MENSA OTABIL

GOAL & SETTING GOAL & GETTING



How to Set & Achieve Your Goals

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DEDICATION

Wholly dedicated to all those who seek to live a better life through Christ Jesus. May you fulfill your life’s vision as you set and achieve your goals.

INTRODUCTION

We need to set goals, plan and act to achieve great things in life. If we do not do that, we make ourselves vulnerable to failure. It is said that " *If you fail to plan, you plan to fail."* Daily planning is an important key to success in our endeavors and progress in life. Jesus highlighted this point when he said:

> *28 For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has enough to finish it— 29 lest, after he has laid the foundation, and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, 30 saying, 'This man began to build and was not able to finish'? 31 Or what king, going to make war against another king, does not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand? 32 Or else, while the other is still a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks conditions of peace.*

In this passage, Jesus teaches about goal setting, planning, and action. He stresses the importance of preparation and admonishes us to count the cost before taking any action. He, subsequently, explains the role of evaluation and encourages damage control through negotiation.

The man who plans knows when to confront an objective and when to buy time and regroup. Some would argue that this type of planning smacks of a lack of faith. I disagree with that! It is rather foresight based on insight and hindsight.

Goal setting requires that you:

- Learn from your past experiences
- Locate your current opportunities
- Launch boldly into your future

The sad truth is that a lot of people go through life imprisoned by their past, unhappy with their current life and scared of the future. The live hoping that by some stroke of luck or good fortune their lives will manage to turn out right. On the contrary, everything that happens in this world is according to a set plan and purpose.

In the Scripture, Jesus told the parable of a builder who decided to build a

tower and started by first calculating whether he had enough resources to finish the project. The principle is to locate or define a major goal in life and then determine if our current talents, gifts or abilities and the resources we have at our disposal are sufficient to get the job well done. If we discover that our current resources are inadequate, we must work to upgrade ourselves. Competence goes beyond words. It is the ability to say it, plan it and do it. This requires total focus and commitment to the task.

Jesus also spoke about a king seeking counsel about whether he should engage a formidable opponent in a particular battle. Although the king had confidence in his own competence, he had to gain more insight into the venture he was proposing to enter. **To have insight is to know what to do, when to do it and how to do it.** The application of these three qualities, will not only lead to competence but also to excellence.

When a builder does not count the cost or prepare his estimates accurately, his building may be left half completed. In our part of the world, we often see people start big building projects without fully considering what would be required to finish it. They plan a ground-breaking ceremony with much pomp and enthusiastically lay a foundation with lots of concrete only to stop the project halfway through for lack of funds. That is what a friend of mine calls "wisdom in reverse gear." True wisdom requires that before you build your house, your life, your church, marriage or business, you sit down, plan and take stock before you lay the first foundation stone.

Two Alternative Plans For Your Life

There are two opposite poles that all human beings gravitate towards. These two poles offer you the option of choosing between life and destruction. The first pole represents the agenda of God for your life; the second represents Satan's agenda for your life. You have to make a choice as to which of these poles you will choose to gravitate towards. Your choices will either lead you towards God's agenda or push you into Satan's agenda. Jesus alluded to this when He compared his objectives to those of the thief.

> *10 The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.*

The thief here is in reference to Satan. His work and activities are contrasted with that of Christ. Satan's desire is to steal, kill and destroy you; God's desired is to offer you abundant life. Nothing happens in this life which does not come

from these two entities. Your plans may, therefore, either fit into God's plan or the devil's. Success in life is not a matter for gambling. It is therefore imperative not to try to order your life according to change or luck.

Whereas God has a purpose for your life, you must also recognize a satanic agenda to frustrate you and keep you from fulfilling your God-given purpose. Satan wants you to end up in life a useless and frustrated person. His strategy is to get you to gamble with life instead of planning your life. Even where you set clear goals or make plans for your life, he tries to put obstructions in your way to thwart your progress.

The intention of this book is to expose you to the process of developing a vision and setting goals for your life as well as how to plan to meet these expectations. Significantly, it concludes by identifying four enemies that primarily prevent people from achieving their goals.

Because this book is designed to elicit behavioral change, it is recommended that you keep a notebook or journal with you in order to capture any inspirational ideas or to help craft your own vision or goals.

CHAPTER 1

WHAT IS A GOAL?

A goal, simply defined, is an aim or a purpose, or the mark set as a limit to a race. Your goal in life is, therefore, what you aim at, what you want to do or achieve within a certain specific time. Everybody is heading towards some sort of destination but not everybody likes their destination when they get there.

Some have a clear destination in mind but board a bus, so to speak, which is going to a different destination from what they have in mind. So, your goals must always be reinforced by choices in line with your stated goals. You can't have a goal to be dentist and go to college to major in graphic design. In the same way, you can't have a goal to own your own business and be lazy and dependent at the same time!

What Is A Vision?

Vision is the mother of goals. Vision gives birth to goals. In order to set achievable goals, you must have a vision. You must see the future in your mind's eye and imagine how it would look and feel like when you get there.

Proverbs 29:18a declares:

> *Where there is no revelation (vision), the people cast off restraint.*

A vision is:

- Foresight.
- Imagination of the future.
- A clear-cut picture of how the future will be.

A vision shows you the future before you get there. It allows you to see way ahead of the things that are happening around you. It takes your mind to places that lie beyond your current circumstances. People live aimlessly and perish when they are not able to see life beyond what they see and feel right now.

> *Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he.* Proverbs 29:18

Where there is no vision, the people perish. Vision is a clear picture of what you desire to achieve or experience in the future. We are sustained and kept on

track in life by the quality of our vision. When we live our lives without any clear picture of where we are headed or what we want to do with the talents and opportunities we have, we waste the days and squander the gift of life that God has blessed us with. Without a clear sense of where we are going and where we want to get to, we will settle for any destination. Without vision, we will accept anything that comes our way and allow other people to set the agenda for our lives.

The NIV renders Proverbs 29:18 as, *'Where there is no revelation, the people cast off restraint.'* To cast off restraint is to have no guide or control. Can you imagine what would happen if there was no pipe to guide the water from the pump station into your house? That pipe acts as the "restraint" that controls and guides the water from the pump station. Without it, the water will be wasted. That is what vision is like. Without it, you waste your precious life. Don't go through the rest of your life without a clear vision.

