

Introduction

How many remember your time in grade school?

What kind of impact did those days have on your life?

What does significance mean to you?

When you strive for significance, what are you striving for?

What is keeping you from feeling significant?

John Maxwell writes in his book, *Intentional Living*, “To be significant, all you have to do is make a difference with others wherever you are, with whatever you have, day by day.”¹

Here is the question: What or who did I make better today?

Significance is not about you. It is about other people—improving or adding value to their lives. It is about improving your church or business.

Reflection

Which of your goals are challenging you today?

Which goals are on the back burner because they do not inspire you?

What are different ways you can make a positive difference in the lives of others today?

What kind of difference do you want to make?

To make an impact on the lives of others, you must be willing to overcome roadblocks you face in your journey to significance.

And it shall be said, “Build up, build up, prepare the way, remove every obstruction from my people’s way” (Isa 57:14).

Significance is a day-to-day expedition, not a destination.

Chapter 1

Preparing for the Journey

Milestone: Compassion

Roadblock

An obstacle is defined as something that blocks one's way so movement or progress is prevented or made more difficult. Have you noticed when you come to a roadblock there is an alternate route, sometimes for miles till you get back on the road you were traveling to get to your destination. Roadblocks come in our lives and we must navigate wisely to get back on course.

Think of a time you faced a roadblock on a highway you were traveling and how you had to navigate to get back on track to come to your destination?

How much time did it add to your travel?

How did you feel?

Was the alternate route marked well or did you have to use a gps to navigate?

Reflection

What are roadblocks you face as you try to have a positive impact on your church, your business, or people with whom you live and work?

Various ways can be found to overcome roadblocks. The real concern is finding victory navigating to overcoming the roadblocks that appear in your path and keep you from moving forward.

The first roadblock you must navigate, and perhaps the most difficult to maneuver, is selfishness. A person who is selfish cares only for himself or herself.

The Apostle John provides a personal example of an roadblock he faced in one church in 3 John 1:9–12. Read this out loud.

Reflection

Which one describes you: Diotrephes or Demetrius?

Which attitude do you move toward naturally?

When do you feel stuck between the two?

What do you think of the following statement? Selfishness damages relationships, breeds unhealthy relationships and will eventually destroy any connection with healthy people.

The realm of self (selfishness) is illustrated by putting a circle around your feet.²

Where are you in the journey between selfishness and servant hood?

Which one describes you right now?

How can you transition to a servant mindset?

Conquering Milestone: Compassion (Love)

The commandment to love God found in Luke's Gospel.

And behold, a lawyer stood up to put him to the test, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" He said to him, "What is written in the Law? How do you read it?" And he answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself" (Luke 10:25-27).

What does this imply to you?

Loving God improves my relationship with myself. If you cannot get along with yourself, you will find it difficult to get along with others.

Start with God loving me.

In what area of your life do you struggle with God loving you?

If you do not love God, you find it hard to love yourself and so you will have a difficult time loving others. Diotrephes missed this!

Where do you miss this?

Your relationship with yourself will be reflected in your relationships with others.

Reflection

Where and when do you struggle to be a loving person? The truth is all people struggle.

In what ways do you struggle with self? Selfishness?

In what situations are you critical of yourself?

How do these issues relate to your relationship with God? How do you see God? How do you believe God sees you?

Which lens are you seeing yourself through?

What do you feel about this statement: “Seek to understand before being understood”?

Think about this statement: “Everyone has a different map of the world.” How does this statement give you a different perspective of people?

Talk to the Lord about areas that cause you to be self-centered.

Love God. Pursue God. Spend time alone with God.

“Where does selfishness, or “selfish ambition” show up in your life?”

“Are you looking at the “interests of others?””

Selfishness keeps us self-centered and blurs our vision of others.

The Cure is Simple: Come to Jesus. Deny self. Carry your cross. Follow Him.

One way to see if you are denying yourself is to examine how you listen.



James 1:19 reminds you to “be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger.” Listening is developed through curiosity, which explores the deep areas. Proverbs 20:5 says, “The purpose in a man’s heart is like deep water, but a man of understanding will draw it out.”

Reflection

Do you make decisions based on how they benefit you or how they benefit others?

