts of others and also provide a platform for others to build upon. This ought to be a continuous process as we climb and re-climb leadership ladders.

During your personal study time, look up and list Scriptural references for the following topics and complete the exercise. This may seem difficult, but it really is not. You can get help in finding the Scriptures from a Bible concordance, a teacher, others, or the Internet. Discuss your findings with a friend. You may want to complete the entire exercise with a friend.

### ❖ **Godly Insight**

1. Scripture Text \_\_\_\_\_
2. Scripture Text \_\_\_\_\_
3. Scripture Text \_\_\_\_\_

a) What is godly insight?

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b) Name two biblical characters who displayed godly insight:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

c) Why is godly insight necessary for promotion? Give an example from your life.

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❖ **Godly Endurance**

1. Scripture Text \_\_\_\_\_

2. Scripture Text \_\_\_\_\_

3. Scripture Text \_\_\_\_\_

a) What is godly endurance?

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- b) Give a biblical example of someone displaying godly endurance.

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- c) Give an example of how godly endurance changed a situation for you.

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## EVALUATE THE STEP

To evaluate means to look over or inspect and see the good and the bad in something. When we evaluate, we attempt to discover how we should respond in a godly manner to our preparation for promotion seasons.

Joseph gives us a vivid example of how improving your skill-sets as you rely upon the Lord can lead to godly success. Not all biblical characters were as successful as Joseph. We will briefly view other biblical leaders with the intent of gleaning from their experiences.

This evaluation step is designed to assist you in addressing any challenges that you may have in the area of improving your skill-sets and reliance upon the Lord as a leader during challenging times.

### GODLY LEADERS AND THEIR JOURNEYS

The leaders highlighted here have provided us with examples both good and bad. We can learn from their experiences and appreciate the opportunity to study their accounts. Leadership is a journey that has many challenges and opportunities for success. The development of one's skills is vital for sustained success.

Any leader today can learn from these biblical leaders. One does not need to personally handle fire to know of its ability to warm and harm.

## LEADERS AND THEIR SKILL-SETS

- ❖ *David grew in many areas, but at times had issues with his thought life. What was one result of a lack of skill in this area? (see 2 Samuel 11)*

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- ❖ *Explain how you developed the skills necessary to control your thought life.*

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- ❖ *Who was Hiram-Abi and what was he skilled in? (see 2 Chronicles 2)*

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❖ *How do you think Hiram-Abi developed his skill-set?*

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❖ *The Lord looks for willingness and skills. Why do you think this is so? (see Exodus 35:26)*

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❖ *How important do you think skills are for an emerging leader and why?*

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# PERSONAL DISCOVERY

- ❖ *What concerns you the most about your current skill level as a leader?*

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- ❖ *What system do you currently have for self-improvement, and are you satisfied with it?*

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- ❖ *Name three persons who you feel would give you godly advice in regard to this third step. Make an appointment to see at least one and seek advice on steps to overcome that which most concerns you about developing your skills as a leader.*

1. 

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2. 

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3. 

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## PRACTICE THE STEP

**A**s we learn and develop steps to success, it is important to consistently walk in these steps. By practicing, they become a part of our everyday life and ministry. The step we have just studied is the step *of preparation for promotion (developing skill-sets)*. How can we practice this step? We practice it by consistently evaluating our skills as a leader and committing to personal and leadership growth, also in positioning ourselves in the environments conducive for growth.

Over the next few days, conduct a daily personal inventory, allowing the Holy Spirit to search the inward parts, revealing what is in your heart. As revelation comes, write down your personal adjustments.

### YOUR PERSONAL ADJUSTMENTS

List 10 adjustments you will make to ensure you are successful in your preparation for promotion step. Be specific.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_

## **PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE**

It is important to practice this exercise of 10 and continually make necessary adjustments to ensure you continue developing in your process of *“preparation for promotion.”* God is interested in our achieving success in our personal lives and ministry endeavors. It is our responsibility to turn ability into skill-sets.

Practice this important step to success, maximize your opportunities, and then manage challenges that emerge in your life and ministry. Practice still makes perfect.



## SEE THE SUCCESS

Success may be both immediate and progressive. True success means responding to the call and to the challenges we receive in a fashion that is pleasing to God. Success is very much godly results—it's outcome-focused. Everyone wants to achieve this God-given purpose and maximize their potential.

Today, after years of practicing the step of *preparation for promotion*, I have come to realize this third step's tremendous value to me and my efforts as a leader. On a recent trip abroad, I was graciously rewarded for my display of skills in a particular leadership area. Developing that skill-set was not easy and was quite time consuming, but was vital for my promotion. As you commit your ways to the Lord, you must believe that the word of God and the work of the Holy Spirit will ensure that the proper wisdom is employed.

I encourage you to follow through on further developing this step in your personal life and leadership endeavors. You may wish to keep a journal. Document your steps, pause at times to reflect, re-adjust, and ready yourself for future success. Practice the step and see the success!





# FULFILLING PURPOSE PERSONAL AUDIT

Please read each of the following statements. Circle the number that best describes how true each statement is for you.

