

STEPS TO SUCCESS SERIES

LEADERSHIP ESSENTIALS

Visibility, Prayer, Counsel, and Faith

DR. JONATHAN C. CAREY



LEADERSHIP ESSENTIALS

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All Scripture quotations are taken from the Authorized King James Version of the Bible.

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Contents

Preface	1
Introduction	3
Step 1: Visibility	7
Step 2: Prayer	29
Step 3: Counsel	47
Step 4: Faith	65
Leadership Essentials: A Personal Audit	79
Plan of Salvation	113
About the Series	115

This Series Is Dedicated To Those Desirous of God-Ordained Success

“ *Dr. Carey has a passion to give young people and adults a footing and framework in which to flourish on life's pathway. From his wide range of experience as a minister, teacher and Christian guidance counselor, he blends rock solid faith principles with simple practical steps. With seasoned insight, Jonathan uniquely crafts this discipleship resource as an enriching tool to shape the mind, the heart, the character and actions of all who desire a fulfilling and successful Christian journey.* ”

Dallas Elder

Director, Grace Covenant International

Preface

This book and the entire series were developed to provide in a workbook form steps for personal and ministry success for believers. It targets two groups. Firstly, leaders desiring biblically-based personal development study materials and secondly, men and women that are incarcerated as an evangelism and personal development tool.

The steps are taken from biblical characters reflecting part of their life's quest and challenges. It is hoped that the series will be welcomed not only by believers for personal study, but also by, Bible Training Institutes, Mission Organizations, Sunday School Classes, Cell Groups, Prison Ministries, and all those who are involved in the maturing of the saints. Tips for instructors using this series in group settings are available in the article section on our Web site (www.ctcnetwork.org).

The author, on a limited basis, is available to conduct Steps to Success related workshops and seminars.

BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE

Successful personal-ministry developmental steps do flow from the pages of the Bible, but are these steps applicable for believers today? Indeed they are. What then ought we to do with these biblical steps to success? Perhaps the first step is the creation-maintenance of an environment in our ministries and organizations where they are recognized, taught, and encouraged.

Biblical steps to success take place when believers respond in obedience to God's call. They recognize the importance of total obedience, allowing 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 be successful we must fulfill the will of God for our lives!

The Bible teaches that we can be successful only when we are in right relationship with God. This right relationship is made possible by the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The plan for personal salvation is found at the back of this workbook. If you are studying this workbook as a group, your instructor will share this plan with you. If you are independently studying this material, go there first and read the plan of salvation. Then you can begin your study.

I encourage you to contact a chaplain, pastor, Christian worker or our organization (www.ctcnetwork.org) for additional help and counsel.

Introduction

Welcome to this study on Leadership Essentials. In 2007, I released the book, *“Practical Wisdom for Building Your Vision”*. Many of my colleagues, who read the book, suggested that I write a workbook for the topics: *Visibility, Prayer, Counsel, and Faith*. Leadership Essentials is that workbook.

Leadership is necessary; however it is extremely difficult at times. Lack of or inadequate leadership plunges families, communities, organizations, and nations into a state of pandemonium. Children without proper guidance become underachievers. Sheep without adequate shepherds are often scattered. Sound leadership is indispensable for success.

The mantle of leadership may be passed on, but, Christian leaders are called and appointed by God, they are to be developed, not simply assigned. This developmental process is comprised of discipline, hard work and a commitment to self-improvement.

Throughout my years of Christian service I have seen the value of and for *Visibility, Prayer, Counsel, and Faith* in my life and the lives of other leaders.

In essence, we are all leaders and have the potential for leadership greatness, be it in our homes, ministries, workplaces, or leisure places. I believe our continual successes and the successes of those we influence are in part connected to these four essentials. They should be prominently positioned in our mentoring and personal development efforts.

This study provides numerous projects for you to complete. 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 throughout. The method of study is derived from the acronym STEPS.

Also provided for you is a *Leadership Essentials Personal Audit*. This audit serves as an assessment tool and a goal setting device. The audit should be taken at the conclusion of the study. Let's now take the first step!

STEPS

STATE THE STEP

TEACH THE STEP

EVALUATE THE STEP

PRACTICE THE STEP

SEE THE SUCCESS

STEP ONE

Visibility

“Go to now, ye that say, Today or tomorrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that.”

(James 4:13-15)

STATE THE STEP

Our lives are brief and ever fading and must be visibly lived out exhibiting godly purpose, humility, unselfishness, and love.

TEACH THE STEP

James, the brother of Jesus Christ, wrote the epistle of James to the Jewish believers in Christ in his day. James calls them, and by extension believers everywhere, to a life that shows the world in which they live: *godly purpose, humility, unselfishness, and love*. These are qualities of the spiritually focused, and ought to be visible in all leaders. The epistle is loaded with Steps to Success principles and is worth studying in its entirety.

In the above Scripture, James encourages his readers to view their lives as vapors. With this as a foundational principle, he says that it is foolish to plan and pursue anything outside of God’s will, emphasizing

that one's thoughts and actions must harmonize with God's purpose and providence. We are advised to remember that all plans are subject to God's granted permission and enablement. God's purpose must guide the choices for our tomorrows, and will ultimately determine our success. The truth is that leaders are to lead by example, and must ensure that their steps are directed by the Holy Spirit.

Is It Possible to Know God's Purpose for Our Lives?

The wonderful reality is that we can and should know God's purpose for our lives. His purpose for our very existence is not held as an eternal secret. God by His *Word* has openly declared and decreed His plan and purpose for humankind. By His *Spirit* He orders the steps of each person, thus establishing a specific role for every life. I believe He shares His purpose for each inquiring mind daily. Is this not to a certain extent the intent of prayer? We discover and cultivate His will for us in *prayer*, and through submission allow its Earthly birth and full development. Often submission to God in the wilderness of various *circumstances* creates a path toward God's will for us. His purpose governs and guides the intent of the human heart; it reflects and mirrors the pulse of the divine.

James admonishes us that plans are sure, predictable, and successful only when they are in accordance with God's purpose. He uses an analogy of a person's life with that of a vapor, brief and constantly fading. However, upon closer examination we discover that this brief and fading entity has to be visible in order to please God and fulfill His purpose.

A Person's Life is to be Visible

A life which is visible ought to be accessible too. It should be fashioned so that it can be seen and touched by all. It is also transparent, allowing greater light to shine through it.

What is evident by the teachings of Scripture is that once a person recognizes and responds to the call, and further develops passion and knowledge for his or her endeavors, life then cannot and must not be lived in a vacuum that is unrelated to and detached from an audience. A person's life must be visible.

The Mandate

Even with all our weaknesses, challenges, and insecurities, we are still required to present ourselves to God and our world as visible servants. We are to be visible in our personal, ministry, and professional lives. Our faith must be constantly on display. It is impossible for a believer to separate his faith from his ministry, profession, or daily life. The world is our mission field, and our spiritual walk is the strength and godly witness in that field.

When we attempt to live double or separated lives, we run the risk of robbing others of opportunities for wholeness and fulfillment. We are mandated to model Jesus Christ. God never intended for us to live our lives under the radar of an audience; it is selfish and perhaps even cowardly to live constantly for oneself.

We are stewards of the talents and gifts entrusted in our care by our Heavenly Father, we must share and display them; they are not for personal relishing, but for the benefit of all. It is not egotistical to desire to make an impact on your generation. This desire can be accomplished with godly purpose, humility, unselfishness, and love. The grace and gifts of God are sufficient for this quest. We are to become and stay visible for the glory of God and the betterment of the human race. Visibility remains one of the prime responsibilities of believers.

SCRIPTURE TO EXPLORE

Jesus stated in Matthew 5:14-16 that believers are the light of the world. What does Jesus say should be the results of visibility?

We are designed and destined for visibility, and must be determined to live out this divine privilege. Many of us are embodied with temperaments or preferences that prefer isolation and solitude; however, we are mandated to be visible. This we accomplish through the power of the Holy Spirit (see Acts 1:8).

We are here for a brief moment, and equipped with the ability to fulfill God's purpose on the stage of life. Let your light shine in the dark paths of internal and external human struggles, and allow it to point fellow sojourners in the direction of God's divine light, Jesus Christ. This is the *transparent* element of a vapor.

We are transparent when we allow the light of God to shine through; we are visible for His cause and glory. Being visible is not a choice, it is a Kingdom of Heaven Mandate. Both Matthew and Mark recorded this Kingdom mandate commonly known as *The Great Commission*.