Explain.

How much would you like someone just to listen to you?

How often do you focus on listening to others?

Character

Do you work harder at building your image or serving others?

Your love for the Lord is observed in your relationships with others!

Chapter 1.5

Commencement

The Journey begins at Resurrection

One Friday long ago Jesus cried, "It is finished."

What do these words mean?

What do these words mean to you personally?

Watchman Nee reminds believers, "Our old history ends with the cross; our new history begins with the resurrection."³

When you realize God values people, you begin to value them also.

Your perspective changes.

How has your new life in Christ given you a new perspective?

In what areas have your perspective, how you look at things and people, changed?

Abundant Life

One other benefit of following Jesus that affects your journey to significance is abundant life.

"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy."

Your Old Story

“I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.”

Your New Story

Which story is yours?

Which side of the “and” between life and abundantly do you live?

A voice behind you says, “Take the first step.” This step will transform your life. You will never be the same if you just begin the journey.

Challenge:

Take the first step in the journey to significance.

Sharpen your pencil and begin writing your new story.



Chapter 2

Milestone: Be Courageous

Roadblock: Fear

You must be courageous to step into the journey to significance.

Is your life being controlled by the man on the stair who is not there?

What fear is stopping you from doing the things you should be doing?

How are you handling your fears?

Greg shared a story of facing fear sliding down a tube in a cave.

Share a story of a time you faced your fear.

What lesson or lessons did you learn that you can share with others?

If I had not faced my fears, I would have never climbed again and would have missed out on the wonder and excitement of climbing in the mountains.

What is stopping you from climbing again?

What do you need to do to start again, to face your fears?

Jesus Knows our Fears

What encouragement do you find in these words “Jesus knows our fears”?

Every time you refuse to take the difficult step, each time you keep quiet instead of saying the hard word, you die a little. And your faith dies a little too as your fear whispers to you that God is not really big enough to take care of you.

Have you come to this moment in your life?

What words do you hear God telling you to speak to others?

Something Important Happens Every Time We Face Our Fears.

Each time you face a fearful challenge and act, you will get a little stronger inside.

Where in your life do you feel you need to face a challenge and act?

You become more alive. You trust God more.

Chapter 3

Milestone: Be Calm

Roadblock: Stress

Then, the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, "Peace be with you" (John 20:19, NKJV).

Calm and peace are opposites of inner turmoil and stress. Calmness is:

freedom from inner storms

freedom from agitation

freedom to be yourself

freedom to enjoy the moment

untroubled

even tempered

in control of self.

Which of these statements above define you right now?

Which of these statements are you working on to become part of your everyday life?

What scripture verses can you memorize to help you in this quest?

Who can you ask to help you?

Calm is the peace comes as a result of reconciliation and forgiveness!

How Do You Deal With Difficult People.

Here are a few thoughts.

Deal with yourself first.

Where in your life does real peace exist and where 'drama' or undercurrents exist which battle with your peace?

Find God's peace and apply it in your life. The most difficult person I have had to deal with in my life was not the person who stuck an unsigned letter under my door; it was me.

Forgive Yourself First

:John Maxwell has written

“The first person I must know is myself; This brings self-awareness.

The first person I must get along with is myself;

This leads to a healthy image.

The first person to cause me problems is myself;

Admitting truth yields self-honesty.

The first person I must change is myself;

This empowering attitude paths the way to self improvement.”⁴

The first person you must forgive is yourself. This leads to peace within and forgiveness of others.

Where in your life do you deal with unforgiveness?

You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you (Isa 26:3).

Fixing Your Mind On Christ Fixes Your Mind

Where has this statement made a difference in your life?

Where does it need to make a difference today?

Lewis Smedes put it this way, “If forgiving ourselves comes easy, chances are we are only excusing ourselves, ducking blame, and not really forgiving ourselves at all.”⁵

Forgiving yourself is a voluntary, emotional, and intentional process that brings a change of feelings and attitude regarding an offense.

Start Focusing On Jesus

Your limiting beliefs about yourself keep you from moving higher; keep you from victory. They keep you from having close relationships.

Let It Go And Fix Your Mind On Jesus

Have you ever told yourself, “I can’t do that?”

