

## Living Beyond Yourself

God's desire is for each and every one of us to make an impact in the sphere of influence we have been placed

- So many of us don't see ourselves as leaders
- Leadership is defined as influence
- All of us are called to influence others

### Jeremiah 29:11 (NKJV)

<sup>11</sup> For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.

- Even though most of us are familiar with this passage we have a hard time believing it
- The truth is, most people don't see themselves successful
- We need to look beyond ourselves to experience the success God has planned for us

No one can limit the plan of God for your life except you

### Psalms 78:41 (KJV 1900)

<sup>41</sup> Yea, they turned back and tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel.

- They sent out spies who saw the giants
- They chose to look at all the reasons they couldn't go
- They allowed the fear of man to keep them in the wilderness
- We need to change ourselves, our thinking and our mindset
- We can take the limits off God

### Ephesians 3:20 (NKJV)

<sup>20</sup> Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us,

- Many people think this verse is saying that God is able to do anything, but they miss the point
- His power is working and active in us
- According – “*in proportion to*” or “*to the degree of the power that worketh in us*”

You have got to change your perspective on life

### Mark 2:22 (NKJV)

<sup>22</sup> And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; or else the new wine bursts the wineskins, the wine is spilled, and the wineskins are ruined. But new wine must be put into new wineskins.”

- You can't go around thinking mediocre thoughts and expect abundance – New thinking!
- You must have a bigger vision for your life!
- Don't let your mind talk you out of it
- Don't let circumstances dictate what God can do in your life
- God is *still* in control!

The problem is most of us are so caught up in the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches we have a hard time hearing the voice of God

The same part of us that mediates on the word is the same part that worries

## Acts 9:10 (NKJV)

<sup>10</sup> Now there was a certain disciple at Damascus named Ananias; and to him the Lord said in a vision, “Ananias.” And he said, “Here I am, Lord.”

- How many times has God called our name and we weren't there?
- How many times has God spoken to us and tried to help us from making a mistake, but we didn't hear Him?
- How many times has God tried to do things in life, but we were busy watching, “*As the Stomach Turns*”?

## 2 Corinthians 10:4–5 (NKJV)

<sup>4</sup> For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, <sup>5</sup> casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ,

- Arguments – Did God say?

Face the hard questions:

- Is this all there is to life?
- Is this all God wants me to do?
- Is there something more?
- Am I in the right profession?
- Is this what God led me to do?

*“Most people strive to be independent”*

*“We are meant to be God dependent”*

We have got to take time to sit and just think about God

- Start spending time with Him
- Let the word of God renew our minds
- Focus our attention on the things of God

Unplug from this world and give God the opportunity to speak to us

If you think you can get things done on your own because you're talented or motivated, you're wrong

### 1 Corinthians 1:27 (NKJV)

<sup>27</sup> But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty;

- God hasn't chosen the mighty, the rich and the powerful
  - He has chosen the weak things of the world
  - The things that are despised

God isn't against gifted, talented, wealthy people

The problem is, when people have it in the natural, they tend to think they can do everything on their own

- So, they don't depend on God
- People who don't have a lot tend to turn to God more readily
- It doesn't mean God doesn't speak to all of us, but the vast majority of gifted, mighty people don't listen

## Gideon

### Judges 6:11–14 (NKJV)

<sup>11</sup> Now the Angel of the LORD came and sat under the terebinth tree which *was* in Ophrah, which *belonged* to Joash the Abiezrite, while his son Gideon threshed wheat in the winepress, in order to hide *it* from the Midianites. <sup>12</sup> And the Angel of the LORD appeared to him, and said to him, “The LORD *is* with you, you mighty man of valor!” <sup>13</sup> Gideon said to Him, “O my lord, if the LORD is with us, why then has all this happened to us? And where *are* all His miracles which our fathers told us about, saying, ‘Did not the LORD bring us up from Egypt?’ But now the LORD has forsaken us and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites.” <sup>14</sup> Then the LORD turned to him and said, “Go in this might of yours, and you shall save Israel from the hand of the Midianites. Have I not sent you?”

- The Israelites are oppressed by the Midianites
- They would take all their food

Gideon was threshing wheat in a wine press to conceal it from his enemies

- He was hiding and trying to beat out a little bit of grain so he could have something to eat
- This is the man God chooses to use
  - *“If the Lord is with us, why then has all this happened to us?”*
  - *“Where are all the miracles which our fathers told us about?”*
- I believe that Gideon was looking to God and expecting to see the things
- He was tired of being oppressed

The first step in seeing the supernatural is to get to the place where you say, *“I’m not going to live this way anymore”*

- God still had to show Gideon that he was going to use him
- But I believe he was ready for a change
- He was tired of the enemy stealing their food

### Judges 6:15–16 (NKJV)

<sup>15</sup> So he said to Him, “O my Lord, how can I save Israel? Indeed my clan *is* the weakest in Manasseh, and I *am* the least in my father’s house.” <sup>16</sup> And the LORD said to him, “Surely I will be with you, and you shall defeat the Midianites as one man.”

- God shows him that he is the man
- Starts with an army of 32,000
- Ends up with 300
- Great victory
- It’s not your talent, it’s God supernatural power
- You and God make a majority!

Are you in a dead-end job?

- Do you hate going to work?
- Are you tired of “Blue Mondays”?
- Are you just “Working for the weekend”?

Why are you living like that?

*“When you get desperate for God and a change in your life, you will do what you have to, to hear Him and take the steps of obedience He reveals to you”*

God made you to be something special!