Some allow their current hardships and challenges to keep them from seeing any new possibility ahead of them. As such, they imprison themselves in the jail of despair and simply allow time to pass them by. Others are so happy with their lives right now that they fail to see anything better than what they have at the moment. Such people freeze themselves in the refrigerator of their past successes and never explore new opportunities that God wants to bring their way.

They wait till they are twenty-seven years old and wish they had planned when they were twenty-one towards what was going to happen to them at twenty-seven; and at thirty they wish they had planned fifteen years earlier. On their retirement at sixty-five, they then find that all of a sudden they have become old, with nothing ahead to life for.

Asked what advice he would give to young people on his eightieth birthday, an elderly man replied, "If I knew I would live to be 80 years, I would have invested my time and energy more productively." Think about that for a moment. He thought his life was going to end earlier so he did not set any future goals. He lived to be eighty and realized that he had only accumulated years and nothing more.

For many of us, age is catching up very fast on us. You thought you would never be twenty, but now you are twenty and over. You imagined fifty years to be very far away until you turned forty-nine years.

Time And Vision

The time we have to live on earth is limited. It is essential that we plan to use it wisely. Our bodies were designed by God to function optimally for about 70 years and, by reason of good care, our lives could be extended beyond the time allotted. Within those seventy years, God gives us life and energy to accomplish our desired goals.

Psalm 90:10 captures this thought simply and clearly:

> *The days of our lives are seventy years; and if by reason of strength they are eighty years, yet their boast is only labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away.*

It is rather remarkable how much difference an hour well spent makes in a person's life. The Bible says Ecclesiastes 3:1 that God has "an appointed time for every event under the sun." This underscores the need for the proper management of the time we have at our disposal.

By normal practice, if you live to be 70 years old you would have cumulatively spent a total of:

- 20 years sleeping
- 20 years working
- 6 years eating
- 7 years playing
- 5 years dressing
- 1 year on the phone
- 2½ years of self-indulgence
- 2½ years just lying in bed
- 3 years waiting for somebody
- 5 months tying your shoe laces
- 2½ years for other things including 1½ years in church.

Interesting, isn't it? You don't have as much time to work as you think you have. That realization demands that you plan your time efficiently and cut down on waste.

Know Where You Are Going

Successful people are those who are able to anchor their lives around an

overriding vision, a dream that supersedes everything else; and then set achievable goals in line with their vision. For example, their vision in life may be to use their God-given talents to improve the lives of rural communities. To achieve that vision, they must determine what kind of help they want to provide for the rural communities. In addition to that, they need to have a real passion for people who live in rural communities. Without that passion, they would be overwhelmed by the setbacks they might face and give up eventually on their vision. With all of that in place, they would be required to set goals to achieve specific targets that will enable them to fulfill their vision. The goals are therefore the link between their vision and its fulfillment.

Your main desire in life could be to become the most accomplished banker or neurosurgeon in your country. Another person could aspire to make a particular scientific breakthrough or invention or be listed in the Guinness Book of Records. You could also determine to become one of the greatest presidents of your country. Someone else could have a strong desire to visit all six continents or, probably, build an ultra-modern hotel complex or bank. Whatever it is, your goal must fit into a larger vision for your life. A clear goal provides a specific target that subsequently influences all other decisions in your life.

Some people go through secondary school or college without ever having an idea of what they hope to be. They take their examinations and enter university not knowing whether to study Geography or Archaeology. When they are not given their preferred course in Law or Administration, they resign themselves to “anything available.” That kind of attitude can undermine your efforts at living a fulfilling life.

Such people may put in a lot of effort towards a task without achieving anything of significance. They may end up piling up degrees and other academic qualifications without any direction in life. Significance is not found in simply achieving goals but in achieving goals that are in line with your deep most heart desires. In addition to that, they must fulfill the need of others and help you make a beneficial contribution to humanity.

On the other hand, you might come across someone who starts off as a simple janitor but who has a compelling desire to own and manage his own real estate business. Since he is nursing such a great vision in his heart, he is bound to run his life differently from other janitors. Every step he takes is likely to be a preparatory one towards the bigger vision. People like that often end up achieving significant success in their chosen fields because they harbor a clear vision.

You should know where you are heading towards and the path that will take you to your destination. If you do not know where you are going, anywhere could be a destination for you. Because there is no definite destination, you will endlessly move around in circles.

Where people do not set targets, they live daily according to the dictates of circumstances; but circumstances, like the wind, are very uncertain: they will move you one way today and another way tomorrow. There is an important decision you will have to make today. Set a target by which you will live the rest of your life. That vision or goal becomes the rudder that guides you on the vast ocean of life. Without it you will easily get lost along the way.

Writing A Life-Transforming Vision

In Habakkuk 2:2-3, the Bible tells us what to do when we have a vision:

> *2 Then the Lord answered me and said: "Write the vision and make it plain on tablets that he may run who reads it. 3 For the vision is yet for an appointed time but at the end it will speak, and it will not lie. Though it tarries, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry."*

Through Habakkuk, God furnishes us with some very helpful characteristics of a great vision. He concludes that a vision should motivate us toward a certain goal and should not be discarded when the going gets tough. Clear, written and inspiring vision objectives, when acted on, will not fail.

a. Vision and goals should be written down.

What is the vision you have? What do you want to achieve? Write it down in black and white. Do not just have a vision and say, "Well, I think I am going to be millionaire one day."

Write down your vision either in your Bible or in a diary or notepad. Write it somewhere you can always see because what you see is what you get. See it always; let it be before you, and do not lose sight of it.

The single act of writing down your goals increases the changes of achieving them by 1100%. This means that you can increase your chances of reaching your goals by 11 times just by writing them down.

A major survey of corporate behavior asked people if they had achieved their goals from the previous year. Of the total number of respondents who had

achieved their goals, 46% indicated that they had written down their goals. Interestingly, only 4% of those who did not have their goals written managed to achieve them.

b. A vision should be made plain.

For your vision to be understood, you must make it plain. Explain it, plan and set out the various phases of action. Making a vision plain means spelling out the details required for its implementation. The most important characteristic at this stage is clarity. The more specific you are, the better. This is even more important if your vision involves working with other people. Communicating wrong details or instructions can have grave consequences. After it is well laid out, you are then in a great position to begin to act on it.

