LIVING FOR SOMETHING



A Biblical perspective










A.M. KIAMA

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DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to;All members of Egerton University Njoro Campus Christian Union (EUNCCU).

All family members and friends.

Anyone who loves his/her life.

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FOREWORD

I count it a great pleasure to write a brief foreword to this very useful and informative inspirational book. It's written by one whom am glad to count among my great friends; a brother in the great ministry and a coworker in the kingdom.

He (Author) drives relevant references from the life of Paul who didn't live aimlessly, but had something to live for. He (Paul) says "…if only I may finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me. The task of testifying the gospel by God's grace" (Acts 20:24)

The book is so rich since it combines a brief survey of the scripture with the author's real life experiences. The author sets himself a living testimony of how the five pillars of excellence can apply in a person's life. In light of this, the ground-breaking contribution that bro Alex has made, is a life changing input if put to practice. Many people have lost direction in their life and many give up in

this journey only because they lacked a life DREAM, or had a dream but lacked STRATEGY to go about it, or had a dream and strategy but were not ready to SACRIFICE what was required of them to see it happen, or had a dream, strategy and were ready to sacrifice but they lacked COURAGE and FOCUS.

Reading this book will help sharpen your mind on how to live for something. I echo the author's call on 'LIVING FOR SOMETHING', praying that God may use it to inspire the whole world to rise up and live their dreams.

SIMON NJOGU

INTRODUCTION

Having been born in one of the most remote areas in Laikipia county, gave me a sense of what it means to endure,what it takes to overcome and what to give in order to gain. Leaving home for school at 5:30a.m was what I was used to. The distance from home to school would take me more than 1hr and for most times I used to walk bare footed. This early the temperature was very low and it was still dark.By the time I arrived at school my hands were numb and I could barely hold a pen. At one time I escaped an encounter with elephants by a whisker. They were a nuisance in our village and Laikipia West at large. There is a cliché that said that `it's only in Laikipia where people plant and animals harvest.' When night came, instead of sleeping, it was time for farmers to scare the elephants away from their gardens.

Elephants were not only the source of menace in the land. It was also a Bandits Paradise. Theft was so

rampant. I had become used to gunshots. Laikipia is a home to many tribes, including Samburu and Pokot. Them being pastoralists, made raiding part of their life. At one time they fought for hours using firearms. To me this was like the famous Vietnam War.

This is the kind of environment I was raised up in, but in all this time I thought that this was how life was everywhere. To me going to school was a rule to fulfill, and facing challenges was part and parcel of life. I could not really tell where these challenges came from and why they came. I was living in a cocoon outside an unexplored world. My mind wouldn't contemplate on what came and passed. I only thought within the limits of my knowledge. And like any other child, I only did what I was told and what I thought was good. With no sense of understanding or drive for action.

It was not until I was 17yrs that I realized the goal for living. I knew what I wanted in life. As I read the

newspapers, it dawned to me that things just don't happen. They are made to happen. I realized that the world is very big and has a lot of undiscovered treasure that I had to discover. I started focusing on my life to evaluate my strengths and weaknesses.

Like a child life many of us are living in a world of naivety, where you live for nothing and not for something. In this book, we are going to discuss the five pillars of excellence that will help you discover the reason for living (goal/dream/destiny) and what it takes to establish it.

CHAPTER 1

DREAM

One of the greatest speeches ever recorded in history was one by Martin Luther King, **'I have a dream.'** Martin became the predominant leader in civil rights movement to end racial segregation and discrimination in America during the 1950s & 1960s and was a leading spokesperson for nonviolent methods of achieving social change. In his speech he said *"Now I say to you today my friends, even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. It's deeply rooted in the American dream. I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed:-. 'We hold these truths to be self evident, that all men are created equal.'"* Unfortunately he was shot on April 4 1968. Six days after his death, President Johnson signed the civil rights act of 1968, prohibiting discrimination in sale, rental and financing of housing. The dream of martin had

started becoming a reality. He being dead, yet speaketh. He never enjoyed the freedom he vehemently fought for but his children did.

It all starts with a dream. ***To live for something, you have to start with a dream.*** You need to have a goal for living; otherwise you'll live for anything. Failing to have a dream makes people live aimlessly. Dreamless lives make people to be tossed to and fro by the waves of this life. It makes you dependent on what life will give, instead of what life will get from you.