Have you ever thought, *I’m not good, so I can never ...* .

These may be limiting beliefs brought on by you not forgiving yourself or brought on by someone’s words.

Counting and recounting the hurts of your past keep you stuck in a rut of self-bitterness.

Change your limiting belief about yourself with God’s help.

There comes a time when you have to intentionally decide to stop beating yourself up over the mistakes you made in the past.

Do you use a calendar app on your cell phone, tablet or computer? Get it out and make this appointment with yourself, “Stop beating myself up.”

However, your happiness is not other peoples responsibility. It is your responsibility. It is an attitude. It is a choice.

Do you keep this type of company?

Are you like this?

Reflection

Are you upset with someone?

Have you asked for forgiveness recently for something you have done to upset others?

Four Instructions to Develop Peace in Your Life

1. “You will keep in him perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on you: because he trusts in you (Isa 26:3, NKJV).

A Matter of Choice

“Choose this day whom you will serve” (Josh 24:15). When you begin your day, you choose your attitude for the rest of the day. Your choice depends on who or what you are thinking about.

What did you think about when you woke up this morning?

Who influenced your thoughts?

How did it affect your attitude?

Be aware that your thoughts affect your attitude and your attitude has an effect on your day.

Choose Jesus. He brings peace. Don't just think about it; make it a matter of the heart.

Reflection

Do you have peace?

Are you living in the realm of calm?

Where do you go to find peace?

Who can you forgive?

Yourself?

Someone else?

Paul writes to the Corinthians, "Finally, brethren, farewell. Become complete. Be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you" (2 Cor 13:11, NKJV).

You can make a difference in the lives of others by living in God's peace.

CHAPTER 4

Milestone: Be Confident

Roadblocks: Insecurity, Doubt

Many people today lack belief in people. It may come from a lack of belief in themselves! The root problem comes from the lack of belief in God, how people view God and think about God.

Do you believe in God?

Are you aware that God loves you?

God believes in you! He values you! He has offered you grace.

Where does your belief in God contradict with your belief in your ability in what God is calling you to do?

Do you believe in the people around you?

How do you view yourself? How does God view you?

How does your belief in God affect how you live?

A friend, Scott Green, described how his belief in God affected his life in this way. "It affects my seeing things on an eternal scale (perception). Knowing God has things under control."

What effect does your belief have on you?

Does it give confidence, lower stress, build faith and endurance?

What else?

Reflection

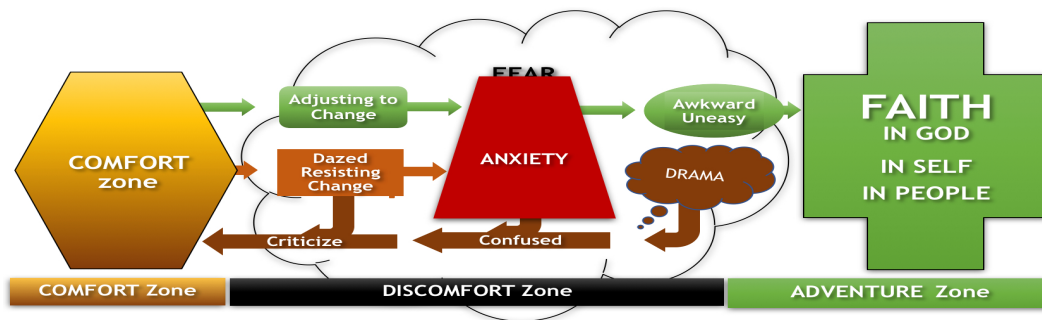
How did you feel the last time the Holy Spirit nudged you or you heard the Holy Spirit tell you to witness to someone?

How did you respond?

Did your heart race?

Did you feel a loss of words?

Explain:



Reflection

As a pastor or business owner or leader, how are you developing your staff?

Who are you mentoring right now?

Who is mentoring you?

Is training for staff in your budget?

If not, how can you begin setting aside funds for training?

Reflection

Do you have that kind of confidence?

Where does insecurity appear in your life?

Where do you lack confidence?

Who can you find to help you overcome this roadblock?

When are you going to contact them?