Should somebody ask you how you intend to become a millionaire, you don't respond by saying that you believe it will happen as time goes on. Instead, you must have a clear way of making it plain and understandable. You must be able to respond by showing how you will start; where you will be in the next ten years; your expectations over a fifteen-year period and so on. That is making your vision plain or breaking down your big vision into smaller portions.

A vision must be phased out into achievable

goals which can be accomplished one step at a time.

Make plans for the next 50 years. If you are 50 years old now, where do you want to be when you are 100 years old; or have you concluded that you will not live to be 100 years? Well, since you do not control all factors of longevity, you cannot tell how long you will live. You could hit 100 years before you know it. As the years go by, you will be surprised to realize that you are nearing 100 years before you know it. As the years go by, you will be surprised to realize that you are nearing 100 years without any plan for it, so plan for those days. Have the future always in mind.

c. A vision should make the reader run.

Habakkuk says "that he may run who reads it." In other words, when you see your vision, it should put some fire in your heart and quicken your steps. You cannot claim to have a vision or goals in life and just cross your legs in the hope that in 10 years' time you will make it. You have to be up and running. The verse in Habakkuk does not talk about walking, crawling or jogging; it speaks of running! Some are strolling through life and expecting great results. The urgency that accompanies a vision is an important prerequisite for its accomplishment.

d. A vision is for an appointed time in the future

Timing is crucial. The things you envision for yourself will not yield immediate results. You must therefore have the capacity to understand the timing of your vision and work patiently with it. The gap between you and your vision is bridged with the useful activities you undertake with your time. Time gives you the opportunity to acquire better skills, build strong networks and a durable character. God always works out His plans according to His perfect timing. You must therefore trust Him to help you accomplish the vision in due season.

Delay does not mean denial. When you encounter delays in the pursuit of your dreams, you must seek wisdom. Find out the reasons for the delay. Is it related to your immaturity? Is it a result of your own wrong actions? Have you underestimated the real cost of the endeavor you have undertaken? These are some questions to ask yourself when you encounter delays. They are questions that can lead you to wisdom.

After you have written down your vision, you have to make it plain and easy to comprehend. You then have to evolve a plan with various phases and go on to act on it. Wherever you are, start taking steps towards that vision God has placed on your heart .

OUR VISIONARY GOD

One major attribute of God is His ability to see the future and make plans for His children ahead of time. The characteristics of God's vision are that:

- He sees things before they happen
- He sees things that are hidden
- He sees things which are not there as if they are there
- He sees things which are there as if they are not there

Because of that, God sees things differently from the way we see things. Where we see a problem, He sees solutions. Where we see limitations, He sees abundant supply. Where we see a crisis, He sees opportunity. That is the way He saw the sin of Adam and Eve. After the first couple had sinned and sabotaged God's creation plans, He saw a way out for mankind and immediately presented a new vision for the redemption of humanity. The plan included using the same woman who was tempted to be the vessel for the Redeemer.

In Genesis 3:15, He declared:

> *And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.*

That was God's dream. It was a dream for the salvation of mankind from sin. God made that dream or vision plain when He declared that the seed of the woman would bruise the head of the serpent. The serpent represented Satan; the seed of the woman represented the Son of Man.

It was God's great redemption dream. He wrote it down in the Holy Scriptures. Then He started planning it. He codified it in the Law that He gave to Moses. He revealed His plan in types and shadows in various ceremonies of the Old Testament. He also inspired prophets who explained the vision through prophecy. Accordingly, in due season, Jesus was born, at the appointed time. That vision was realized when God sent Christ to redeem humankind from the bonds of sin.

God did not just sit down and hope: "One day, I will save mankind from sin." He writes it, He planned it and He acted on His plans. God never left anything to chance. He planned everything. It is evident, when you read the Bible, that God had a definite point-by-point plan to bring the Messiah into being. He never left anything to change. That is the Almighty God Himself! What about you?

If you have a dream, it is going to take time for it to materialize. Aim at it, work at it. Plan for it and it shall surely come to pass.

Jesus – Our Visionary Saviour

God's vision for the redemption of humanity resulted in the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus.

Jesus Christ Himself also had a vision. He declared His vision with these words, "I am come that you might have life and have it more abundantly." His vision or purpose was clear to him throughout His ministry. In the process of achieving His vision, He did many good things. He taught the good news, healed the sick, raised the dead and worked many other miracles. But His mission was far bigger than any of the miracles that He worked.

He did not come just to multiply loaves and fishes. He came to fulfill the original vision that was set out in the Garden of Eden after the fall of Adam and Eve. When the time came for Him to fulfill that vision, He set His face

resolutely towards Jerusalem. In spite or warnings that He would die, He kept going because that was the plan. Those are the marks of a true visionary. Jesus was not aimless. He lived His life according to a set plan!

Nothing great is going to happen in your life by chance. You are not going to have silver and gold by accident. Neither are you going to come across wealth and progress by chance. You have to plan and set things in order and then build appropriately.

Each one of us must commit to a life of purpose and vision. We must act in ways that are consistent with our vision and have clear achievable goals to aim at. I have goals in life. I have a God-given vision for the church I pastor. I have goals for my family. I have a set pattern by which I want to live my years. I don't want my life to be ruled by chance. Neither should you allow your days to be governed by chance.

After you have set your goals, you must focus all your attention on achieving them. In the subsequent chapters we shall discuss ten important principles to apply in order to achieve your goals.

CHAPTER 2

STAY IN TOUCH WITH YOUR SOURCE

The first key to meeting your goals or dreams is staying in touch with God. He is the Source of all blessing and prosperity. It is important to constantly stay in tune with Him for direction because He holds the key to your promotion. We cannot receive anything good, unless it comes from the Lord God Almighty.

> *This Book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous; and then you will have good success.* Joshua 1:8

The responsibility for making your way prosperous does not rest with God entirely; you have a part to play in it. Your part starts with having faith in God.

Keep Him at the center of your being. Allow His word to become our foundation, moral and spiritual anchor. Meditate on His word daily and seek the wisdom that comes from intimacy with the Ancient of Days.

The Hebrew word translated ‘meditate’ denotes an active recitation, a re-speaking of God’s word. It must not “depart out of your mouth.” Practice the habit of regularly memorizing Scriptures, speaking them to yourself and putting them into practice. Simply knowing God’s word is not enough. We must know God’s word well enough to apply it to life’s situations.