- He's never created a piece of junk
- He's never made a failure
- God doesn't create mediocre, "*normal*" people

He creates people to be unique and accomplish different purposes

- God made you special and your life should count

You ought to be excited about your life and about knowing that you're fulfilling God's call and destiny

- Yet, many people just settle for less

**James 4:6–7 (NKJV)**

<sup>6</sup>But He gives more grace. Therefore, He says: "*God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.*" <sup>7</sup>Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

- Humility is submitting yourself to God
- The Lord is looking for someone who is humble and submitted to Him
- He finds the ones who are hungry and desire Him
- The ones who aren't satisfied with what everybody else is getting

Humility is submitting to God and resisting the devil

- The devil flees from us when we do that

Sadly, most of us aren't submitting to God or resisting the devil

- Humility is being God-dependent not self-dependent

## 2 Chronicles 16:1–6 (NKJV)

In the thirty-sixth year of the reign of Asa, Baasha king of Israel came up against Judah and built Ramah, that he might let none go out or come in to Asa king of Judah. <sup>2</sup> Then Asa brought silver and gold from the treasuries of the house of the LORD and of the king's house, and sent to Ben-Hadad king of Syria, who dwelt in Damascus, saying, <sup>3</sup> “*Let there be a treaty between you and me, as there was between my father and your father. See, I have sent you silver and gold; come, break your treaty with Baasha king of Israel, so that he will withdraw from me.*” <sup>4</sup> So Ben-Hadad heeded King Asa, and sent the captains of his armies against the cities of Israel. They attacked Ijon, Dan, Abel Maim, and all the storage cities of Naphtali. <sup>5</sup> Now it happened, when Baasha heard *it*, that he stopped building Ramah and ceased his work. <sup>6</sup> Then King Asa took all Judah, and they carried away the stones and timber of Ramah, which Baasha had used for building; and with them he built Geba and Mizpah.

- The idea here is “*That if Israel was busy fighting a war with Syria, they wouldn't be able to also fight with Judah.*”
- Ben-Hadad agrees and attacks the king of Israel
- Most people would think, “*What's wrong with that?*”
- God had a different perspective

## 2 Chronicles 16:7–8 (NKJV)

<sup>7</sup> And at that time Hanani the seer came to Asa king of Judah, and said to him: “Because you have relied on the king of Syria, and have not relied on the LORD your God, therefore the army of the king of Syria has escaped from your hand. <sup>8</sup> Were the Ethiopians and the Lubim not a huge army with very many chariots and horsemen? Yet, because you relied on the LORD, He delivered them into your hand.

Asa's prosperity, up to this point was because he relied on God

### 2 Chronicles 14:2-7 (NKJV)

<sup>2</sup> Asa did *what was* good and right in the eyes of the LORD his God, <sup>3</sup> for he removed the altars of the foreign *gods* and the high places, and broke down the *sacred* pillars and cut down the wooden images. <sup>4</sup> He commanded Judah to seek the LORD God of their fathers, and to observe the law and the commandment. <sup>5</sup> He also removed the high places and the incense altars from all the cities of Judah, and the kingdom was quiet under him. <sup>6</sup> And he built fortified cities in Judah, for the land had rest; he had no war in those years, because the LORD had given him rest. <sup>7</sup> Therefore he said to Judah, "Let us build these cities and make walls around *them*, and towers, gates, and bars, *while* the land is yet before us, because we have sought the LORD our God; we have sought *Him*, and He has given us rest on every side." So they built and prospered.

- Their prosperity is directly related to King Asa seeking the Lord

### 2 Chronicles 14:8-11

- We see that Asa is facing an army of over a million
- His army is only 580,000
- It was way beyond his ability
- He cries out to the Lord, "*Our eyes are on you. We look to you. We need your help!*"
- The Lord smote the Ethiopians, they could not recover
- They also defeated the cities around Gerar
- The fear of the Lord came upon them

You aren't submitting to God when you try to figure everything out and do it on your own

- Pride, at its root is simply depending on yourself

As long as Asa was seeking the Lord, the Lord delivered them, and they had victory

**2 Chronicles 16:8–9 (NKJV)**

<sup>8</sup> Were the Ethiopians and the Lubim not a huge army with very many chariots and horsemen? Yet, because you relied on the LORD, He delivered them into your hand. <sup>9</sup> For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of *those* whose heart is loyal to Him. In this you have done foolishly; therefore from now on you shall have wars.”

- Can you see what King Asa was being rebuked for?
- He had trusted God when he was out numbered 2 to 1
- This time he takes the treasures of the Lord and uses it to hire the King of Syria
- God's plan was to give the Israelites into his hand as well as the Syrians
- God's whole plan was thwarted because Asa trusted in self

Something we must understand: *“It's not just a matter of obtaining the right result – it matters how you get there.”*

- Asa throws the seer in prison
- He continues to have wars
- Asa dies of a foot disease
- He seeks the physicians instead of the Lord
- His heart became hard
- He was no longer God-dependent

God isn't against gifted, talented, wealthy people

The problem is, when people have it in the natural, they tend to think they can do everything on their own

- So, they don't depend on God
- People who don't have a lot tend to turn to God more readily
- It doesn't mean God doesn't speak to all of us, but the vast majority of gifted, mighty people don't listen

**Proverbs 4:26 (NKJV)**

<sup>26</sup> Ponder the path of your feet, and let all your ways be established.

- God wants us to ponder our lives in view of His ways
- He wants us to think and lay our lives before Him

When was the last time you chose to remember where you have come from and what God has spoken to us in the past?

- Think about how much he has changed your life

**John 10:27 (NKJV)**

<sup>27</sup> My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.

- Jesus didn't say, "My sheep can hear My voice"
- God is speaking to us every minute of every day
- If we aren't hearing His voice, it's because we've grown dull of hearing
- We are drowning out His voice with everything else

We need to change our lifestyles and focus our attention on God in order to take the limits off of Him