Life without a vision results to a staggery future (author)

Great achievements are conceived in the world of visions. This is a secret veiled in the lives of many. Those who discover it live a life of distinction; a life with a purpose. They walk with an open eye, because they know what they want. ***Chances come to everyone but opportunities to the chosen few***. The chosen few are those who walk with an open eye; those who have a dream to pursue.

Dream driven lives lead to destiny. A car only move in the direction the driver wants it to. In the same way, if you allow your dream to govern your life, the final destination will be your destiny. Just like a big flame is started with a spark, big achievements in life start with a dream. Your dream is a spark. Light your world and live the life you were born to.

A journey of a thousand miles starts with a step (Lao Tzu). A multi storied house starts with a foundation. To scale to higher heights of excellence, you have to start somewhere. It all starts with a dream. It is a key to achievement. It is a building block of success. However, dreams are only found in the world of fantasy. They are what your mind conceives and so must be brought to reality.

Whatever the mind of man can conceive and believe, it can achieve (Napoleon Hill)

To achieve what you saw in the dream, it demands that you start living for something. It's in this transition that many dreamers fail. ***You can't***

plough a field by turning it over in your mind. You will be shocked by the very amazing dreams people have. The sad reality is that most dream and never wakes up.***You know what is like to wake up in the middle of the night with a vivid dream? And you know that if you don't have a pencil and pad by the bed, it will be completely gone next morning. Sometimes it's important to wake up and stop dreaming. When a really great dream shows up, grab it. (Larry Page)***

The richest place on the planet is the graveyard (Dr. Myles Monroe)

Why? Because there are so many people who died without achieving their dreams. Some who wished to be professors, doctors, preachers, businessmen, engineers, designers, musicians, actors etc. A majority of these people, failed in the transition part. Disappoint the graveyard by living your dream.

For I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time for my departure is near.2 Tim 4:6(NIV)

Paul had lived a life he was called to. He had fulfilled the mission assigned to him. He had given everything and was ready to die 'empty.' There is always a satisfaction when you live your dream by exploiting your full potential; when you live for something and not for anything.

Christ for all nations ministry has recorded over 55 million pledges of born again individuals within a period of two scores. All this massive achievement has been made possible through one man. Reinhard Bonnke. He says that through God's revelation he saw himself preaching to a million plus people in Africa. In pursuit of this revelation, he flew from Germany to South Africa and started a church in Lesotho. Though it was not an easy ride, his dream finally came to reality when he preached to a million plus people in Nigeria.

Always keep in mind that genuine dreams come from God. Draw closer to him and he'll make them more real. Invest in prayer and study of the scriptures.

And now, brothers and sisters, one final thing. Fix your thought on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worth of praise Phil 4:8(NLT)

Wake up and live your dream

CHAPTER 2

STRATEGY

Strategy is a plan of action intended to accomplish a specific goal.

Victorious warriors win first and then go to war, while defeated warriors go to war first and then seek to win. (Sun Tzu)

Before soldiers go for a mission, they are involved in a confidential session of planning. It's in this session that they strategize how they'll bring the target down. In most cases, a plan B is also drafted just in case A fails. This process may take days to perfect but once its implemented the chances of failing are finite. The Navy Seal team six didn't wake up one day and decide to fly to Afghanistan to kill Osama. They possibly had spent years to make it a success. The same case applies to our lives. To achieve your dreams you have to strategize. ***Rigorous***

preparation is the key to success for many endeavors.

In my first Mathematics paper as a candidate in High school. I scored a six percent (6%). This was very disappointing and it almost crushed my dream of being an engineer. The mechanism I employed to fix this problem was developing a strategy that required me to practice mathematics every morning. In my K.C.S.E I scored an A-.That's when I realized that sometimes we fail in life because of failing to have a strategy.

Failing to plan is planning to fail.

Before you plant French beans, you need to know the climatic condition of that place, type of soil, source of labor, availability of ready market and other related factors. That's strategy. When doctors, teachers or lectures do strike, the panel involved in the negotiations has to draft a return to work formulae. That's strategy. When business proposals are being prepared, steps of when, how and where

money will come from are indicated. That's strategy. Strategy is in every aspect of life. If ignored, substantial progress is hampered.