The verse implies two kinds of success:

- Good success
- Bad success

Bad success is attained through foul means; it involves deception, murder, cheating or lying in order to succeed. That type of success comes from man and is greedy and self-centered. Good success, on the other hand, comes from spending quality time in the Bible and allowing the word of God to transform your thoughts and perceptions. Your way of seeing life should give way to God’s way of seeing life.

The Bible instructs in Psalm 119:130:

> *The entrance of Your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple.*

When the word of God comes into your life, it gives you illumination and direction. It gives you a sense of purpose in life.

The world system teaches that prosperity and success come from having power, influential personal contacts and a relentless desire to get ahead of everyone. But the prosperity of God goes beyond such worldly criteria.

In Joshua chapter one, God admonished Joshua to be strong and courageous for the task ahead. He was further commanded to obey God's word, constantly read it, study it and apply it. That is the first foundation to establish in your heart and mind in order to meet your goals for true success. It is better to follow God's pattern than to pursue that of the world. You may not look successful according to the world's standard, but you will be prosperous and successful in God's sight, and His success is the best.

CHAPTER 3

DISCOVER THE SEED

The second principle to adopt to achieve your set goal is to sow your seed. The seed is the source or force that begins the process of fruitfulness. It is the potential of that which is yet to be. It appears small and insignificant, but it is today's picture of tomorrow's reality. A seed could be:

- An inborn talent or gift that is discovered and nurtured into a beneficial skill.
- An idea that begins very simply and yet grows to have profound influence on our lives.

It has been said that great things often come in small packages. That is an important observation about life. Jesus reaffirmed this principle in the parable of the mustard seed.

> *Another parable He put forth to them, saying: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field. Which indeed is the least of all the seeds, but when it is grown it is greater than the herbs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and nest in its branches.* Matthew 13:31-32

The mustard seed was among the smallest seeds used in Palestine at the time. It is interesting that Jesus did not use any other plant with a relatively bigger seed; this was to illustrate how small beginnings can lead to growth and great results.

The Kingdom of God starts with a seed. A seed could be compared to the smallest form of what you want to do. A seed has got in it all that a plant will be in the future. It is the potential force which will eventually culminate in a satisfactory and desirable end result. Yet it is very small in appearance and easy to neglect.

God works with the seed principle. He starts with the potential before He releases the product. He starts with the thought before the word, and the word before the act.

The seed is the potential. Today it appears tiny, but within its shell lies a vast

unrealized potential ready to emerge. Everything in the world has a seed component. The most sophisticated invention begins with a simple idea.

A big vision starts small. We serve a God of increase who will multiply your seed into a mighty harvest. He said to Abraham in Genesis 13:16:

> *And I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth; so that if a man could number the dust of the earth, then your descendants also could be numbered.*

Do you want to start a big commercial venture? Do not wait to acquire a huge amount of money before you begin. Start with the little you have now. It may be a little seed but when properly planted and nurtured, it will germinate and grow into greatness!

Take the initiative and do not be discouraged by how small your beginnings are and how little your resources. That is where goal-setting comes in. It helps you to see the small components of your big vision. That way, instead of looking at the huge challenge in front of you, you can break them down into small steps that will lead you eventually to the big picture.

Sometimes, your vision can be so big that you do not even know where to start. Go ahead and invest the very little you have at your disposal! Recognize that as your seed. Like every farmer, you will always have to make a choice between sowing your seed and consuming it. Similarly, you will also have to make a choice between squandering the opportunity to start small because your view is clouded by a huge vision.

Break your vision up into small seeds – goals. Plant one seed at a time and soon you will reap your plantation. Your goals are the actions steps you take towards your vision.

CHAPTER 4

DON'T DESPISE SMALL BEGINNINGS

Closely related to the principle of the seed is that of small beginnings. Not only must you not start small but you must resolve never to despise small or humble beginnings. If you don't appreciate this principle, you can easily get discouraged at the foundation stages of whatever you are trying to do.

The word of God assures in Job 8:7:

> *Though your beginning was small, yet your latter end would increase abundantly.*

Do not despise, reject or shun your difficult beginnings. Treat them as a passing phase which will ultimately usher you in to an end that will be pleasant and abundant. Do not be afraid, shy or ashamed of small beginnings. Do not be ashamed of the time when it becomes inevitable for you to have to wear a tattered shoe.

I believe in success. I believe that God wants everybody to succeed. But success is not achieved through shortcuts. It is the result of much sacrifice, hard work and purposefulness.

At the beginning of my ministry in Ghana, a number of well-meaning people gave me what was supposed to be very good advice: "When you start a church in Ghana, you must have donors and contributors in Europe or America to finance your work." In their minds, there was no way for an African to start a ministry in Africa without foreign support. The usual practice in those days was for African preachers to spend lots of time soliciting for money abroad. I had no money but chose to nurture the potential of my congregation.

Instead of travelling to solicit for money, I spent time teaching on talent discovery and use, economic development, wealth creation and entrepreneurial skills. In my mind I pictured a self-sufficient African church that was as good and well-resourced as any church abroad. I saw a church that was actively involved in the development of its members and the community.

That was the big vision. But how did I start? I had no money, sound

equipment or church building, so I started with what I had - my seed. I started by teaching the poor, unemployed young men and women the principles of financial independence. That was the most immediate goal I set for myself. It was a small step. Compared with the vision, we seemed way behind.

Many times, the church was ejected from its meeting place without any notice. For the first four years I did not draw a salary. Even when the congregation had increased significantly with a respectable income, in those early years I still did not draw a salary. Many times, I had to go home and trust God for the next meal. I did not compare myself with other preachers who had what I did not have. My options in clothing were limited and I had little by way of luxury. Today, I look at how far God has brought our ministry and feel a deep sense of gratitude to Him for His mercies and faithfulness. If God has done it for us, He can do it for you too.

I have learnt not to despise small beginnings. I have learnt not to compare my lack with someone else's abundance. I have learnt not to be intimidated by the success and achievement of other people but to stay focused on the small goals I have set for myself as I journey towards the big vision.

To attain your big vision, you must consider that whatever challenging phase you are going through in your life now is temporary. Look beyond today's challenges to the future God has in store for you. Do not be hindered or discouraged by your own seeming lack of progress. If you do not have designer clothes, just wear what you have now and be content. That is not the end of your life. Do not despise small beginnings.