Some things you cannot do by yourself. But notice that He gives you a task to carry out and the freedom to carry it out.

What causes you to settle for less?

If you have settled for less, What can you do to get back on track?

When you come under His authority, it is seen in your obedience.

Reflection

Do you fully grasp the reality of Jesus's resurrection in your life?

Where do you work on making this realization a part of your life?

What Scriptures can you read or memorize to help you?

When are you going to set aside more time to spend with God?

Date: Time:

Chapter 5

Milestone: Live Out Your Mission/Commission

RoadBlock: Aimlessness

Aimless is defined as being without purpose or direction.

Synonyms for aimless include undirected, rudderless, adrift, and directionless.

When have you felt having a loss of direction?

I believe that finding who you are begins by defining whose you are.

You are a child of God, a follower of Jesus Christ. Then you find your values.

When you explore values, you are deciding what is at the core of who you are.

Reflection:

Do you know your values?

Are you in alignment with your values?

Living your values keeps you in alignment with who you are. It assures integrity!

Do you know your values?

Share your values with someone close and ask how they see these values lived out in your life.

If you cannot define your values to go <https://www.gregwhite76.com/discover-your-values.html> you will find a free download for discovering your values.

Work through this download intentionally with much reflection.

When you have discovered your values and written them down in a list go back over it and list your top five. Then think about how these values help define who you are and have become a guide for living. Share these with family members and friends and ask how they see these values live out in your life.

Our mayor asked me to work with a team of people to define a new mission statement for our city?

journey ahead. Think about this: the journey is more about who the group is becoming during the journey than the destination.

The struggle is in determining: Who am I? Why am I here? What am I to do? What is my purpose? What is my mission?

A mission or purpose statement not only states what you do, it also implies what you do not do. I believe the mission statement of an organization should be the litmus test for any new idea or venture.

My mission (the wording has improved over the years) is, “Guiding people to know and grow in a relationship with Jesus and one another.”

My vision is to guide Pastors and church leaders to grow, navigate roadblocks, and celebrate milestones to make a difference in their calling.

A few years later I began to use a tweaked Engle's scale of conversion based on the work of James Engel to help me understand my role in the process of leading others to Christ.⁶

-6 Consciousness of God

-5 Contact with the gospel

-4 Considers the gospel

-3 Comprehends the gospel

-2 Conviction

-1 Choice

0 Conversion

+1 Change

Where on this scale are the people you are witnessing to, guiding to know Jesus?

What strategy can you develop to take them to the next step toward choice?

IV. Praying.

Do you have someone for whom you are praying to receive Christ? Pray again right now.

Believers are all called to fulfill the mission of making disciples.

Are you living out your mission?

What goals have you set that do not align to your mission?

Reflection

How is your attitude toward a person who is mean-spirited?

Where are you allowing that person's attitude to overflow into your life?

How is your attitude affecting the rest of the church or your business?

C. S. Lewis provided insights into experiencing the presence of God. "We may ignore, but we can nowhere evade the presence of God. The world is crowded with Him. He walks everywhere incognito."⁷

Do not lose sight of the truth that a moment in God's presence can change everything. Remember the words of Jesus, "Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Matt 6:21).

Reflection

What is your purpose?

What is your mission?

Is there a sense of aimlessness that keeps you from moving forward with the mission?