Believers are commanded to "*Go*." We are then to be visible. The Great Commission is not just for a select few, but for everyone. All believers have received this command, and will be held responsible for its fulfillment. As we go about our daily lives in the workplace and leisure place we are to preach Christ. We are to make Him known.

The Kingdom of God is the center focus in Heaven and desires to be the center focus on Earth. It is to be seen in that grand place on Earth through us. Let others choose to remain behind the scenes, take your place among the active participants and Execute God's will for your life. The Great Commission to the best of your ability, leave your imprint and a godly legacy. Blaze a trail, fulfill your divine purpose, and shine as a reflector of Jesus Christ. Know Him in His fullness, and make Him fully known through your visible life and ministry.

SCRIPTURE TO EXPLORE

The Gospels of Matthew and Mark have a great deal to say about The Great Commission. Read the following Scriptures and complete the exercise:

Matthew 28:18-19: Explain the mission of believers:

Mark 16:15-18: List the signs that ought to follow those that believe:

Digging Deep

Visibility is a command we have received from Jesus Christ. It is impossible to fulfill God's plan and purpose for our lives if we are not obedient to the commands we receive. Throughout our entire lives, we will be faced with the challenge of obeying God in the areas of our personal lives and ministries.

Each stage of development may bring new issues that tend to cloud our thinking and hinder total obedience.

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 chaplain, pastor, others, or the Internet. Discuss your findings with a friend. You may want to complete the entire exercise with a friend.

GODLY PURPOSE

1. Scripture Text _____

2. Scripture Text _____

3. Scripture Text _____

a) What is godly purpose?

b) Name two biblical characters who visibly lived out godly purposes:

i. _____

ii. _____

c) Why is godly purpose vital to success?

HUMILITY

1. Scripture Text _____

2. Scripture Text _____

3. Scripture Text _____

a) What is the biblical concept of humility?

b) What's the difference between humility and weakness? Give an example.

c) How does one maintain a spirit of humility?

UNSELFISHNESS

1. Scripture Text _____

2. Scripture Text _____

3. Scripture Text _____

a) Give an example of the unselfish nature of Jesus Christ:

b) Name a leader in the Bible who exhibited an unselfish nature. Fully describe the event.

- c) Is an unselfish nature a liability in the workplace? Support your answer.

GOD'S WILL

1. Scripture Text _____
2. Scripture Text _____
3. Scripture Text _____

- a) What is God's will for the human race?

- b) What is God's general will for believers?

- c) Do you know God's will for you as it pertains to ministry? If yes, what is it?

EVALUATE THE STEP

This evaluation step is designed to assist you in confronting any of these hindrances that may have a grip on your life and is preventing your visibility as a Christian and/or leader.

There are many reasons why a person may refuse to become or remain visible, here are four: Fear, Familiarity, Failure, and Fatigue.

FEAR

Fear is an intense dislike or distaste to, or apprehension of a person or place, event or activity that causes emotional distress, and often avoidance behavior. Because of fear many will never climb the stage of life, and others have abandoned their stage. Fear is not only an intense dislike, distaste, or apprehension, it is also a spirit that possesses and controls one's life.

We are reminded in Scripture that *"God has not given us the spirit of fear: but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind"* (2 Timothy 1:7). The Apostle Paul wrote this to Timothy, his son in the Gospel. It was written to encourage him and others to remain steadfast in the midst of challenges. By personal experience Paul knew of the lethal grip of fear. If fear is not from God, then from where does it originate? It originates from and is used as a ploy of Satan, and can be a dream and vision killer.

The spirit of fear or apprehension stifles, and if it is left unchecked, eventually eliminates the forward movement of a person, purpose, undertaking, or vision. Fear paralyzes the heart and immobilizes the walk. Some are afraid of failure, while others are afraid of success. Some are trapped by the memories and deeds of the past, while others are afraid of impending change that is most certain. Still others fear rejection, criticism, responsibilities, and the demands that visibility entails.

Fear is faith misdirected and misapplied. By this, I mean fear believes that the negative or thing feared will come to pass, and this conviction helps create its reality. “*What I feared has come upon me; what I dreaded has happened to me*” (Job 3:25). This renders fear as influential as faith; over time it develops into a belief system, taking on a mind of its own, thus classified as a spirit.

We overcome fear and neutralize its influence by unwavering faith in God and through obedience to His Word. By embracing God and His provisions, we are able to operate in the spirit of power, love, and a sound mind.

Why is it vital for believers to overcome the spirit of fear? Fully explain.

Explain a recent challenge you had with the spirit of fear. What was the result?

FAMILIARITY

Familiarity is thorough knowledge and understanding of something. There are those that will never move forward in a vision or mandate from the Lord because they are too familiar with a person, place, or project. They allow their familiarity with any one of these to hinder them from viewing their position from a purely spiritual vantage point.

Familiarity hindered the Old Testament preacher Jonah. He was displeased that God wished to extend the opportunity for forgiveness toward the wicked city of Nineveh. Jonah's familiarity with the nature of the city and his self-righteousness resulted in him rebelling and attempting to flee God's presence and providence. By a series of events, God brought him to the place of accepting the call to visit and preach at Nineveh. God made him known on the ship in order to make him visible in the city (Jonah 1:1-7).

Like Jonah, our human knowledge is often in conflict with divine grace and preference. Familiarity often leads to prejudging and results in disobedience and consequently missed opportunities for the kind of success derived from pleasing God.

Familiarity may also cause one to be rejected by the community. Jesus could do only a few miracles in His hometown because of unbelief

(Matthew 13:58). The town's familiarity with Jesus overshadowed opportunity and produced an unbelief that nullified potential miracles. Familiarity applied as a negative virtue by His community produced this unbelief.

There will be those who will reject you and the message you share, simply because you are too familiar. Perhaps they knew you as a youth, or they observe flaws in your character. Many will embrace unknown ministers and leaders for guidance, somehow thinking a word from a stranger is more authentic. This will happen, but never let it be said that *you* missed a God-inspired opportunity because of familiarity. There are those in shouting and viewing distance that the Lord of the Harvest is using mightily; do not allow familiarity to overshadow your opportunity for success. See Christ in them, and let others *see* Christ in you.

Why do you think God still used Jonah to preach to the inhabitants of Nineveh?

Give an example of how familiarity robbed you of a blessing:

FAILURE

Failure is anything unsuccessful. We all have failed at one thing or another, whether it is family, marriage, parenting, business, career, hobbies the list may very well be endless. We have also, to varying degrees, failed God in our personal lives. All are guilty of falling short of the mark of holiness. From the perspective of guilt and shame, and engulfed with the pain associated with personal failure, we often wish to be excused from the stage of life. However, even in this wounded state we still sense the call on our lives; dreams may be dim, but they still exist; hope may be fading, but a flicker of it is still present.

It is certain that every leader must go through a season of trials and testing. The apostle Paul in the Book of Romans went to great lengths explaining the victory over sin that is ours by Christ Jesus (see Romans 8). Victory is possible in the midst of any temptation, trial, or test. However, he also acknowledged that believers will have a wilderness experience where they will be tempted and tried with varying success. When failure occurs, we are to confess it, repent of it, and seek forgiveness from the Lord and the offended, if possible.

LEADERSHIP ESSENTIALS

Name someone in the Bible that overcame failure and excelled in ministry. What was his or her strategy?

Does failure ever disqualify a person from a visible leadership role in ministry? Fully explain your view.

FATIGUE

Fatigue is exhaustion of strength because of toil. It is a weariness that takes over a person. Many leaders are just simply tired. They are drained of energy and consequently fade away from the stage of life. Fatigue may not only be physical; it may be emotional and spiritual. Fatigue often occurs when our lives are out of balance, or we have just completed a demanding task. It is at these moments and periods that we are most vulnerable.

A Remedy for a Fatigued Prophet

First Kings 18 and 19 tells an interesting story of a fatigued prophet. The prophet Elijah had just accomplished two great spiritual victories: the defeat and destruction of the false prophets of Baal, and the answered prayer for rain. Afterward, he received a death threat from King Ahab's wife, Jezebel, and would experience the nadir of fatigue and discouragement. The death threat was powerful in that it painted a visible picture.

“And Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and withal how he had slain all the prophets with the sword. Then Jezebel sent a messenger unto Elijah, saying, So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by tomorrow about this time” (1 Kings 19: 1, 2).