Strategy helps you to outline some principles to follow while pursuing your dream. ***In the lack of absolute principles there is anarchy.*** You need to highlight the dos and don'ts. Some things look attractive in the eyes of man like the fruit in the garden of Eden, but they lead to destruction. Without absolute principles in life we'll live for anything. That's why strategy involves building barriers and creating pathways.

The essence of strategy is choosing what not to do. (Michael E. Parter)

There are so many things that we ought not to have done. Some looked good but they had no base of supporting our goals in life. In the pursuit of your dream there'll come shortcuts and diversions, that if followed, the ultimate result will be far from your expectations. That's why you need strategy and its in

it that you'll choose what not to do. It helps you keep the track.

A life without a strategy is a life of trial and error. (Author)

The good thing about drafting a strategy is that you'll be required to refer to from the past. This helps you reduce the chances of failing. Working towards your dream without a plan of action increases your chances of trial and failure. This is how it works; A pharmaceuticals distributor is instructed to supply medicine to a certain shopping centre by his boss. Unfortunately he fails to enquire the exact location of that place. After driving for ten kilometers he finds a junction where three roads meet. He decides to follow the first one which takes him to a lake. He drives back to the junction and follows the second one which takes him to a conservancy. He drives back to the junction and follows the third which happens to be right one. He gets to his destination but it costs him extra fuel and

time. This is no different with one who pursues a dream without a strategy. Since it will be a life of trial and error resources are wasted.

To cut down a tree in five minutes, spend three minutes sharpening your axe. (Abraham Lincoln)

This prudent president of the United States understood very well the importance of strategy in his tenure of leadership. Efficiency of everything we undertake is what matters most. But the problem comes when we use two minutes to sharpen the axe and three minutes to cut the tree. You need to use quality time drafting a plan of action and once you are done the flow of activities will be very smooth. If the efficiency is good, you will achieve and live your dream but if it's poor you'll die before achieving and living it. There are so many dreamers who die in the process of pursuing their dream. This is an indication that in one way or the other, they spent more time cutting down the tree other than sharpening the axe. The attention of mankind is

easily drawn to what they can see, other than what is imagined. That's why many people would opt to start cutting down a tree with a blunt axe, with few choosing to sharpen it first. Don't be lured by sight, it's wise to think first.

To get to the top of a mountain, you have to start at the bottom. When drafting a strategy, you need to start from step one and follow the right procedure to get to where you wonna get. Corruption is flourishing in Kenya because many people are not willing to follow the right procedure to get money or promotions. It is better to have a little honestly earned than to have a large income gained dishonestly. (Prov 16:8). The lord makes it clear from Galatians 6:7 that people will reap exactly what they sowed, if you sow in the field of natural desires, from it you shall harvest death.If your motives are sound, present your plans to God for establishment (prov16:3). Those who try to hide their plans from God they are doomed. (Isaiah 29:15). If you are

planning to do some corruption somewhere you are doomed. Don't try to use shortcuts, follow the right channels and once you present that plan to the Lord, he will establish it.

The Lord said to Joshua, "Take all the soldiers with you and go on up to Ai. Don't be afraid or discouraged. I will give you victory over the King of Ai; his people, city and land will be yours. You are to do to Ai and its king what you did to Jericho and its king, but this time you may keep its goods and livestock for yourselves. ***Prepare*** *to attack the city by surprise from the rear". So Joshua got ready to go to Ai with all his soldiers. He picked out 30,000 of his best troops and sent them out at night with these orders: "Hide on the other side of the city, but not too far from it; be ready to attack. My men and I will approach the city. When the men of Ai come out against us, we will turn and run, just as we did the first time. They will pursue us until we have led them out of the city, they will think that we are running away from them, as we did*

before. Then you will come out of the hiding and capture the city. The lord your God will give it to you. After you have taken the city, set it on fire, just as the lord has commanded. These are your orders" Joshua 8:1-8 (GNV)

The lord works best through strategy. He promised victory to the Israelites but he needed them to strategize. The word used to signify this in the above text is **prepare**. Joshua had to use his military skills to lay out a plan of action and it's from this plan that he gave them victory.

Buildings that cost millions of money to build are drawn on paper first. Your future is bright but you need to brighten it on paper first. Take your time and strategize. Belittle not, this pillar of excellence.