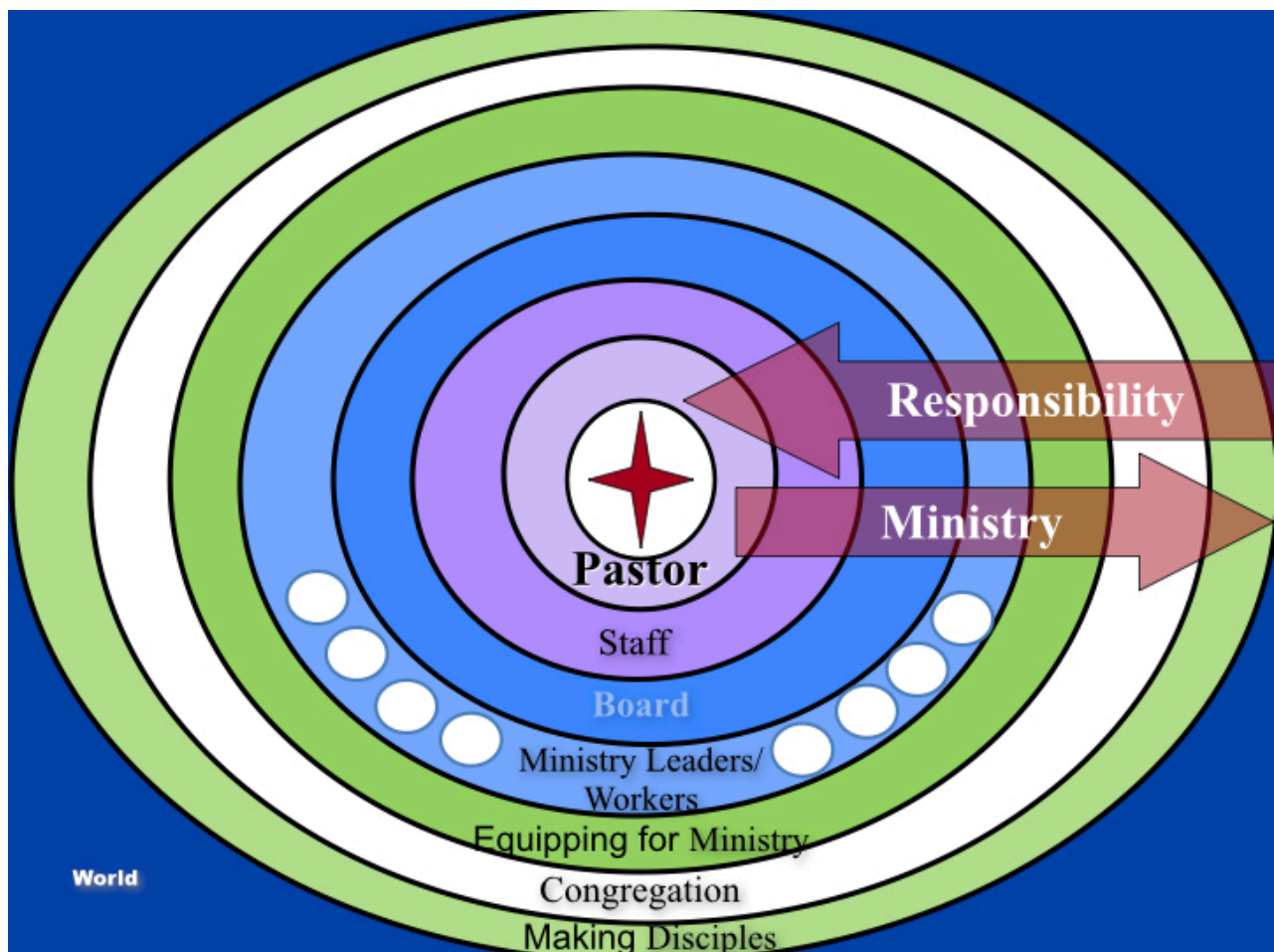
Is the answer to "who am I" found in what you do or who you are in Christ?

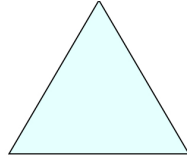
A great resource to help you define who you are and begin the process of finding your purpose is Tom Wolfe's book, *Identity and Destiny: 7 Steps to a Purpose Filled Life*.

Another thing I would like to address at the end of this chapter is responsibility. A leader accepts responsibility, and the more responsibility you have, the less rights you have.

Consider the traditional pyramid structure used by many businesses today and how it may be reflected in your church. The pyramid speaks of climbing higher to reach the top and of rights instead of responsibility.