Alone, exhausted, and concerned for his life, fear gripped his heart and he fled. Weary and depressed, he sat under a tree and requested God to take his life. He wanted off the stage. The mission, isolation, and mounting stress were finally too much to endure. In this state, he inaccurately evaluated the situation and concluded that he was the only one still faithful to God. He no longer was able to see life from God's viewpoint; he was blinded by his challenges and rendered unbalanced by his weariness.

What *Steps to Success* remedy did God provide for this fatigued leader? God provided:

- Rest—Lengthy and peaceful (1 Kings 19:4-7)
- Refreshments—Food and drink (1 Kings 19:8)
- Regrouping—Physical activity and spiritual dialogue (1 Kings 19:8-14)
- Reassurance—God assured him there were still faithful others (1 Kings 19:18).
- Resume—God told him to get back to his mission—God’s purpose (1 Kings 19:15-17).
- Relationship—God made Elisha available for companionship and mentoring (1 Kings 19:19-21).

PERSONAL DISCOVERY

What concerns you the most about living a visible life?

Which of the four (Fear, Familiarity, Failure, or Fatigue) is the most challenging for you and why?

Name three persons that you feel would give you godly advice. Make an appointment to see at least one and seek advice or steps to overcome that which most hinders your visibility.

1.

2.

3.

PRACTICE THE STEP

As we learn new steps to success it is important for us to walk in these steps. By practicing, they become a part of our everyday life. The step we have just studied is the step of visibility. How can we practice this step? We practice it daily by evaluating our thoughts and actions. Conduct a daily personal inventory, allowing the Holy Spirit to search the inward parts, revealing what is in your heart. Sin will most definitely hinder godly purpose, humility, unselfishness, and love.

Psalm 51, gives us a model for recovery from sin. King David's process of repentance contains at least six steps:

1. Acknowledge your sin to yourself. "I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me" (v.3).
2. Acknowledge your sin to God. "Against thee only have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight..." (v.4).
3. Assert God's faithfulness and forgiveness. "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving kindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions" (v.1).
4. Accept your sinful nature as a reality. "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin my mother conceived me" (v.5).
5. Ask God to restore you. "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me" (v.10).
6. Answer the call to disciple. "Then will I teach transgressors thy ways" (v.13).

With godly *confidence, courage, counsel*, and *compassion* you move forward. God rescues, revives, and restores!

The Perfect Model

Jesus Christ is our perfect model; our example for overcoming temptations and trials. He proved in His wilderness experience that it is possible

to overcome Satan and the desires of the flesh. Jesus Christ, by conformity to and reliance upon the Word of God, came out of His wilderness experience in the power of the Holy Spirit (Luke 4). He endured temptations as a man led by the Holy Spirit, establishing a spiritual precedent. The work of the cross and the promise of the Father (Holy Spirit) ensures that this same power is available to all believers. I have found great comfort in the fact that Jesus will ask of me nothing that He has not already done Himself, and that He also provides the means for me to succeed.

The Value of Balance

“And the apostles gathered themselves together unto Jesus, and told him all things, both what they had done, and what they had taught. And he said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while: for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat” (Mark 6:30-31).

Jesus understood the value and necessity of and for rest. He instructed His disciples to take a break from ministering and eat and rest. He knew the importance of not allowing the demands associated with ministry to overshadow the basic needs of ministers.

Ministry and leadership are very demanding, and often those whom you minister to will not exercise a conscience. They will press you toward the brink of exhaustion, and this pressing may easily become a runaway train.

Jesus desired for His disciples to withdraw; however, the people followed them into the desert demanding yet more ministry. His attempt for balance failed. You must always strive to maintain a balance in your ministry. Design a plan for rest and relaxation, and follow it as much as possible. It will serve you well in the long run. In 2006, I had to make adjustments to my schedule. I was working an average of seventeen hours per workday and started to notice the telltale signs of physical and mental fatigue. Here is a list of my major adjustments:

- Work days were reduced to ten hour days
- Ministry related phone calls were routed through the office
- My cell phone was given to our daughter.
- Walks on the beach were taken at every possible opportunity
- Phone calls at home were not received after 9:00 PM
- Eating habits were changed
- Time with God, spouse, and family were increased

I fill my calendar first with my priorities, and for the first time in twenty-seven years of ministry, I know what it is like to politely decline a speaking engagement. Here is a thought to consider: When we become perpetually fatigued our visions are canceled by default.

YOUR PERSONAL ADJUSTMENTS

List ten adjustments that you will make to ensure you live a balanced life. Be specific and use timelines.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____

10. _____

Practice, Practice, Practice. It is important to practice this exercise of ten and continually make the necessary adjustments to ensure a balanced life. God is interested in us having longevity in our personal lives and ministry endeavors. Practice this step to success and maximize opportunities and manage challenges that flow into your life and ministry. Practice still makes perfect.

SEE THE SUCCESS

Today, after a number of years of practicing the step of visibility coupled with the safeguards that I have set up, I find that I am living a better, more fulfilling life. It is vital for success, and personally rewarding to practice what you preach. The fact that my thoughts are in print is a testimony of the power of the step of visibility, and one reward of committing to its mandate. *Visibility* that exhibits *godly purpose, humility, unselfishness, and love* is God-ordained and an absolute for success.

I encourage you to follow through on this step. You may want to develop the habit of keeping a journal. Document your steps, pausing at times to reflect, readjust, and ready yourself for future success. Practice the step, see the success.

STEP TWO

Prayer

STATE THE STEP

Prayer is to the soul what breathing is to the body. A continuous prayer life is required for sustained God-ordained success.

TEACH THE STEP

Prayer should be as natural and necessary for the Christian leader as breathing. Have you had moments of breathlessness, the collapsing of the chest, the panic that strikes the soul? When the breathing process is inhibited, life painfully slips away. Prayer is our lifeline. Simply put, prayer has been defined as talking with God. It is through this fellowship with God that we receive instruction and guidance. We pray not when we are in trouble or confused, we pray consistently in all seasons of life and ministry. One of the qualities exhibited in a successful Christian leader is a habitual prayer lifestyle. There are many benefits derived from this quality. It is by prayer that we enter a two-way conversation with our Creator. Consistent prayer enables our faith to remain strong.

Often, leaders face challenges that seem insurmountable; however, the one whom we pray to and fellowship with is all-wise and powerful. It is in this relationship that we receive the wisdom for the moment; faith soars and the challenge is conquered. We were created for fellowship with God and given dominion over the earth by our Creator; however, when Adam and Eve sinned, man's spirit was separated from God. One of the results of this fallen state is an independent spirit. The fallen spirit

often continues to follow the dominion mandate but in its own strength and wisdom. By Jesus we are re-connected to the Godhead, and our dependence on God is acknowledged by not only our need for prayer, but also by the results prayer produces.

As children, our household was full of excitement the night before Christmas. We would ready ourselves and attend as a family our Roman Catholic Parish Church. One particular Christmas when we were teenagers, my brother and I found ourselves sitting in the pew nudging each other throughout the mass, trying to contain our building excitement. You see, as we grew older, the gifts became more sophisticated. We eagerly awaited this new threshold in gift advancement and could hardly wait to open them. We opened our presents immediately when we arrived home just after midnight, discovering that many of them had parts to assemble. We never read the instructions, and spent hours in utter frustration trying to assemble the parts. Finally, conceding defeat, we looked for the instructions among the trash pile we had created.

Unfortunately, many leaders are in this very state, seeking God among the self-made trash pile as a last ditch effort. God gives us a vision and a purpose, but He also includes the instructions for its development and fulfillment. The instructions are accessed during and because of prayer. Leaders can spare themselves many unnecessary hardships and disasters if they just maintain a consistent prayer life. A consistent prayer life allows for an unabated flow of information. We are often taught by life's experiences; however, by prayer, many truths are caught or received. A healthy relationship with God produces positive spiritual results. God wrote the instructions, and He requires us to read them first and often. He is even available to help us assemble the parts.

Let God give the vision as we fellowship with Him in a consistent prayerful lifestyle. Let us continually draw nigh to Him for the vision's assembling.

In the Epistles, we discover many principles of prayer all pointing in the direction of the requirement of consistent prayer for the Christian leader. Believers and Christian leaders in particular can only hope to

receive knowledge and direction from God by conforming to this type of lifestyle. This is imperative for the success of the leader and ministry. Here is one prayer principle in the Epistles for our consideration: Pray without ceasing.

“Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you” (I Thessalonians 5: 17-18).

Verse 17 of the above Scripture does not mean that we are to be constantly on our knees; that is not possible if we are to fulfill the purposes of life. However, praying without ceasing is attainable. We can and ought to enter into this lifestyle that is actually unbroken fellowship with God. But how is this possible? I call this the *unconscious* aspect of praying.