Use what you have at every point. When challenged by the request of a lame man at the temple gate, Peter simply said to the man, “…such as I have, I give you.”

That is the truth of life. You can only give what you have. If you don't have it, you can' give it. Do not borrow to impress anyone. If you do not have something and cannot afford it, do not put yourself under pressure. Learn to use what you have with dignity as you work towards what you want.

What you do for God may sometimes seem small and insignificant, but God rejoices in what is right, not necessarily in what is big. Let us be faithful in the small opportunities that come our way; let us begin from where we are and do what we can and leave the outcome to God.

In *Zechariah 4:9-10* the Bible says *:*

> *The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this temple; His hands shall also finish it. Then you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent me to you. For who has despised the day of small things: For these seven rejoice to see the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel. They are the eyes of the LORD, which scan to and fro throughout the whole earth.*

The prophetic word of the Lord concerning you is sure - the hand that laid the foundation would also complete it. Begin it and God will give you the grace to finish it. What you cook is what you will eat. If you want to enjoy a sumptuous meal, you will have to cook it well. However, if you do not cook it well, you will eat an unpalatable or tasteless meal.

If all you have in your room is a wooden bench, do not be ashamed to invite people to your house and let them sit on it. A time will surely come when the same guests will recline in a stuffed leather couch and confess that, “Truly, the Lord God has prospered you.” That will be your testimony.

WITHOUT A TEST,
THERE CAN BE NO TESTIMONY.

CHAPTER 5

AVOID PROCRASTINATION

Most of us are familiar with the oft-repeated quote of the 18th century English poet and dramatist, Edward Young: 'Procrastination is the thief of time'. To procrastinate is to postpone or put off doing something you intend to do.

Many times, we miss out on great opportunities because we fail to act at the most opportune time. We keep deceiving ourselves that there will always be enough time for us to do the things we want to do. Sometimes action that should have been taken remains frozen for days, months, years and decades till sadly we grow old and tired. Only then do we realise that we have not made the most of our time on earth.

Procrastination can be caused by over-confidence, laziness, fear or indecision. It is fed by our excuses.

Instead of acting, some of us make all the excuses to justify why we cannot do something. We blame our parents, finances, government, spouses, background, the weather, and lack of time etc.

Procrastination is a notorious thief. It steals your time and incentive. It deceives you into postponing actions that must be taken now. It is a liar that tells you to put off till tomorrow what you can do today. It creeps in when you lower your guard or are in your weakest or most vulnerable moments. Procrastination tells to ignore your responsibilities or postpone action on the things that will ensure your progress in life.

You have a crucial decision to make. If you are going to win the battle against this sly and formidable enemy, the secret is one word: “Now!”

DO IT NOW!

We cannot achieve anything without work. Be diligent in your work. Get better at what you do every day. Perfect your skills to enable you confront the challenges ahead of you. If you stop working, you stop gaining. Take action now!

In Proverbs 24:30-34, the wise man warns about the dangers of being lazy. He says:

> *I went by the field of the lazy man, and by the vineyard of the man devoid of understanding; and there it was, all overgrown with thorns; its surface was covered with nettles; its stone wall was broken down. When I saw it, I considered it well; I looked on it and received instruction: A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest; So shall your poverty come like a prowler, and your need like an armed man.*

Proverbs 26:13-15 shares another lesson:

> *The lazy man says, "There is a lion in the road! A fierce lion is in the streets!" As a door turns on its hinges, so does the lazy man on his bed. The lazy man buries his hand in the bowl; it wearies him to bring it back to his mouth.*

Proverbs condemns the attitude of the lazy person as being unproductive as well as irritating. The lazy man or woman finds every excuse to either postpone or completely avoid the effort required to make progress in life. A lazy person finds it wearisome to finish as routine a task as eating food that has already been placed before him.

Are you given to much sleep and the neglect of your work and business? Do you find yourself sometimes giving excuses instead of taking the simple but important steps required to move you forward in life? If so, the wisdom of the Scriptures cautions that if you don't change, poverty will pounce on you like an armed robber!

I challenge you to take the initiative and get to work on your goals today. Motivate and discipline yourself to do what it takes to get the desired results. The time to act is now! Procrastination will derail all your efforts at progress.

CHAPTER 6
STAY ON COURSE

Once you begin to move, do not allow yourself to be derailed from the path of progress towards your goals.

> *My son, fear the LORD and the king; do not associate with those given to change.* Proverbs 24:21

Change can be beneficial when it is done in response to major strategic factors. However, there are some people who are given to consistently changing direction in life. Their purposes change like the weather. One day they say, “We are going to do this.” The next day, they come up with entirely different plans. They don't seem to know what they want in life and could be described as consistently inconsistent. For such people, what they see others doing is what they want to do. If they start doing something and come against obstacles, they stop and look for an easy way out. Without that single-minded commitment, they often fail to achieve their goals.

Apostle Paul tells us in Philippians 3:13-16 that his goal was to know Christ, to be like Him, and be all that Christ had in mind for him. With singe-minded passion, he forgot the past and pursued the prize of his call.

Philippians 3:13-14 says:

> *“Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”*

There are people who keep referring with nostalgia to ' *the good old days* .' Paul saw things differently; he chose to forget all about the past and press forward toward his goal. Achieving your goals requires you to stay on course. Forget your past victories. Do not be sentimentally bound to the good old days because they will never come again. You have much better days ahead of you, and, if you can look forward with hope, you will not be disappointed.

Do not let anything whatsoever take your eyes off your goal. Be like Paul who committed all his energy into the pursuit of his one preoccupying goal.

How did Paul achieve this singular aim?

> *But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me.* Philippians 3:7-12

1. He discovered what he wanted in life. Knowing Christ became his solitary pursuit (vv9-11).
2. Paul discerned the things that posed a hindrance to him. He had to let go of some things he once cherished, but which he now considered as distractions (vv7-8).
3. He determined how he was going to get it (vv12-14).

Have you narrowed your focus or are you grappling with so many things at the same time? What is the “one thing” you wish to commit your entire life to? Staying on course requires the single-mindedness of an athlete in training; it means laying aside everything harmful and forsaking anything that may distract you from being effective. Nothing should be allowed to derail your efforts at achieving your goals.

Don't dwell on the issues of your past. Instead, focus on God and concentrate on growing your relationship with Him. You will thus live a fuller and more meaningful life.