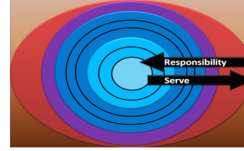
Consider another way to express structure:





Pyramid Structure

- **COMMAND BASE**
- **INDIVIDUAL**
- **POWER**
- **CONTROL**
- **MY IDEA**
- **MAKE ME LOOK GOOD**
- **RIGHTS**
- **KING OF THE MOUNTAIN**
- **CLIMB**



Concentric Circle

- **TEAM BASE**
- **GROUP**
- **EMPOWER**
- **INFLUENCE**
- **OUR IDEA**
- **MAKE OTHERS LOOK GOOD**
- **RESPONSIBILITY**
- **WHEN WE ALL PULL TOGETHER**
- **SERVE**

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The concentric circle structure gives a different perspective to a church or organization. It represents people standing shoulder to shoulder to carry out the work of the mission. From this perspective the deeper one goes in the organization, the more responsibility. Responsibility is a better choice than power, because power in this context speaks of control and responsibility speaks of cooperation and collaboration. Thus, the deeper one goes, the more responsibility and wherever one is in the organization, ministry or serving goes outward. Remember the old adage fold your hands, “here is the church, here is the steeple, open the door and see all the people.” The church is not the building, the church is people. Look at the chart below and see further differences between the pyramid model and the concentric circle model.

Chapter 6

Milestone: Companion

Roadblock: Unhealthy Relationships

Paul gave this advice to the people of Corinth, “Do not be deceived: ‘Bad company ruins good morals’” (1 Cor 15:33). Your friends influence you. Your relationships mold you.

Who is influencing you?

What is influencing you?

Who are the people who encourage you in your walk with Jesus?

Who are the people who discourage you and lead you away from Jesus?

Who are you influencing?

When people come to Jesus, His influence in their lives overflows to influence their relationships. He transforms lives and encourages His followers.

Milestone: Companion

When were times you called on the Lord when in danger?

How can you use your experiences to encourage others to call on the Lord?

You carry with you the presence of the ones you spend the most time with.

Who do you spend the most time with?

Whose presence do you carry?

Whose presence do you carry?

People carry presence.

What defines your presence?

A moment in God's presence changes everything. This is why the Psalmist could sing, "In your presence there is fullness of joy" (Ps 16:11). His presence in your life makes a difference, developing within you the ability to make a difference in other people's lives. This is significance.

Chapter 7

Milestone: Live Out Your Calling

Roadblock: Discouragement/Frustration

What frustrations do you face in ministry or in the work you do?

Are you discouraged in your calling?

Reflection

What is your calling?

Do you have the same passion for the call as when you first discovered your passion?

Do you need to renew your passion for what God has called you to?

To renew your passion and renew your calling, spend quality time inspecting yourself and asking God to help you keep in tune with your call.

There is a story of a shepherd who called in from an isolated place and asked a radio announcer to play a certain key on the radio so he could tune his guitar.

Where in your calling do you feel out of tune?

What do you need to do right now to get back in tune?

Have breakfast with Jesus and renew your call, you will keep your calling “in tune.”

Call a friend and talk it over with him or her. Pray. Keep praying until you renew your call.

Then you will find fulfillment instead of discouragement. You will find fulfillment in overcoming, recommitting to your call and staying in the journey.

Paul wrote of staying focused on his call in Philippians 3:12f

What do you need to do to reach the prize of the upward call?

Think about your calling as you read the verses below:

“I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called” (Eph 4:1, NKJV).



How can you “walk worthy of the calling...?”

Where are you intentional in finding encouragement as you continue your calling?

“To this end we always pray for you, that our God may make you worthy of his calling and may fulfill every resolve for good and every work of faith by his power, so that the name of our

Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ” (2 Thes 1:11–12).

When you are discouraged in your calling (discouragement will come), you can find encouragement by going back to the One who called you. Talk to God about your discouragement and frustrations. You will discover God is there to help you and give further direction. And you will “fulfill every resolve for good and every work of faith *by His power.*”

Be intentional in your calling and you will make a difference.

Chapter 8

Milestone: Daily Fill to Capacity

Roadblock: Powerless

Countless stories can be found of men and women in ministry facing burnout and depression. Many reasons for this could be cited, but one major reason is a lack of leaning on God, i.e., being in His presence and finding the strength and capacity to carry on the work God has called you to do.

When have you faced burnout?

How did you come to this conclusion?

What are you doing about it right now?

Who can you talk to?

When are you going to talk to the person listed above?

The Holy Spirit Gives Believers Power

What is most needed in the church?