When you see the word “unconscious” you may think of a prize-fighter out for the count or an accident victim in the hospital hooked up to a drip. This is not the intention. The word “unconscious” also means *unaware* and implies an event that is taking place that is not readily recognized or noticed.

We are encouraged as leaders to view prayer as *breathing*, or *praying without ceasing*. Let it flow naturally and become a part of your unconscious self. Let me explain this *Steps to Success* concept: The unconscious self is the self that we, at times, are unaware of. It is that part of us that habitually performs daily tasks so we can, through our conscious self, learn or attend to new things. Have you ever driven to work or home and wondered how you got there? Your mind was actively focused on another matter and not on the drive. You do not consciously recall stopping at the traffic light or maneuvering around the awkward corner. This is a result of your unconscious self taking over.

Here is another example: In my country, The Bahamas, we have primary and secondary schools; in some other countries they are called elementary and secondary. The truth is that many parents place greater value on the secondary school system. I saw this often as a school guidance counselor. Parents are more concerned in enrolling their children in “the

best” secondary school. For instance, they will leave their children in an inferior primary school, then spend an enormous amount of funds for seventh through twelfth grades. This choice results in many underachieving students. Please observe:

1. **Primary is not inferior.** To the contrary, primary is the foundation, or what will become the educational unconscious self. It is here that learning skills and concepts become habitual. If this foundation is weak or inferior, the educational house we build will be unstable. It will be ineffective for present and future challenges. Potential will not be realized.
2. **Secondary is not superior.** To the contrary, the primary foundation is what we build upon. If we put new information upon a weak foundation, the cracks will become evident to all. New information can only be evaluated by the primary. A weak primary results in poor or inaccurate evaluations. Lessons and steps missed or wrongly taught in the primary will determine the direction of the secondary. I have seen this as a glaring concern, especially in the discipline of mathematics.

Educational systems that encourage social promotion are equipping students for a lifetime of failure. If the primary is strong and well balanced, the secondary will be clear and successful. Let’s view this example in reference to prayer.

Prayer is to be part of our primary foundation grafted into our unconscious self. It ought to get to the place and position in our lives where it flows naturally and as necessary as the breathing process. *Pray without ceasing* is an acquired disposition. You have to work at this until it becomes an unconscious foundation in your life. You have to see this as mandatory in your life and ministry. Your spiritual life depends as much upon this as your natural life depends upon air. The Holy Spirit guides and nudges in this area.

Often, we stress the importance of corporate and designated prayer time. This is fine, needed, and required; however, when we view the prayer life of Jesus, we observe the power of the Holy Spirit in the individual life. Jesus as the Son of Man relied on the presence and empowerment of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is present in His fullness today, and He dwells within each believer.

He teaches how to pray; He searches the heart of man. If He is within and teaches us, do not overlook the unconscious self as it relates to continual prayer. Jesus remained in constant fellowship with the Father and was always anointed. This lifestyle has been made available for every believer.

Here is a final example. Think of a duck swimming above the water; it appears calm and effortless, but below the water its legs are in full motion. Success often takes place first in the unaware realm, or below the surface. I have observed this trait in many great men and women of God. They might be in conversation and drift to conscious prayer; where did it start? It commenced in the unconscious realm. We are encouraged to stay connected with God; this is possible and necessary for the leader. The successful leader built on the secondary level is due in part to habitual prayer on the primary level.

It has been said that the formula for a miracle is to get the Word of God first in your mind, second in your heart, and third on your lips. Can this formula work for prayer? I believe it can. What is in the heart, the lips will eventually cry out and manifest. Make efforts throughout each day and in different circumstances to live out this concept. Give it repeated opportunities to become as natural as breathing.

We are further admonished in verse 18, that “*In everything give thanks...*” Notice it says not *for* everything, but in everything. We are aware that not everything that happens in our personal lives or ministries appears to be good; however, we also know that God is in control, and when we approach our challenges with a thankful heart, we are able to put a positive spin on any circumstance.

Thankfulness releases the miracle-working power of God (see John

6:11). In every situation or circumstance we may find ourselves in as leaders, let our heart's response be one of thankfulness. This attitude is a sign of faith in Him who holds the whole world in His hands. God, who called you, is also faithful toward you. So the will of Christ for us is to approach it all with a thankful heart. This is an attitude and action of the primary foundation.

If you complain of the state you are in or about what is taking place, then you will never see the possible change, growth, understanding or deliverance from God's view. Often, God gives us the test first, and then He explains the lesson. We have the Holy Spirit to guide us in this area.

SCRIPTURE TO EXPLORE

Matthew 5:14-16 states a condition derived from keeping your mind on the Lord Jesus Christ, what is it?

The Holy Spirit's Guidance

Sometime ago I was invited as a speaker for a function in New York City; this was about a year after the 9/11 tragedy. My flight itinerary required travel through two airports, and by the time we arrived in NYC, I was quite upset with the manner of body and bag searches endured at the airports en route. When I arrived at the hotel and checked into my room on the fifty-third floor, the Holy Spirit summoned me to the window and

urged me to look down onto the street. The pedestrians below appeared as ants traveling in all directions; however, there was an order in it all. There were well-defined lines and an unconscious system. God gently rebuked and invited me to see life from His vantage point.

When you sit, stand, or walk with God, you see beyond your challenges and view the possibilities for success. Did the body and bag searches cease? No, they continued for fifteen more consecutive trips to the U.S.A. What did change was my attitude.

Finally, one day when clearing a checkpoint in Florida, the security said, “You are a minister. Come through.” The lesson was learnt and the tide turned. This was in part to me developing the primary foundation of praying without ceasing and maintaining a thankful attitude. Nothing can take the place of the Holy Spirit’s guidance that we receive and is intimately ours by staying connected to God in prayer.

“And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment” (John 16:8). Let’s adapt this Scripture to success. The Holy Spirit helps the leader answer the following:

- *Is there any sin in my life as the leader that will hinder the fulfillment of God’s purpose for my life?* The Holy Spirit will answer this question with clarity.
- *What is the right thing (righteousness) to do in regard to fulfilling the purpose?* We all have our plans and views on how God’s purpose should be accomplished. What matters in the end is only God’s will. The Holy Spirit teaches us and reveals the will of the Godhead.
- *What is God’s judgment on my attitudes, actions or success steps?* We want to know if we are pleasing God. The Holy Spirit answers these questions.

Prayer is vital to our success as believers and leaders. It is a lifeline that must be obtained and maintained. It is a spiritual filter that purifies our motives and actions. Vision is birthed and fulfilled in part due to sustained

prayer. Character is molded as a result of obeying the prompting received in prayer. Miracles are secured by prayers of faith, and hearts are warmed by the fellowship derived from prayer.

Many leaders claim that they are too busy to pray. Are they too busy to breathe?

SCRIPTURES TO EXPLORE

The Holy Spirit leads us in the path of success. Read the following Scriptures and complete the exercise:

Romans 8:26-27: Explain the mission of the Holy Spirit as it pertains to prayer:

Digging Deep

Prayer is a must for success. It is impossible to fulfill God's plan and purpose for our lives and ministries if we do not maintain a consistent prayer life. Throughout our entire lives, we will be faced with the challenge of obeying God in the areas of our personal lives and ministries. Each stage of development may bring new issues that tend to cloud our thinking and hinder total obedience.

During your personal study time look up the scriptural references for the following aspects of prayer and complete the exercise. Discuss your findings with a friend. You may want to complete the entire exercise with a friend.

HUMAN INVOLVEMENT

1. Daniel 9:3
2. Ezekiel 22:30-31
3. Matthew 6:10

a) How did Daniel place his focus on God?

b) Why did God search for a man?

- c) Is it possible for God's will to enter the Earth's realm without prayer? Explain.

MINISTRY ADVANCEMENT

1. Acts 4:23-31

- a) What did the believers pray for?

- b) What was God's answer to the believers' request?

PROPER PRIORITIES

1. John 16:13
2. Psalm 27:4
3. Matthew 6:31-33

- a) Give an example of how the Holy Spirit guided you in a recent decision:

- b) Name one thing you desire and seek after. Fully describe how prayer is assisting in its fulfillment.

THE THOUGHT LIFE

1. Psalm 103:1

2. I Corinthians 2:16

3. Philippians 4:8

a) How can prayer on the primary level influence your thought life?
Give an example.

b) How does one acquire the mind of Christ?

c) How does a habitual prayer life shape a godly thought pattern?
Give an example.