CHAPTER 7

WORK BEFORE PLEASURE

It is always expedient to prioritise in the allocation of our resources. We must first pay attention to what is productive before we do what is comfortable. Our efforts must be expended in the proper order. For example, if an entrepreneur invests all his money in a magnificent mansion at a time when his business is struggling and in need of resources to grow, he may end up losing both his house and the business. It is therefore possible to work and still lose everything if one gets the timing wrong, or if the resources to carry it out are not in place.

> *Prepare your outside work, make it fit for yourself in the field; and afterward build your house.* Proverbs 24:27

Do not get the sequence wrong and waste your money. Take care of your work before you think of your own pleasure because it is out of your work that you get your increase. Why destroy everything by squandering all your business income on expensive cars, luxurious hotels and restaurants while leaving your work to grind to a halt. Do not spend on things that do not matter. Remember, it is work before pleasure.

CHAPTER 8

DO NOT BE HASTY

Timing is very important. There is a time element to your vision. The secret to peace with God is to discover, accept, and appreciate God's perfect timing. It is dangerous to doubt or resent His timing. This can lead to despair and rebellion and can also leave you operating outside the counsel of God.

We do not control the timing of most events. It is our responsibility to recognize God's timing, not change it. We must, as a duty, cooperate with God's timing, because our alignment with God's timing makes all the difference.

> *To everything there is a season, a time for every purpose under heaven.* Ecclesiastes 3:1

Your vision may not materialize tomorrow. It may take you ten, fifteen or even twenty years to achieve your vision, so do not be hasty. There are things God told me which I thought were going to take place in a week, but some of which took years to manifest.

The vision is for an appointed time.

Do not rush. Go at your own pace and do not allow anyone to push you to do things you are not ready for. I believe in doing what I can at every point in time and working my way forward. I recommend the same approach to you too. Not all of God's solutions are instantaneous. A delay does not mean inaction on God's part. Success usually comes step by step.

In Exodus 23:23-30, the Bible says,

> *23 For My Angel will go before you and bring you in to the Amorites and the Hittites and the Perizzites and the Canaanites and the Hivites and the Jebusites; and I will cut them off. 24 You shall not bow down to their gods, nor serve them, nor do according to their works; but you shall utterly overthrow them and completely break down their sacred pillars. 25 "So you shall serve the Lord your God, and He will bless your bread and your water. And I will take sickness away from the midst of you. 26 No one shall suffer miscarriage or be barren in your land; I will fulfill the number of your days. 27 "I will send My fear before you, I will*

cause confusion among all the people to whom you come, and will make all your enemies turn their backs to you. [28] *And I will send hornets before you, which shall drive out the Hivites, the Canaanite, and the Hittite from before you.* [29] *I will not drive them out from before you in one year, lest the land become desolate and the beasts of the field become too numerous for you.* [30] *Little by little I will drive them out from before you, until you have increased, and you inherit the land.*

There are two points to observe in this passage: the promise and the process. After God had given them a vision of the Promised Land, He tells them the time in which it would be accomplished. He said they would not get it in one year, otherwise the beasts of the field would multiply against them.

The beasts of the field multiplying against you refers to opponents multiplying against you if you take on situations that are far bigger than your ability to manage. That is why God wants you to go at things bit by bit. As you increase in strength, you will possess the land fully. Many times, God doesn't bring people into instant success because they cannot handle the increased opposition. Do not be in a rush in whatever you do.

Build your capacity to deal with the "beasts" out there in the corporate, sporting, entertainment, and academic worlds. These beasts could be in different forms – victimization, blacklisting, cheating, fraud and others, which could conspire or multiply against you. Approach your vision step by step and you will enjoy fulfilment through its accomplishment.

A desire accomplished is sweet to the soul. Proverbs 13:19a

Success is sweet. It is revitalizing and strengthening. It is appealing, motivating, stimulating and fascinating. In order for you to conquer little by little, you have to be able to phase out your vision into daily, weekly, monthly and yearly targets, so that every time you fulfill a target you feel a little sweetness in your soul. The satisfaction that comes out of a job well done is what keeps pushing you towards your main goal in life. If you do not attain victory progressively, there will be nothing but bitterness and frustration in your life.

How does it feel to step out to do something significant in the morning and be able to accomplish it at the end of the day? When you attain what you set out to achieve, you become encouraged, your faith is boosted and you are pumped up to face the next challenge.

You have to set goals that are challenging but which you can accomplish. Do not rush into setting ‘wild’ goals about walking on the moon and owning an airplane or a bank within a year at a time when you have absolutely nothing to show today. That is unrealistic and could leave you bitter by the next year, because of your failure to accomplish them. If you do not even possess a bicycle and have not graduated to a motorcycle, why dream of a plane next year?

Set an aim you can achieve. When you have achieved it, it will bring sweetness to you and you will be motivated to forge ahead. That is how God wanted to take the Israelites – bit by bit so that they would taste one sweet experience after another.

What do you want to accomplish in your business today? What about next week and the month after? Do not sit down doing nothing and waiting for an opportunity to plough 50 acres of land because your vision is to cultivate a large plantation. Start from your backyard. By next year, you would have learnt how to manage a bigger project.

CHAPTER 9

SURROUND YOURSELF WITH GOOD COMPANIONS

The company you keep is another important factor in the achievement of your goals in life. There are some people you may call “faith breakers.” Psalm 1:1 calls them mockers or the scornful because they will discourage you every inch of the way. You have to stop associating with “faith breakers” because they will not help you to achieve anything.

They do not dare to do anything themselves, and, when you try, they go to great lengths to caution you about the challenges ahead or even try to belittle your genuine effort. They therefore end up criticising and frustrating every idea you come up with.

Keeping company with the wrong crowd can corrupt, stifle and eventually snuff out your dream. Befriend and move with people who will encourage you, stand by you, believe with you and help you to accomplish your goals no matter what hardships confront you. Be careful about flatterers and bootlickers.

> *Do not be deceived. Evil company corrupts good habits.* I Corinthians 15:33

Your good plans can be ruined by the wrong company you keep. When you set out to do something, team up with people who are pursuing the same goals as you are. As the saying goes, “Birds of the same feather flock together.” If you desire to be a millionaire, associate with people with a similar orientation or vision. If you want to succeed in your marriage, associate with people who are successful in their marriages. Stay with people who will preserve your confidence.