CHAPTER 3

SACRIFICE

Sacrifice means giving whatever it takes to get whatever you want. It involves letting go money, friends, time, space, privacy e.t.c

Am ready not only to be bound, but also to die in Jerusalem for the name of Lord Jesus. Acts 21:13 (NIV)

You should be ready to sacrifice for what you live for. Before Paul was called to be an apostle he couldn't understand why someone would die as a martyr of Christian faith. He used to love the act of persecuting believers. He even went beyond the ordinary when he asked permission for introduction of synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found believers there he would easily arrest them (Acts 9:2). Paul had not discovered that he was living a life that was not his, until he met Jesus. Its only Jesus who can help you discover the reason for your living. He is the gate of discovery. Paul's life took a u-

turn when he met Jesus and that's when he discovered the mission he was born to accomplish. He had spent about 23 years living a life that was not his but when he discovered his mission, he was not only ready to live it but also die for it.

We've seen multistoried houses collapsing in Kenya in the recent past. When enquiries are made as to why its happening, the reasons dominating are; the foundation, the building materials, the engineer, the project certification. What's wrong with all these? The foundation used for building the house was very weak, the building materials were of low quality, the engineer overseeing the project was not qualified and the property developer acquired the project certification from a back door. After all these wrongs are combined the result is failure because two wrongs do not make a right. The kingpin of all this mess is the owner. Why? because he was not willing to sacrifice. At the end of it all he becomes a loser

after millions of his money are reduced to dust. His dream is crushed because of the failure to sacrifice.

The reason why many people in life are not where they ought to have been is because they took shortcuts. Shortcuts only try to substitute sacrifice and the moment they do so, failure takes over. If you put little effort on something, you expect to get little output from the same because it's a natural law to harvest what you sow (though corruption has changed this fact). Even the bible records that if you sow sparingly you'll reap sparingly (2Cor 9:6). An acre of maize will not yield an equivalent harvest with 10acres tended the same manner. The acre will produce low harvest than the 10 acres because the seeds planted were fewer. On the other hand the 10 acre will yield more because more seeds planted, more inputs were added and more time was used in tending the plants.

Lydia ploughed a 5 acre field, planted beans and never returned till harvest time. Lucky for her there was still something to harvest. She obtained 800kgs.Ann who was a farmer also, ploughed a 1 acre field and planted the same variety of beans as Lydia during the same period. She tended the crop by eliminating weeds, controlling pest and diseases and supplying the required nutrient by application of fertilizers for optimum growth. When harvest time came she harvested 900kgs. Even though Ann had a small field, she harvested 100kgs more than Lydia who had 4 acres more than her. What brought about the big difference was sacrifice and commitment. ***It is pointless to sign yourself up for something and put in a half-baked effort***. Success is a lifelong process of sacrifice. I concur with Ben Sweetland who said ***that Success is a journey, not a destination.*** You've been entrusted with a possession/gift. Exploit it to the best of your ability.

At one time in my life I ventured in horticultural farming. Laikipia being a semi-arid region forced me to practice irrigation. I used to work tirelessly from Monday to Saturday for 6-7 hrs a day, since I didn't have enough cash to hire laborers. I used to borrow a water pump and pipes to water my plants very early in the morning before the owner came to water his. I did all this with the hopes that after a period of 7 months I would be in a position to purchase a nice laptop for my tertiary education. Having this goal in mind compelled me to work even harder. I sacrificed my time, money and comfort for this course. Unfortunately, a catastrophic incident occurred. A heavy aphid infestation left my cabbages at economic injury level. I never achieved my target, but the sacrifice I had made led me to exploring new horizons. That sacrifice is a stepping stone of success. It's just a building block. It's just an ingredient. Having this in mind will help you pursue your dream with understanding.

The different levels of achievements demand different levels of sacrifice. Positions of great honor and respect demand bigger sacrifice. Every Christian believer rate apostle Paul as the greatest preacher the world has ever contained. Many wish to be like him, but what they don't know is the kind of sacrifice he made to get to that level. In his letter to the Corinthians he records;

I have been in prison more times, I have been whipped much more, I have been near death more often. Five times I have been given thirty nine lashes by the Jews, three times I was whipped by the Romans, once I was stoned, I have been in three shipwrecks and once I spent 24 hours in water. In many travels I have been in danger from floods and from robbers, in danger from fellow Jews and Gentiles, there have been dangers in cities, dangers in the wilds, dangers on the high seas and dangers from false friends. There have been work and toil; often I have gone without sleep. I have been hungry and thirsty, I have often been

without food, shelter or clothing. And not to mention other things, every day I am under the pressure of my concern for all churches. 2Cor 11:23-28 (GNV)