LEADERSHIP ESSENTIALS

INTRA-PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP (YOU RELATIONSHIP WITH YOURSELF)

1. Proverbs 4:23

a) Why is it important to guard ones heart?

b) Can prayer on the primary level influence the issues of the heart?
Give an example.

c) What role does prayer play in the keeping or guarding of ones heart? Fully explain.

EVALUATE THE STEP

To evaluate means to look over or inspect and see the good and the bad in something. When we evaluate here we are attempting to discover how we should view the step of prayer. In this evaluation process, you will also discover challenges that are hindering your prayer life.

Name four things that can hinder prayer on the primary level:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

PERSONAL DISCOVERY

What concerns you the most about your prayer life?

Which of the five (Human Involvement, Ministry Advancement, Proper Priorities, Thought Life, or Intra-Personal Relationship) is the most challenging for you, and why?

Name three persons that you feel would give you godly advice. Make an appointment to see at least one and seek advice or steps to overcome your hindrances to a consistent prayer lifestyle.

1.

2.

3.

PRACTICE THE STEP

As we learn new steps to success it is important for us to walk in these steps. By practicing, they become a part of our everyday life. The step we have just studied is the step of prayer. How can we practice this step? We practice it daily by evaluating our thoughts and actions. Conduct a daily personal inventory, allowing the Holy Spirit to search the inward parts,

revealing what is in your heart. After a time of personal inventory and reflection, complete the “Your Personal Adjustments” section.

YOUR PERSONAL ADJUSTMENTS

List ten adjustments that you will make to ensure further development of your primary prayer level. Be specific and use timelines.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Practice, Practice, Practice. It is important to practice this exercise of ten and continually make the necessary adjustments to ensure continued growth. Practice this step to success daily until it becomes an unconscious aspect of your prayer life. Remember to get prayer in your mind, heart, and then on your lips. Practice still makes perfect.

SEE THE SUCCESS

As this aspect of *prayer* becomes grafted into your unconscious self, it will flow naturally and as necessary as the breathing process. You will discover it resulting in God-led decisions, and many of them will be made on your feet during the days activities. There will be less backtracking in your personal and ministry life. You will be better prepared spiritually to embrace the success opportunities that flow your way and manage the challenges that present themselves. Your counsel to others will be more on target, and also more frequent will be the supernatural moves of God in your ministry.

Prayer is an ongoing exercise that yields eternal results. Throughout the years you will be able to link your success to your prayer lifestyle. If you continue to practice this step, you will consistently see personal and ministry success. Practice the step, see the success!

STEP THREE

Counsel

STATE THE STEP

Receiving and giving counsel are vital components for personal and ministry success.

TEACH THE STEP

It is necessary for the Christian leader to seek godly counsel. Leadership is a life-changing and challenging journey, and the counsel of others is vital for destination realization. Equally vital is the responsibility as a leader to give counsel to others.

Leaders interact with numerous people for any number of reasons; however, there are special persons needed in a leaders life who will help ensure personal and organizational success. In this chapter, you will find *Steps to Success* principles as they relate to three types of persons that you will need in your life at each level of ministry and/or personal development. The three types of persons are:

- A Barnabas
- A Timothy
- An Epaphroditus

BARNABAS

“Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the lord. For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith” (Acts 11:23, 24).

The Christian leader Barnabas was an encourager. You have to be connected to an encourager. Your Barnabas will help you see the glass half-full as opposed to half-empty. When plans fail or unexpected challenges arise, your Barnabas will speak words of life to you. Usually, you will find that this person is often older than you and has traveled the road on which you are presently. However, at times God will send a younger Barnabas your way. Typically, a Barnabas is a person with insight beyond his years and a high level of spiritual maturity. Our Scriptures show that a biblical model of Barnabas will:

- *Encourage you to remain true to God and His call upon your life.* He will never encourage you to abandon the call of God.
- *Encourage you to remain true with all your heart.* His words will help you remain focused and motivated. It is so easy to lose your drive due to the challenges and stress associated with leadership. Your Barnabas will encourage you to finish as strong as you started.
- *Be a good person.* Your Barnabas will have a good report of those within and without the church. A good person, reflected in his conduct, commitment, and conversation. Your Barnabas must be a true role model—an ambassador for Christ.
- *Be full of the Holy Spirit-faith.* Spirit-led, therefore his words bring life; faith-driven, therefore his life produces results. He has to demonstrate the essence of a spirit-led life.

It is important to note that you may have different persons fulfilling this role at various times in your development. Some people will outgrow you,

LEADERSHIP ESSENTIALS

and some you will outgrow. People may change; however, the need for a Barnabas will remain consistent. As you continue to develop as a leader, it may very well be necessary to repeatedly seek out a Barnabas-type.

MY BARNABAS-TYPE

Name a BarnabasType for each area that is applicable:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

TIMOTHY

“Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus. To Timothy, my dearly beloved son: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the father and Christ Jesus our Lord. I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience, that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day; Greatly desiring to see thee, being mindful of thy tears, that I may be filled with joy; When I recall to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that is in thee also. Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands” (2 Timothy 1:1-6).

Timothy was the apostle Pauls son in the ministry. A wise, elderly missionary once told me that whatever you give away belongs to you twice. I asked for an explanation. He went on to explain that when you invest in the life of another, you see your gift not only in your life, but theirs, therefore, it is twice yours. Every Paul should have a ministry son, and the relationship should naturally develop into a mentoring process. From the quoted Scriptures, we see that a biblical model of Paul will:

- *Identify* with a protégé.
- *Thank* God for and remember their Timothy in prayer continually.
- *Be* emotionally attached. Desiring to spend quality time in mentoring and fellowship.
- *Know* the immediate family and discern spiritual traits.
- *Encourage* the stirring of gifts. He will challenge his protégé to maximize his potential.

- *Acknowledge* his role in his Timothy's spiritual life and gift development. He has a hand in his life and ministry.

MY TIMOTHY-TYPE

(THOSE WHO I MENTOR)

Name a Timothy-Type for each area that is applicable:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

I believe that the greatest ministry that a person will have is that of mentoring. It is important to build great organizations and ministries, but greater to assist in building great people. We ought to have a positive influence on as many people as possible. It need not be a lifetime of mentoring; it may be simply a season. Timothy types will constantly crisscross your path, be willing and prepared to mentor some of them.

EPAPHRODITUS

“Yet I supposed it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, and companion in labour, and fellow soldier, but your messenger, and he that ministered to my wants. For he longed after you all, and was full of heaviness, because that ye had heard that he had been sick. For indeed he was sick nigh unto death: but God had mercy on him; and not on him only, but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow. I sent him therefore the more carefully, that, when ye see him again, ye may rejoice, and that I may be the less sorrowful. Receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness; and hold such in reputation: Because for the work of Christ he was nigh unto death, not regarding his life, to supply your lack of service toward me” (Philippians 2:25-30).

Every leader must have a friend with whom he can look across the table and share his heart. Epaphroditus was this kind of friend. Paul calls him a brother. Leadership is quite difficult at times, especially when you are in transitional phases and shifting from one scope of ministry and embracing another. Shifts will take its toll on a leader. You cannot expect personal counsel from those you serve, and its at these moments that you comprehend the importance of, and desire, the companionship of a brother.

Do you have that kind of friend, a person with whom you may share your fears, dreams, and failures? Every leader needs a godly friend. Lets take a closer look at Epaphroditus.

- He was a brother, companion, and fellow soldier in the ministry. What allowed their relationship to be close was the common ground they shared. They had similar convictions and godly desires. They had the ability to sharpen each other. They walked parallel paths.
- He was there for Paul. Paul states, “He ministered to my wants.” Friends are like medicine; they provide a healing touch. They give

of themselves for their friends. Paul had wants in the form of personal needs, and his friend was there and provided comfort, companionship, and service.

- As a friend he neglected his own sickness for the betterment of his friend.
- As a faithful friend of a leader, others were instructed to hold him in high esteem. Being a friend of a leader requires a special quality. Leaders, it appears partly because of their visibility and transparency, have few friends.
- Epaphroditus jeopardized his own ministry and risked his life to serve a friend. His actions were love—advancement of the work of Christ motivated.

MY EPAPHRODITUS-TYPE

Name an EpaphroditusType for each area that is applicable:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

God knits us with others and sometimes the relationship develops into a meaningful friendship. These friendships endure the test of time and trials. I have found that some of my Barnabas types have developed into lifelong friends. These three types are vital to your development and success.