## GOD'S APPROVAL

- 1.** I know my personal life is experiencing God's approval.
  1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False
  
- 2.** I know my leadership role is experiencing God's approval.
  1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False
  
- 3.** I am always aware of the need to operate from the place and position of God's approval.
  1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False

4. I am always willing to establish God's approval in my personal life regardless of the personal sacrifice involved.
  1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False
  
5. I am always willing to establish God's approval in my leadership role regardless of the personal and professional sacrifices involved.
  1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False

## **EARNED TRUST**

1. I fully understand the value of earned trust as a leader.
  1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False
  
2. I always do my utmost to earn the trust of my superiors.
  1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False
  
3. I always strive to develop trust with those I lead.
  1. True
  2. More true than false

3. More false than true
4. False
- 4.** My relationship with the Lord always grows during my ladder re-climbs. I always wait patiently on God's timing for my promotion.
  1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False
5. I always display the spirit of trust with my core leadership team.
  1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False

## **GIVEN RESPONSIBILITY**

- 1.** I fully understand how competence and added responsibilities are connected.
  1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False
- 2.** I always reward my core team for competence.
  1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False

3. I have received additional responsibilities for my faithfulness as a leader.
  1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False
4. I am developing a proven track record as a leader.
  1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False
5. I display a high level of commitment at all times as a leader.
  1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False

## DEVELOP SYSTEMS

1. I understand the importance of systems in the workplace and value them.
  1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False
2. The systems in my place of employment are always recognizable to me.
  1. True
  2. More true than false

3. More false than true
  4. False
- 3.** I am always trusted by my superiors to develop systems for my responsibility areas.
1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False
- 4.** I always assist my core team in developing their working systems.
1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False
- 5.** I am always willing to improve my working systems by allowing input from others.
1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False

## **DELIVERED RESULTS**

- 1.** I am results driven as a leader.
1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False

- 2.** I coach my core team to understand why results and positive outcomes are vital for our organization.
  1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False
  
- 3.** I am always inspiring those around me to produce positive results in their areas of responsibility.
  1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False
  
- 4.** I always celebrate my core team's successes in a meaningful and public way.
  1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False
  
- 5.** I have obtained results (fruit) in my ministry that still remain.
  1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False

## TOTAL YOUR SCORE

Add the numbers and place them in the spaces provided. Then multiply them by the given number.

**True = 1**

**More true than false = 2**

**More false than true = 3**

**False = 4**

True 1 X \_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_

More true than false 2 X \_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_

More false than true 3 X \_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_

False 4 X \_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_

Add the numbers together and read the results of your audit.

**Total**\_\_\_\_\_

## IF YOUR TOTAL SCORE IS

**25-35:** All three categories are engrained in your personal life and leadership role.

**36-55:** You are practicing them well. If your total score is closer to 55, you must pay more attention to one or more categories.

**56-75:** You must continue to work on developing all concepts.

**76-100:** Others probably do not view you as an effective leader. You may want to rethink your motives for service.



# PERSONAL IMPROVEMENT STEPS

The purpose of this exercise is to identify areas that need improvement and develop a plan to address them.

**STEP ONE:** List an area where your score is a 3 or 4.

## GOD'S APPROVAL

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My score is a \_\_\_\_

**STEP TWO:** Develop a plan for personal improvement. You may refer to your list of 10 personal adjustments for assistance in developing the plan.



# PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

[illegible]



# PERSONAL IMPROVEMENT STEPS

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---

My score is a \_\_\_\_

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## PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

[illegible]



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**STEP ONE:** List an area where your score is a 3 or 4.

## GIVEN RESPONSIBLY

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My score is a \_\_\_\_

**STEP TWO:** Develop a plan for personal improvement. You may refer to your list of 10 personal adjustments for assistance in developing the plan.

## PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.



# PERSONAL IMPROVEMENT STEPS

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## DEVELOP SYSTEMS

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My score is a \_\_\_\_

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## PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

[illegible]



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## DELIVERED RESULTS

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My score is a \_\_\_\_

**STEP TWO:** Develop a plan for personal improvement. You may refer to your list of 10 personal adjustments for assistance in developing the plan.



## PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

[illegible]

You have now completed your personal development plan. As you begin to implement your plan, it will be wise to continually review it and seek guidance from the Holy Spirit. Your plan will help you move forward in your walk in the Spirit. It is important to strengthen your weak areas and build on your strengths. This process may be repeated as necessary.



## OTHER BOOKS BY JONATHAN

***Joshua*** – Teaches how to be successful in your personal life and leadership roles. It introduces biblical and practical steps for successfully fulfilling your purpose. In this book, Jonathan compares the crossing of the Jordan to the steps that a person has to take to be successful. The six steps presented are: *Respond, Remove, Relocate, Request, Require, and Respect*. A personal audit is also provided for assessment and further development.

***Leadership Essentials*** – In essence, we are all leaders, be it in our homes, ministries, workplaces, or leisure places. Continual personal success and the successes of those we influence are in part connected to *Visibility, Prayer, Counsel, and Faith*. They should be prominently positioned in our coaching, mentoring, and personal development efforts. These topics are discussed, and readers are provided with personal and group study questions. A personal audit is also provided for assessment and further development.

***Effective Leadership*** – Nehemiah wore three hats: He was a cupbearer, a builder, and a governor. In our study, we will view the enquiring and rebuilding principles from his roles as cupbearer and builder. These timeless principles are timely in dealing with challenges with rebuilding and

restoring that today's leaders face. This study provides several projects for you to undertake to enhance your learning of these God-given principles, including an Effective Leadership Personal Audit, which serves as an assessment tool and a goal-setting device.

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