Paul's level of elevation demanded a high level of sacrifice. ***There is a high price for every high calling*** *(Apostle Mayanja).*

When the king of Moab realized that he was losing the battle, he took seven hundred swordsmen with him and tried to force his way through the enemy lines and escape to the king of Syria, but he failed. So he took his oldest ***son who was to succeed him as the king*** *and offered him on the city wall as a sacrifice to the god of Moab. The Israelites were terrified and so they drew back from the city and returned to their own city. 2Kings 3:26-27(GNV).*

Why would God let such a wicked king to escape? Most probably it is because the value of sacrifice the Israelites made was below the one the king of Moab made. This sacrifice could be in terms of their obedience and dedication to God. The king offered

the most precious thing he had; the son who was to succeed him as the king. The sacrifice the Israelites made was not enough to secure total victory against the Moabites. This does not mean that God is weak. It means that God allows us to govern our fates with what he has given us. To what extent are you willing to sacrifice?

Anything worth having costs something.

It took 27 years of imprisonment for Nelson Mandela to be the first president of an independent South Africa

It took the life of Martin Luther King Jnr for black Americans to gain their freedom.

It took the torture and death of Mau Mau fighters for Kenya to acquire freedom.

It took the painful death of Jesus Christ for your sins to be forgiven.

In the pursuit of dreams, Sacrifice is inevitable.

CHAPTER 4

COURAGE

Courage is the quality of a confident character. It means pursuing without fear. It entails overcoming all odds. It involves standing to be counted. It is risking more than others think it's safe.

There are two voices of great influence in the lives of humanity; God's voice and devil's voice. God speaks to us through the conscience by the help of the Holy Spirit (Rom 9:1). On the other hand the devil speaks to us through the mind when we start thinking using the carnal mind. God's voice leads to destiny but devil's voice lead to ruin.

Devil's voice tells you to remember but God's voice tells you to focus. (Author)

One mega strategy the devil uses to bring us down is instilling fear in our minds. He keeps telling you to remember. Remember that no one has ever received Christ in your family. Remember that your dad,

grandpa and great grandpa were all drunkards. Remember that since you joined school, you've never scored a good grade. Remember that you've never succeeded in any of your projects. He makes the fear to pursue the centre of your life.

In the midst of all this, God's voice still finds its way, because he has good plans for your life (Jer 29:11). He says that you can make it whatever the circumstances. He fills you with the guts to pursue, the boldness to face, the strength to surmount and the attitude of triumph. He has orchestrated all things to work in your favor.

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. Rom 8:28 (NIV)

In pursuit of your dreams, you should be sure of God's backup. As Paul records, everything will work **for** good. Note that some things will work bad, but **for** good. It's not every road we take in life will be tarmarked. It's not every farm we cultivate will

yield. It's not every person we encounter will be friendly. Not everything we do will be a 'success'. ***Smooth seas do not make skillful sailors***. Sometimes our destinies are lodged and embedded in layers of impediments and to garner, we have to overcome. Since our God is just and honest, he chooses to let us go through the right channels to get to our destiny. Some things will work bad, but for your good. If only the Lord would take us behind the scenes and show us the plans he has for our lives, we'd all be amazed.

If you stand up to be counted, from time to time you may get yourself knocked down. But remember this; a man flattened by an opponent can get up again. A man flattened by conformity stays down for good (Thomas J. Watson)

The conformity described by Thomas is brought by the Devil. If you stay down and fail to overcome the fear, you become a loser. To raise the banner of

victory you have to overcome the fear. ***Great dreams are achieved through courageous moves.***

Simon Gicharu is the founder and chairman, board of trustees of Mt Kenya University. He took a loan of Ksh. 20,000 to start the now big institution without fear of failure. Currently M.K.U has branches in Kenya, Rwanda, Somaliland, Uganda and Tanzania. This makes him one of the few billionaires we have in Kenya. It takes courage to make bold moves and to live your dream.