Let us now take a brief look at the value of a mentor and coach. Mentors and coaches may have to be hired, and their time honored by you.

There Is Value in Having A Mentor and Coach Every Christian leader ought to have a mentor and coach. Having a mentor or coach who is able to speak into your life is a real blessing. Not every leader of your covering will be a mentor or coach. A mentor will have the ability and time to pour into your life from his or her own experiences. A coach will assist in drawing out of you the gifts placed there by the Holy Spirit.

As you seek godly advice, stay open for the Holy Spirits connection with a mentor or coach. I have found that often it is not someone you expect. A mentor and coach may not stay with you for the long haul; often they are transitional in your life and endeavors. First Thessalonians 2:8 gives a brief, concise look at the heart of a mentor and spiritual coach, “We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well” (Paraphrased). This is the attitude of a mentor and coach. They are willing to expose themselves and teach by example. They not only share the Word of God, but their lives as well.

You may, at times, require a mentor and coach who is an expert in a particular area. It might be administrative, managerial, goal setting, etc. This interaction may be needed and required for promotion to the next level. In the corporate world, it is called “executive coaching” and is normally sorted out and secured for employees climbing the leadership ladder. The Christian leader ought also to take full advantage of this service and process.

SCRIPTURE TO EXPLORE

Read 1 Thessalonians 2:8. What does it say about the heart of a mentor?

According to Proverbs 13:10 where is wisdom found?

Digging Deep

VALUE OF WISDOM

1. Proverbs 13:14-20

2. Proverbs 15:31

a) What is a foundation of life, and what does it accomplish?

b) What happens to those who ignore discipline derived from wisdom?

c) What can one do to grow wise?

d) What does it mean to be at home among the wise?

COUNSEL OF CHILDREN

1. Proverbs 22:6

a) Explain the above Scripture as it relates to counseling and mentoring.

b) What persons should be involved in the training of children? Be specific.

MENTORING THROUGH DISCIPLINE

1. Proverbs 13:24

2. Proverbs 22:15

a) What is the purpose of discipline?

b) Name one result of an undisciplined life? Give an example.

CHURCH MENTORS

1. 1 Peter 5:2-3

a) What does it mean to be a shepherd of Gods flock?

b) Why is willingness crucial to successful leadership?

c) How can one be a godly example? Give an example.

WOMEN AS MENTORS

1. Titus 2: 3-5

a) Why is it important for older women to train younger women?

b) List the areas older women are to counsel younger women. If you disagree with any area state it and explain why.

EVALUATE THE STEP

To evaluate means to look over or inspect and see the good and the bad in something. When we evaluate here we are attempting to discover how we should view the step of counsel. In this evaluation process, you will also discover challenges that can hinder the receiving and giving of counsel.

Name four things that can hinder the giving or receiving of counsel:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

PERSONAL DISCOVERY

What concerns you the most about the ministries of counseling and mentoring?

Which of the three types (Barnabas, Timothy, or Epaphroditus) is the most challenging for you, and why?

Name three persons that you feel would give you godly advice. Make an appointment to see at least one and seek advice or steps in regards to your most challenging type.

1.

2.

3.

PRACTICE THE STEP

As we learn new Steps to Success it is important for us to walk in these steps. By practicing, they become a part of our everyday life. The step we have just studied is the step of counsel. How can we practice this step? We practice it daily by evaluating our thoughts and actions. Conduct a daily personal inventory, allowing the Holy Spirit to search the inward parts, revealing what is in your heart. Christs efforts with His disciples went

beyond the mere giving of knowledge; He also passed on values through His interaction and example. As you list your personal adjustments keep this thought in mind.

YOUR PERSONAL ADJUSTMENTS

List ten adjustments that you will make to ensure you further develop your counseling and mentoring ministry. Be specific and use timelines.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Practice, Practice, Practice. It is important to practice this exercise of ten and continually make the necessary adjustments to ensure continued growth. Practice this step to success daily, it provides opportunities for personal and ministry development. Practice keeps us focused.

SEE THE SUCCESS

Counsel and the *Mentoring* process is in short supply in our modern churches and enterprises. We have a tendency to evaluate and certify based on success in the classroom. However, outstanding accomplishments are often fully realized through one-on-one encounters coupled with classroom experiences. Acquisition of biblical knowledge by itself is not sufficient for the development of Christ-likeness. It takes that and the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the input of others.

As we commit ourselves to this *Steps to Success* principle, we will see new levels of personal and ministry growth. We will see the rewards associated with standing on the shoulders of others, and being a shoulder for others. Stand on the shoulders of your Barnabas, be a shoulder for your Timothy, and maintain eye contact with your ever-enlarging circle of Epaphrodituses. Practice the step, see the success.

STEP FOUR

Faith

STATE THE STEP

Faith is the key or tool necessary for achieving God-honoring success in our personal lives and ministry endeavors.

TEACH THE STEP

The Bible has a great deal to say about the subject of faith; however, the definition of faith is recorded in only one place in the Bible, “*Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen*” (Hebrews 11:1).

Hebrews 11:6 states the importance of faith, “*But, without faith it is impossible to please him, for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.*”

Faith understands two different kinds of reality:

1. Faith is concerned with things that are future. I believe this aspect of faith is reaching into the future, seeing the purpose of God and pulling that purpose into the present. By faith, we declare Gods vision for our lives and the ministries, and without faith, we cannot please God.
2. Faith knows that the future is real, that things unseen do exist. We walk by faith and not by sight. Faith believes in what God says, not in what is or is not seen in the natural.

When my wife and I purchased our home and ministry base in The Bahamas, the former owner explained that beneath the overgrown brush on the four-acre site was a winding concrete pathway. This pathway, he said, extended throughout the entire property. Recognizing our puzzled expression, he quickly added, “Trust me, it is really there, for I built it myself.” Those words often echo in my mind and spirit. God is the architect of our future. He does not create the future when we arrive there. It already exists by faith. There is a winding concrete pathway beneath the brush. We are to walk by faith and not by sight. Faith sees what God saw: Faith speaks what God spoke. Faith trusts the testimony of God.

Trusting your life and making a full commitment to God is faith, therefore faith is more than a mindset or attribute; Faith is a personal relationship with God. This relationship determines the priorities of ones life. This relationship is one of love, built on trust and dependence. Faith then is having a total dependence upon God. Here are some *Steps to Success* principles that relate to our faith walk: It is never easy to fulfill a God-given mandate. It takes a well-designed plan, courage, and faith.

The workplace ministry leader Nehemiah discovered this as he answered the call of God to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the wall of the city that was in ruin. Nehemiah had a plan, but a plan alone will never accomplish the mission of the vision. The best designed plan should be in the hands of a faith-led leader. Nehemiah was this type of leader.

Nehemiah, after receiving the vision, remained faithful at his job performing his daily duties, and enjoyed the favor of King-Artaxerxes, his boss. He waited on Gods timing. I believe waiting takes more faith than ill-conceived rushed actions (see Nehemiah 2:1-9). When the time was right, Nehemiah, exercising godly wisdom, asked for a letter of permission to carry out his God-given mandate. By asking for a permission letter, Nehemiah was using the favor of the king as an instrument, or rebuilding tool. It also gave him the authority to move freely as he secured the needed materials.

A good leader anticipates upcoming challenges and plans ahead, seizing opportunities of influence. This favor would provide a much needed

wall of resistance in the face of opposition.

Opposition to Nehemiah's vision came as anticipated. Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite tried to destroy the efforts to rebuild the wall. Nehemiah however succeeded in the undertaking because he had well planned his moves and had strong, unwavering faith. He was courageous enough to walk by faith and not by sight (see Nehemiah 2:7-10).

Nehemiah understood some important Steps to Success principles of vision casting and vision completion. Among them are the following:

- *Move forward with a plan.* It is better to have a plan and let God change it than having no plan at all. Many ministries fail simply because they fail to plan. Nehemiah knew there would be obstacles, and altering of the plan might be possible, however, he was compelled to move forward. Plan your work, and then work at your plan with an eye fixed on the future and an ear bent toward the voice of the Holy Spirit.
- *Move forward by faith,* but realize that people of faith have orderly minds. Faith is not haphazard thinking. Faith-led leaders understand the risks involved. They further understand and appreciate that hard work may be involved in fulfilling a vision. Faith-led leaders know that sometimes there is a *blind leap* of faith, but they also know this is not the normal way; however, when it does happen, they know that God is at the end of that calculated leap.
- *Be prepared spiritually for opposition.* If no one opposes you, chances are the vision is not from the Lord. Opposition will come. It is not personal, for we wrestle not against flesh and blood (see Ephesians 6:12); our opposition is spiritual. If you are a sleeping giant, your opposition will not wake you. If you are an awake giant, your opposition will attempt to put you to sleep. Opposition may come in many forms. Be prepared and constantly look to the Lord for strength and guidance.