> *He who walks with wise men will be wise, but the companion of fools will be destroyed.* Proverbs 13:20

You become like those you associate with, so choose your associates wisely. Choose those who will add value to you and will benefit from you. Wise people often have lots of experiences to share – both successes and failures. They are therefore not afraid to tell the truth; they are in a position to warn you of the pitfalls ahead.

CHAPTER 10

LET LOVE BE YOUR MOTIVATION

If you want to succeed, let love be your motivation, for love never fails. Friends may fail, the budget may fail, but the person who has love will go on and on. If you desire good success, let love, and not money, motivate you, because money is not the only reward for hard work. Love is persistent and unfailing. It will go the extra mile and turn the other cheek. Do you want fame or popularity? They will pass away one day like passing clouds, but love stands forever.

> *And now abide faith, hope, love, these three, but the greatest of these is love. 1* Corinthians 13:13.

Love abides, and anything built on love endures. If you are a tailor, seamstress or carpenter, do your work with love and joy. Through love, you will build integrity, trust and honesty among your clients, suppliers and other stakeholders.

Many businessmen are not making it because love is not motivating them. They make various promises which they never intend fulfilling. That is not love. A person with love promises and keeps it. It may mean sacrificing, but they still keep their word. Merely professing love is not enough.

There is this story of a young man who was in love. He did not hesitate to make known in very profuse terms his affection for the young woman who had won his heart. In a letter to her one day, he exhausted his supply of adjectives and figures of speech in an effort to declare his devotion. He wrote, " *I could swim the ocean to be with you; I could endure the Arctic cold, or cross the burning sands of the Sahara, or climb the steepest mountains, if only I could be in your presence!* " How touching!

After multiplying his endearing phrases at great length, he added at the bottom of the letter this postscript: " *I will be over on Wednesday if it does not rain.* " What a paradox! On the one hand he expresses extreme devotion and, then, cautious optimism. That is not real love.

Real love is passionate and sacrificial. It endures pain and overlooks temporary setbacks. It has the capacity to keep going when everyone else is

tired.

If you are in love with your vision, you will pay the necessary price to attain it. If it is just infatuation, you will abandon it when you meet tough times and shift to something else.

CHAPTER 11

REMEMBER, YOU ARE WELL-EQUIPPED TO SUCCEED

According to Benjamin Disraeli, *“ The secret of success in life is for a man to be ready when it comes. ”* Successful people take the changes and chances of life like men and face the rough and smooth alike as it comes.

Numbers 13 talks about twelve men of Israel whom Moses sent to spy out the land of Canaan. When they came back, ten of them reported that they had seen the land and it was very good; there was even milk and honey in it, but there were also giants in the land who made them look like grasshoppers.

Those first ten spies resigned themselves to defeat even before the battle started: “We can't attack those people; they are stronger than we are. The land we devours those living in it. We cannot fight and defeat those people.”

> *Then Caleb quieted the people before Moses, and said, “Let us go up at once and take possession, for we are well able to overcome it.”* Numbers 13:30

'We are well able' means we have the power or capacity to prevail or succeed. Twelve spies were sent. Ten said, “No.” Two said, “Go.” Ten misunderstood thei mission, but the other two who understood it saw their circumstances in the light of their God.

The ten displayed cowardice based on fear; they suffered from a “grasshopper complex.” The two, however, insisted they should enter and possess the land. They felt a calm assurance and displayed courage rooted in faith, because they saw themselves in relationship to God. Our attitude determines our approval of life and is often the main difference between success and failure. Our attitude at the beginning of a task will affect its outcome more than anything else.

Caleb was willing to take the unpopular stand. To be effective when you go

against the majority opinion, you must:

1. Have the facts (Caleb had seen the land himself);
2. Have the right attitude (Caleb trusted God's promise to give Israel the land);
3. State clearly what you believe (Caleb said: We can certainly do it.").

I say the same thing to you. You are well able to succeed.

> *Now thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ.* 1 Corinthians 2:14a.

The picture portrayed here is that of a Roman conqueror leading his captives in triumph. Paul stresses the important role God plays at every stage in our salvation and in our subsequent progress. God helps us in every area of our lives. He has not left us alone in our struggles. He wants to come alongside us and be with us to help us make it in life.

He that believes shall not be made ashamed. All things are possible to him that believes. You are well able and have been equipped for success. Do not ever look down on yourself and say, “I wish I were like that person so I would be able to do the great things she or he is doing.” All of us came into this world naked. Nobody came into this world a speaker or a bold person. We all came as babies. All of us cried when we were born. Some have learnt to act boldly. Others have learnt to act in fear.

If you will diligently hold on to these principles and walk by these laws, you will accomplish your goals or dreams and your life will take on a whole new dimension. God is on your side. He is for you. He is with you and nobody can be against you. Nothing can overwhelm you.

> *For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.* Romans 8:38-39

Christ has made us more than conquerors and His love will see us through every challenge that confronts us. Nothing in the universe can separate us from

His eternal love.

CHAPTER 12

DO NOT FEAR

Setting clear goals and diligently applying yourself to the principles we have outlined will put you firmly on course to realising your dreams. However, between your goals and you, there are some situations and circumstances I choose to call “goalkeepers.”

Their main role is to attempt to keep you from getting to your goal. When you shoot the ball, their responsibility is to defend the goalpost and prevent you from hitting the target. If you are familiar with soccer or hockey, you will understand this analogy better. In order to achieve your goal, you have to develop strategies to beat these goalkeepers and score.

I have identified four formidable goalkeepers you are likely to encounter in life. They are fear, despair, selfishness and laziness. This chapter will deal with the issue of fear. In the subsequent chapters I will treat the other goalkeepers.

Do you know how a lion kills? A lion kills its prey by generating fear in its victim. When the lion roars, the earth echoes the frightful sound that emanates from its throat and amplifies it in the ears of other animals. Fear grips them as they suppose the lion is close by, although it may be quite some distance away. This immobilizes them; makes them panic and make mistakes. The lion then charges quickly, attacks and kills its prey.

That is how fear works. Fear will try to snuff out your life before your time. It will make you inactive, to imagine the worst possible outcomes, and make you lose your sense of initiative. Fear usually attacks us through what we see and hear. Therefore, be careful what or who you give your attention to lest seeds of fear are sown to destroy your faith.