- Is it the fresco? No! Is it the choir? No!
- Is it the stained glass windows? No! Is it the advertisements? No!
- Is it the power of the Spirit? Yes!

Be intentional in your calling and you will make a difference.

Think about this quote from Bill Easum, "We live in a secular world, but the church continues to develop ministries as if the church were in charge of a Christian Society."⁸

What does this quote say about the church today?

What does this say about the need to rely on God and be filled with the Holy Spirit?

Emotion is good. Power is better—power to be a witness.

Are you getting filled daily? It will change your life!

Do you feel a lack of power in your life?

Do you have a hunger for more of God?

As you seek God and press in for more, He answers your prayer.

If Jesus did His ministry in the power of the Spirit, should you not desire that same power to assist you in ministry?

Listen to Jesus's instruction to His disciples concerning the promise of the Father, which is the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

Thus it“ ,and said to them 46 ,Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures 45 and that 47 ,that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead ,is written be ,repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations- I am sending ,And behold 49 .You are witnesses of these things 48 .ginning from Jerusalem But stay in the city until you are clothed with power .the promise of my Father upon you .(49–Luke 24:45) ”from on high

The baptism of the Holy Spirit is an absolute necessity in every Christian's life for the service to which God has called them.

Let me ask you two vital questions about your Christian life.

Have you been baptized in the Holy Spirit?

If not, you need to receive this Baptism!

Are you using His power in daily living?

Where is it evident of His power working in your life?

If not, you need a refilling!

I believe you may find the Book of Acts continues being written in the journals of heaven and in the lives of people today.

Is your name written in these journals?

You can make a difference in the lives of others through the power of the Holy Spirit

Chapter 9

Significance

Significance is not a chapter in your life, which you write and go on to the next. Significance is woven daily in your story as you add value to other people. It is a choice. You choose significance. It is woven tighter into the fabric of your life every time you choose to make a difference in the lives of others.

First Thessalonians 5:11 instructs believers, “Therefore encourage one another and build up one another, just as you are doing.” Encouraging one another points to adding value to one another. Encouragement has many facets.

The Milestone of Significance Is Achieved When We become Intentional.

Now let’s get practical. What can you do to encourage others?

- send a card
- make a phone call
- pat someone on the shoulder
- visit someone
- go sit with someone
- cry with someone
- pray with someone
- share Scripture with someone
- tell someone not to give up and remind the person others are standing with him or her
- tell someone, “You are going to make it”

- What else?

-

Restore someone by bringing that person back on course. Be part of the Christian community the Lord has designed.

Reflection

Who can you encourage today?

Who can you add value to today?

Who can you make a difference for today?

Who has encouraged you today?

Take to heart the instruction found in 1 Thessalonians 5:11, “Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing” (NKJV).

Keep walking in the journey of significance and you will make a difference in the lives of others daily. “Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain” (1 Cor 15:58).



ENDNOTES

¹ John Maxwell, *Intentional Living* (New York: Center Street Hachette Book Group, 2015), 4.

² Earl Jabay, *The Kingdom of Self, A Fresh Penetrating Analysis Of Your Greatest Predicament* (Plainfield, New Jersey: Logos International., 1974), 11.

³ Watchman Nee, *The Normal Christian Life* (Fort Washington, Pennsylvania: CLC Publications, 1977), 27.

⁴ John Maxwell, *Man in the Mirror* (John Maxwell.com Blog), October 1, 2014, www.johnmaxwell.com/blog/man-in-the-mirror/

⁵ Dan Meyer, “Hung up: How Do I Forgive Myself?”, April 2012, Preaching Today, <https://preachingtoday.com/sermons/sermons/2012/april/hunguphowforgive>

⁶ James F. Engle., Wilbert Norton, *What’s Gone Wrong With the World? A Communication Strategy for the Church and World Eveangelism* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Academie Books, 1975), 45.

⁷ C. S. Lewis, *Letters to Malcolm: Chiefly on Prayer* (Harper Collins, 2017), 75. *Letters to Malcolm* by CS Lewis © copyright CS Lewis Pte Ltd 1963, 1963. Used with permission.

⁸ Bill Easum, *Dancing with Dinosaurs* (Nashville: Abington Press, 1993), Back Cover of Book.