Success often comes to those who dare to act. It seldom goes to the timid who are ever afraid of the consequences. (Jawaharlal Nehru)

Fear is a destiny hijacker. If you want to be a musician, actor, scholar, entrepreneur, artist, preacher e.t.c, you must overcome fear. ***Cowardice is a path to failure.***

David said to Saul "Let no one lose heart on account of this philistine; your servant will go and fight him" Saul replied "You are not able to go out against this

philistine and fight him; you are only a young man, and he has been a warrior from his youth." But David said to Saul, "Your servant has been keeping his father's sheep. When a lion or a bear came and carried of a sheep from the flock, I went after it, struck it and rescued the sheep from its mouth. When it turned on me, I seized it by its hair, struck it and killed it. Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear; this uncircumcised philistine will be like one of them, because he has defied the army of the living God. I Sam 17:32-36 (NIV)

David appeared at a time when this giant had challenged the Israelites every morning and evening for 40days. They were desperate and their hopes for victory had been shattered. The young boy appeared and offered to challenge the philistine. To all soldiers and the king, he was risking more than they thought was safe. What they didn't know was that he had a supernatural backup. The King tried to instill fear in him but the little boy knew that the size of

the giant was incomparable with the size of God in him. It's also worth noting that this was not the first act of courage in David's life. When bears and lions attacked the lambs, he confronted and killed them. ***To climb mountains you need to practice on small hills.***

Goliath started walking towards David again, and David ran quickly towards the philistine battle line to fight him. 1Sam 17:48 (GNV)

There is a great lesson to learn from David here. Instead of running away, he was running towards. When challenges come, many people opt to run away instead of running towards them. I am also impressed by the picture he displays; while Goliath was **walking** towards him, David was **running** towards him. This is a demonstration of extraordinary courage. The magnitude at which we face (counteract) the challenges should be more than the magnitude at which they face us. ***The battle is not for the cowards***. When Gideon was going to

fight the Medianites, the Lord instructed him to allow the cowards to go back home (Judges 7:3).

The reason why the apostles overturned the world was because they never feared. They believed in fearing nothing and nobody but God. Men wouldn't stop them, prison wouldn't hold them and death wouldn't frighten them. No one could hold back their dream of preaching to the whole world. Herod thought that they would stop after killing James but it only fanned the flame. They were unstoppable because they had been filled with boldness and courage (Acts 4:31). **To overturn your world courage must be on the frontline.**

CHAPTER 5

FOCUS

The success of many people in the different walks of life has been hindered by side shows, partial concentration, divided priorities, staggery decisions, unfixed mindset, past failures and fear of pursuit. All these are caused by lack of one aspect facilitator, called focus.

Focus involves setting your eyes on your dream and forgetting the past. Sometimes past failures become dream killers, especially when you allow them to fill your minds. You may find yourself giving up after a series of trial and failure.

Yesterday's fire is today's ashes (Eddie Kakande)

Do not allow your yesterday to ruin your today. Yesterday can never be today and today can never be tomorrow. If you failed yesterday try again today. ***The moment you start counting the number of times you have failed, you cripple your ability to***

think of the future. Don't count the number of times you've gone for interviews and never received a call. It took a thousand years of audition trials, for Sylvester Stallone (Rambo) to be international movie star he is.

Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold the new has come. 2Cor 5:17 (ESV)

The moment you receive Christ, things are made new again. God opens a new page in your life. He leads you to a new highway that leads to eternal life. But the problem come when you start looking back and taking diversions.

Anyone who starts to plough and then keeps looking back is of no use to the kingdom of God. Luke 9:62. (GNV)

I do not claim that I have already succeeded or have already become perfect. I keep striving to win the prize of which Christ Jesus have already won me

himself. Of course my brothers and sisters, I really do not think that I have already won it; the one thing I do, however is to forget what is behind me and do my best to reach what is ahead. Phil 3:12-13. (GNV)

Paul knew that his past was filled with failures. He had persecuted the church for a long time, but when he received Christ he was made a new being. However he was aware that his past deeds would bring him down. So he majored in forgetting his past and focusing on his future. A similar case should apply in your life. Let your past failures not ruin your future success. Majoring in the past and minoring on the future leads to miserable life. Start living for something. In any case our past failures should help us work out our dreams with a sense of understanding. They should help us strategize, plan and implement new ideas.