A Japanese soldier, Corporal Shoichi Yokoi lived in a cave on the island of Guam to which he fled in 1944 when the tides of war began to change. Fearing for his life, the man stayed hidden for twenty-eight years in the jungle cave, coming out only at night. During this long period of time, this self-imposed hermit lived on frogs, rats, snails, shrimps, nuts and mangoes. He carried a pair of trousers and a jacket from a piece of cloth made from tree bark.

After many years, Yokoi knew the war was over because of leaflets that wer

scattered throughout the jungles of Guam. However, a new fear ruled his life. He was afraid that if he came out of hiding, he would be executed. He continued ther until two hunters eventually came upon him and assured him that he need not hide any longer.

At last he was free, and with new clothes to wear and food to eat, he was taken by plane to his home. This man lost out on progress and advancement because of impotent fear. Almost half of his life was probably given away to a perception that something dreadful could happen to him.

Every day we hear of wars, rumors of wars, inflation, epidemics and see calamity come upon people around us. However, it is important not to fear.

> *Do not be afraid of sudden terror, nor of trouble from the wicked when it comes; For the LORD will be our confidence and will keep your foot from being caught.* Proverbs 3:25-26

Bible scholars say the phrase, “fear not,” appears in the Scriptures 366 times. This is because fear is a daily enemy. For every day of your life, the Bible encourages you not to fear. Fear is the first goalkeeper to overcome in your life. Fear is overcome when we trust in the love and goodness of the Lord. The word of God says that “the righteous are as bold as a lion.”

One outstanding feature about the lion is that when it roams the jungle, nothing scares it. That is why it is called “the king of the beasts.” It moves majestically with absolute assurance, probably chanting to itself, “This is my territory, and nobody, nothing is going to intimidate me.”

You have to be as bold and fearless as a lion because you are in your Father's Kingdom. God is with you and nobody will dislodge you from where you are. **Do not fear the worst; believe God for the best; and He will help you to do the rest.**

CHAPTER 13

DO NOT DESPAIR

The second goalkeeper you have to overcome is despair. To despair is to give up easily. You may have tried something that did not work. Maybe nothing seems to have worked as far as the key issues of your life, relationships and career are concerned. Nevertheless, you cannot afford to give up on yourself.

Somebody once asked a healing evangelist: “If you prayed for a sick person and he died, what would you do?” He said, “I will roll him over and pray for the next one. If he also dies, I will roll him over and continue until I see one healed.” That is the mark of a man who does not despair. You tried it and you failed, so what? A new chance is coming. Go at it again!

> *Some persons depress their own minds, despond at the first difficulty, and conclude that making any progress…is above their capacity.* Locke

That goalkeeper called despair is trained to keep out all your shots and ensure that you never score any goals in life. There are many people who tried to do something in their youth but could not continue because of discouragement. Now at 60 years they still have done nothing. They allowed temporary setbacks to cut short the vision they had when they were young. They sat for an examination and failed and decided they would not resit it. Even now, instead of looking forward, they only look back at their past with pain and regret. That is despair for you.

Go at it again, keep trying till you pass and achieve your goal. You have a lot of years ahead of you; there is no need to despair now. At 40 years, you can still c to go in for a degree at the university, and still have over 20 years to use that degree beneficially.

If you sit down and bemoan your misfortunes, the years will pass by and you will have nothing to show for it. As a matter of fact, you will be worse off. Do not get to the point in your life where you feel you have outgrown something. If you did not succeed in doing something at the first does not mean you can never do it. Try again with confidence and make your dream come true.

> *To believe that something is impossible is the way to make it so.*

How many feasible projects have miscarried through despondency and been strangled in their birth by a cowardly imagination. Collier

CHAPTER 14

STAY CLEAR OF SELFISHNESS

General Charles de Gaulle, a former President of France, once said: “We do not have friends; we have interests.” What did he mean? Simply that France's relationships with other nations could only be decided around her interests. This is the underlying common denominator which determines most national relationships and decisions in business and commerce – selfishness. It is the sp of the world.

Selfishness is a very deceitful goalkeeper. It makes you think only of what you will gain from a relationship or transaction. Instead of seeking for win/win relationships, selfishness seeks for win/lose partnerships. It seeks to win at the expense of others.

Remember that the world is a team of over six billion people. If you help one person to succeed, you will also get help along the road to success. That is what teamwork is all about - a human chain that we are all hooked on to. If you want to get it all alone, you will end up with nothing.

Do not get to a point where you want to succeed at any cost and thus trample everyone else under foot in your attempt to get there.

There has to be somebody holding your hand up there in support. If you want to be a managing director, who will you manage if you have nobody around you? Aim at helping somebody to succeed and others will also help you succeed.

Luke 8:36 assures you that if you give, it shall be given unto to you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over will men give toward your success. Keep selfishness away from your life and desire to be a channel of blessing to help others get better and better.

CHAPTER 15

AVOID LAZINESS

The fourth goalkeeper is good old laziness **;** a trait we are all so familiar with. Laziness will coax and encourage you to fold your hands and slumber a little. Laziness moves with procrastination and indecision and will tell you, “Do not worry; there is more time.” Your day often ends without you having an inkling of what you did with it.

The next morning it slyly provides you with another excuse, “I do not feel well enough; I will wait till tomorrow.” Another day it is, “Oh, it's raining and I do not have an umbrella. I'll wait till tomorrow.” Then the next day's excuse will be: “It's so sunny. I don't like sunshine. It makes my migraine hurt so severely.”

Consequently, at the end of each week, you will find out that you have succeeded in doing nothing. This goes on and on till you realise that time has left you by and poverty has come upon you like an armed robber.

Someone once said that doing nothing is about the most tiresome work in the world because you cannot stop and rest. “What is life's heaviest burden?” asked a youth of a sad and lonely old man. He answered: “To have nothing to carry.” **To have nothing to do is no luxury; it is sheer drudgery.**

Keep these four goalkeepers (fear, despair, selfishness and laziness) out of your life. If it means crippling them, do it!

I trust that as you set and pursue positive goals in your life, you will experience a more meaningful and fruitful existence. Commit yourself to using these principles and you will see your dreams fulfilled and live a purposeful and fulfilled life. Stay strong in the love and power of God and of His Son Jesus Christ. Amen!

Shalom!