- *Know when to consult and when not to.* Talking to the wrong people even in the right time will hinder the vision. Likewise, talking to the right people in the wrong time will also spell defeat. Nehemiah inspected the wall at night and alone. He did his homework first. Then when his steps were organized, he shared the vision and plan for rebuilding the wall. His consultation was limited and purposefully directed.
- *God gives us favor with those in authority.* Use this favor to fulfill the God-given vision, not selfish desires. Favor is like grace, we do not deserve it, and it is unlimited in respect to the vision. If we take care of the God-given vision, God will take care of us. Often favor is for a season, not for the building of lifelong alliances. So, do not procrastinate, move in faith and favor when God bids you.
- *Pray often and listen more.* Prayer is a sustaining exercise. It is necessary for leaders to pray often. Developing a lifestyle of prayer is a must! Listen for God's voice and direction. Listen with your inner ear. When you hear, obey fully.
- *Build a team.* You cannot do it alone. Groups of families make a great team. Nehemiah used families to rebuild the portion of the wall connected to their sphere of influence and responsibility. The team built and provided protection at the same time. It is important to build a solid team, and families are a vital part of that team, however, do not limit yourself to any one group; Nehemiah himself was the only representative of his family. Please do not overemphasize the value of teams. There are aspects to the fulfillment of a vision that only a leader can do.

A challenging vision builds faith in the lives of all who are involved. Faith becomes one of the foundational attributes of the ministry. A Faith-inspired and God-led organization plans and develops those plans while trusting God each step of the way.

**The Power of the Holy Spirit is evident in
this kind of Leader and Organization**

“God is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us”
(Ephesians 3:20).

The Triune God works in us through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. We accomplish the vision in *His* power. A God-given vision forces a total dependency upon the Lord, and the result is a greater level of faith.

The Holy Spirit is called the Comforter. This term comes from the word *Parakletos*, which literally means, “Called to one’s side or one’s aid”, *Parakletos* is primarily a verbal adjective, and the word generally suggests the capability or adaptability for giving aid. In Jesus’ day, it was used in a court of justice to denote a legal assistant or counsel for the defense; in essence, it meant an advocate. Jesus Christ was this to His disciples and said the Holy Spirit would be this to us.

Prior to entering full time ministry, I was employed as a shipping agent. One of my duties was facilitating Customs and Immigration officers in the clearing of oil tankers, cruise liners, and cargo vessels. As we waited to board, it was fascinating to watch a tugboat come alongside the vessel and proceed to berth it at an oil jetty or dock. It took a great deal of trust for the captain to relinquish control of his bridge to the tugboat pilot. This massive force was now in the control of a seemingly inferior and almost invisible entity. Faith is welcoming the Holy Spirit alongside, and relinquishing control to Him. Let His power work unabated in your life and organization. The writer of Hebrews admonishes us to walk by faith,

“Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it” (Hebrews 4:1-2).

As we hear the Word of God for our lives, we are to mix it with faith and walk in obedience to what we have heard. The same principle is true for the receiving of a vision. It is God's Word or purpose for the ministry and us. We are to lay hold of it and walk by faith. That is walking not by what we see in the natural, but by what God desires for us. The Word not mixed by faith will produce no vision realization.

Nehemiah was a courageous leader. He walked with God and fulfilled his purpose. His example teaches us much about the values of godly leadership and the power of an eternal God. Let us be encouraged and learn by his example. Enter your personal study section with this in focus.

SCRIPTURE TO EXPLORE

The writer of Hebrews stresses the importance and results of right believing or God-honoring faith. What are they? (see Hebrews 11:6)

Jesus told His disciples to believe or have faith when they pray. What did He say would be the result of a faith-prayer? (see Matthew 21: 21-22)

Digging Deep

As leaders, we are to overcome the world. The worldly-system that is corrupted by sin, and ruled by Satan is overcome by our faith (I John 5:4). This worldly, evil influence opposes us at every turn. It opposes us *intellectually, physically, spiritually, and socially*.

The world is an organized system that wages war against God and His leaders. It attempts to hinder our holistic growth (see Luke 2:52) and abort God's purposes for our lives. Its main focus is to hinder and render ineffective the advancement of the Kingdom of Heaven on the Earth. It is our faith that overcomes this enemy and fulfills God's purposes.

During your personal study time look up the scriptural references for the following aspects of faith and complete the exercise. Discuss your findings with a friend. You might want to complete the entire exercise with a friend.

THE NATURE OF FAITH

1. Galatians 5:22
2. I Corinthians 12:9
3. Luke 18:1-8
- a) How is faith a fruit of the Spirit?

b) How is faith a gift of the Spirit?

c) What role does prayer have in releasing faith?

FAITH BELIEVES

1. Hebrews 11:6

a) Faith believes that God exists. How can a leader apply this belief to a ministry challenge? Give an example.

- b) Faith believes God reveals His will and provides rewards. Is it right for leaders to expect rewards from God? Give reasons for your answer.

- c) Faith believes that God will, at times, delay the giving of rewards. Explain why persistence is a valuable characteristic of successful leaders:

- d) Name something you persistently believe God for. Why do you think it is being delayed?

FAITH WORDS

1. Mark 7:29
2. Matthew 17:20
3. Genesis 1:3

a) Why are faith words necessary for success?

b) Explain the concept of mustard seed faith:

c) Give a biblical example of how God created by speaking:

EVALUATE THE STEP

To evaluate means to look over or inspect and see the good and the bad in something. When we evaluate here we are attempting to discover how we should view the step of faith. In this evaluation process, you will also discover challenges that can hinder your faith life.

Name four things that can hinder the development of faith in the heart of a leader:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

PERSONAL DISCOVERY

What concerns you the most about your faith life?

Which of the three (Faith believes God exists, faith believes God reveals, or faith believes God delays) is the most challenging for you and why?

Name three persons whom you feel would give you godly advice. Make an appointment to see at least one and seek advice or steps to overcome your faith challenge:

1.

2.

3.

PRACTICE THE STEP

As we learn new Steps to Success it is important for us to walk in these steps. By practicing, they become a part of our everyday lives. The step we have just studied is the step of faith. How can we practice this step? We practice it daily by evaluating our thoughts and actions. Conduct a daily personal inventory, allowing the Holy Spirit to search the inward parts, revealing what is in your heart.

YOUR PERSONAL ADJUSTMENTS

List ten adjustments that you will make to ensure you to further develop your faith life:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Practice, Practice, Practice. It is important to practice this exercise of ten and continually make the necessary adjustments to ensure continued growth. Practice this *Step to Success* daily until it becomes the foundation of your thinking process. Remember without faith a person cannot please God. Self-sufficiency is anti-God-honoring and will lead us away from God's will. Faith is an essential *Step to Success*. Practice still makes perfect.

SEE THE SUCCESS

All successful Christian leaders have at least one thing in common, they walk by faith. Faith is the key or tool mandatory for accessing God's favor. As we embrace and utilize this key we are able to see the treasures of Heaven released into our lives. It is important to remember that tears, needs, and circumstances don't move God. Faith moves the hand of God and ensures success.

We are to not only recognize faith in the biblical characters we study, but also in our personal and leadership lives. We are to model our faith walk to a faithless society and lead by example those who follow us. As our faith walk develops, we will experience new levels of success. We will see the purposes of God for our personal lives and ministries fully blossom. Practice the step, see the success.

You are now ready to take the *Leadership Essentials*' personal audit. The audit centers on the four essentials you have just studied.

This audit is an assessment tool that can be beneficial in that it will help you reflect on your present stage of development and encourage you to take the necessary steps for further growth as a leader. God Bless!

Leadership Essentials: A Personal Audit

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

Visibility

1. I am committed to fulfill visibly God's purpose for my life.

1. True
2. More true than false
3. More false than true
4. False

2. Humility is a trait that I consciously try to practice daily.

1. True
2. More true than false
3. More false than true
4. False

3. I consistently live an unselfish lifestyle.

1. True
2. More true than false
3. More false than true
4. False

4. Love is the main motivating factor for my Christian labors.

1. True
2. More true than false
3. More false than true
4. False

5. I maintain a balanced God-honoring life.

1. True
2. More true than false
3. More false than true
4. False

Prayer

1. I believe God is pleased with my prayer life.

1. True
2. More true than false
3. More false than true
4. False

2. I pray more when things are going well, then when I am faced with challenges.

1. True
2. More true than false
3. More false than true
4. False

3. I look to the Holy Spirit for guidance daily.

1. True
2. More true than false
3. More false than true
4. False

4. Prayer is a part of my primary foundation.

1. True
2. More true than false
3. More false than true
4. False

5. My leadership role is greatly influenced by my prayer lifestyle.

1. True
2. More true than false
3. More false than true
4. False

Prayer

1. I regularly seek counsel.

1. True
2. More true than false
3. More false than true
4. False

2. I regularly give counsel.

1. True
2. More true than false
3. More false than true
4. False

3. I have a Barnabas-Type in my life.

1. True
2. More true than false
3. More false than true
4. False

4. I have a Timothy-Type in my life.

1. True
2. More true than false
3. More false than true
4. False

5. I have an Epaphroditus-Type in my life.

1. True
2. More true than false
3. More false than true
4. False

Faith

1. I have a God-ordained plan for my life.

1. True
2. More true than false
3. More false than true
4. False

2. I fully understand the importance of faith in pleasing God.

1. True
2. More true than false
3. More false than true
4. False

3. I walk by faith in my personal life and ministry endeavors.

1. True
2. More true than false
3. More false than true
4. False

4. I speak faith words daily.

1. True
2. More true than false
3. More false than true
4. False

5. The power of the Holy Spirit is evident in my life and ministry.

1. True
2. More true than false
3. More false than true
4. False

TOTAL YOUR SCORE

Total 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 ____

More true than false ____

More false than true ____

False ____

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

Total ____

IF YOUR TOTAL SCORE IS

20-35 The four leadership essentials are engrained in your personal life.

36-50 You are practicing the four essentials. If your total score is closer to 50, you need to pay more attention to one or more of the essentials.

51-65 You need to continue to work on developing all four essentials.

66-80 Others probably do not view you as a successful Christian or leader. You may want to take some time to rethink your motives for service.

PERSONAL IMPROVEMENT STEPS

(An example)

The purpose of this exercise is to focus on identifying areas needing improvement, and developing a plan for the same.

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

FAITH STEP

- I fully understand the importance of faith in pleasing God.

- My score is a **3**

STEP TWO: Develop a plan for personal improvement.

Refer to your personal adjustments list of ten to draw your information for developing the plan. Refine your list of ten into five and record it here.

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

1. Study in-depth the topic of faith. I will complete the study in one month. I will develop the study in an outline format for easy reference and teaching opportunities.
2. Develop the habit of asking the Holy Spirit daily for guidance. I will employ this skill in all major decision making opportunities, whether they be personal, work, or ministry related.
3. Discuss my fears with my mentor. I will be very honest and approach this with the desire and commitment to improve my faith walk and conquer my fears.
4. Practice obeying God in all the little things. I will keep a journal for the next 90 days and reflect on the positive results of obeying God.
5. Observe others that are walking by faith, taking note of how they handle their challenges. I will find two or three principles from their lives that I can apply to my life.

This goal setting exercise serves to assist in strengthening your weak areas. It can and ought to be performed on all four steps. On the following pages are blank outlines for your use.

PERSONAL IMPROVEMENT STEPS

The purpose of this exercise is to focus on identifying areas needing improvement, and developing a plan for the same.

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

VISIBILITY STEP

- _____
- My score is a _____

STEP TWO: Develop a plan for personal improvement.

Refer to your personal adjustments list of ten to draw your information for developing the plan. Refine your list of ten into five and record it here.

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

1.

[illegible]

2.

[illegible]

3.

[illegible]

4.

[illegible]

5.

[illegible]

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

PRAYER STEP

- _____

- My score is a _____

STEP TWO: Develop a plan for personal improvement.

Refer to your personal adjustments list of ten to draw your information for developing the plan. Refine your list of ten into five and record it here.

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

[illegible]

2.

[illegible]

3.

[illegible]

4.

[illegible]

5.

[illegible]

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

COUNSEL STEP

- _____

- My score is a _____

STEP TWO: Develop a plan for personal improvement.

Refer to your personal adjustments list of ten to draw your information for developing the plan. Refine your list of ten into five and record it here.

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

[illegible]

2.

[illegible]

3.

[illegible]

4.

[illegible]

5.

[illegible]

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

FAITH STEP

- _____

- My score is a _____

STEP TWO: Develop a plan for personal improvement.

Refer to your personal adjustments list of ten to draw your information for developing the plan. Refine your list of ten into five and record it here.

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

1.

[illegible]

2.

[illegible]

3.

[illegible]

4.

[illegible]

5.

[illegible]

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

Plan of Salvation

Accepting Jesus Christ as your personal savior is the wisest and best decision you can make. This decision results in what we call salvation.

Salvation is being saved from one's sins. Sin is anything that is contrary to God's commands and standards for one's life. I heard it explained as a person falling short of the mark. This mark is set by God and has to do with good and evil. Think of a dart game. The preferred target is the bull's-eye or the "100". Sin would be falling short of that bull's-eye.

There are three important things we need to know about a person's spiritual condition prior to salvation. These things are:

1. **Everyone is a sinner.** We are not sinners because we sin; we sin because we are sinners by nature. We were born with this nature as a result of the sin of the first couple, Adam and Eve.
2. **We cannot save ourselves.** No matter what we do we cannot make it right with God. We are powerless to remove the sin or control the sin nature—the tendency to want to sin.
3. **Only Jesus Christ** has the power to save us from sin and the sin nature.

The Bible declares that "all have sinned" (Romans 3:23) and that the result of sin is death (Romans 6:23). This death is not physical, but spiritual death. Death is not non-existence, rather it is separation; sin separates us spiritually from God. A relationship with God is not possible where sin is not canceled out. Sin is not canceled out by a person's good deeds or thoughts. We can have sin canceled out by Jesus Christ alone.

Jesus Christ made a way for our sins to be canceled. When He died on the cross, He took our place and paid sin's penalty and suffered our punishment. For the results of His act to be yours, you must ask God the Father to forgive you of your sins, and believe Jesus died for you. When you do this, God the Father will accept you for Jesus' sake. Your sins will then be forgiven, and Jesus will become your personal savior. You will be alive spiritually, connected to God, and have a new nature with all its God-designed opportunities.

If you are ready for this step, you can change your life today by simply praying this prayer *out loud* before the Lord:

Dear Heavenly Father,

I come to you in the name of Your Son Jesus. Your Word says that "Whoever calls on God in the Name of the Lord will be saved," and "If I will confess with my mouth the Lord Jesus, and will believe in my heart that God has raised Jesus from the dead, I will be saved" (Read Acts 2:21 & Romans 10:9-10).

I believe your Word and confess Jesus as the Lord of my life. I believe that You raised Your Son Jesus from the dead and He is now seated with You in heaven and will return for me one day. Come into my heart and save me now from my sins and from eternal death which would separate me from You forever. I want to live my life for You. Change me now (Read John 3:5-7, 16, 17 & Romans 8:9-11).

If you have just taken this step, or have questions, please contact a chaplain, pastor, or someone that you know who is a Christian.

About the Series

This book and the entire series were developed to provide steps for personal and ministry success for believers in a workbook format. It targets two groups. First, leaders desiring biblically-based personal development study materials and second, men and women who are incarcerated to use as an evangelism and personal development tool.

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 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.

Joshua – The first book in the series, teaches how to be successful in your personal life and leadership roles. It introduces biblical and practical steps for successfully fulfilling your purpose. The six steps presented are: *Respond, Remove, Relocate, Request, Require, and Respect*.

About the Author

Jonathan is the Lead Pastor of Glad Tidings Tabernacle, Key West, Florida, Chief Visionary of The CTC Network, Metropolitan Bishop for Global United Fellowship, chair of the Monroe County Juvenile Justice Faith Network and Chaplaincy Services, and Dominican Republic Representative for Caribbean Israel Leadership Coalition.

Jonathan entered the Gospel ministry in 1982 and has served in many places and positions. He has served as a Pastor, National Youth Director, District and National Church Official. Jonathan and his wife, Shena, have three children: Jonathan, Stephen, and Joyanne. Two daughters in law, Sherry and Violet, and four grandchildren.

To book Jonathan Carey as a speaker:

JONATHANCAREY.ORG

Email: jonathan@jonathancarey.org