Focus is concentration of attention. There has always been a connection between the brain and all the other parts of the body. If your brain

concentrates on one thing, the whole body conforms to it. If your brain says that you can walk for 20km in a day, the legs have no authority to say no. The reason why some people fail is because their mentalities are fixed on impossibilities. ***If what is conceived in your mind is negative the result will be negative***. It demands positive thinking and total concentration to succeed. **The difference lies not on our abilities but our mentalities.** (Dr. Myles Monroe*)*. If you learn to control your mentality, you'll be in a position to govern your fate.

Side shows are also an enemy of focus. They prevent you from keeping your lane. Mwisho wa reli (rail's end point) is a very famous place located in Nanyuki, laikipia county. It is said that the rail stopped at that point because the men constructing it lost the map after taking a lot of strong drinks and sleeping with prostitutes in that place. The drinks and prostitutes were side shows. The constructers failed to finish a multimillion dollar project because of side shows.

There are many side shows in our life and they are all meant to ruin our destiny. Focusing on your dreams is the greatest methodology of avoiding them. Don't be deceived, however good, harmless and attractive they may look. ***Not all that glitters is gold.***

Divided priorities in life lead to stagnancy. The moment you are unable to prioritize one thing over the other, that's when failure starts encroaching. To move forward in life you need to make decisions. Some are very hard to make but if they are not made, you'll mark time. Whenever two issues conflict be ready to lose one, other than losing both keeping in mind that; ***it is in the small decisions you and I make every day that create our destiny.*** *(Anthony Robbins).*

So I ran straight towards the goal in order to win the prize which is God's call through Jesus Christ to the life above. Phil 3:14 (GNV)

Paul was focusing on his goal. To achieve this, he ran straight. He never took diversions. He knew that the secret of victory is running straight. Paul preached at a time when persecution of believers was at the peak. Emperor Nero persecuted many believers by releasing them to dogs, burning them in the fields, crucifying them and boiling them in oil. Paul knew all this but he was not ready to back off. Our goal in life should be the determiner of our actions. If you want to be an entrepreneur, start thinking and acting like one. Don't let your dream to be crushed by challenges. In fact you should ***view any challenge that comes your way as a testimony in the making***. Don't walk towards your goal, run towards it. If you walk the destiny hijacker will overtake you.You need to remain ahead, to achieve your dream.

It is not what they say about you, but what you say about yourself; that matters. (Author)

Who do you say you are? What do you say you can do? The ants are very small creatures. They have no leader, chief or ruler, but they store up their food during summer, getting ready for winter. The ants look small in body size but they do what elephants can't. They focus on their life and try to make it better. What do you say about yourself? Some label themselves failures and so they become.

The greatest enemy of self is disbelief. (Author)

Self esteem is very paramount in pursuing your dream. Never undermine your abilities. As an African proverb says ***'If you think you are too small to make a difference you have not spent a night with a mosquito.'*** A mosquito is a very small creature but it can make you lack sleep whole night. You were created with a special strength that you need to discover. However small it may look, just know that it's a mustard seed in the hands of the sower. The strength of a mustard seed can never be known until it is planted. It is very tiny. Smallest of

all seeds, but when it grows up; it is the biggest of all plants. It becomes a tree, so that birds come and make their nests in its branches. ***Your gift/ talent may look small in the eyes of men but its dynamite in small package***. You only need to focus on it, exploit it and achieve your goal. Jack Canfield says; ***people often do not reach their goals, not because they lack the required skills, but because they don't believe they can reach them.*** You need to believe that your gift can take you to your dream. Self believe is a master key to triumph. A story is told of how a Delta force squad went to fight the Vietnamese Liberation army. To their surprise the number of the Vietnamese soldiers was far bigger than they expected. The commander of the squad summoned them and told them "I am going to toss this coin, and if the head tops, victory will be on our side, but if the tail does so, we'll back off and go back to the camp." The commander tossed the coin and the head was on the top. The soldiers were filled with boldness and went to war with an assurance of

victory and so they got it. Days later it was discovered that the coin the commander used had the head on both sides. It's amazing what self believe can accomplish***. A battle is won in the mind first, before it is actuated in the physical.***

Avoid imitation of any kind. Focus on your own life; out of the lives of others. Use your tools to build on your own house. Don't build your house on the foundation of other men. The deer, impala, antelope and gazelle look alike but in as much as the deer wants to be a gazelle, it will never be. Why? They were created differently. You too were created with different personalities and abilities from your friend. You'll never be him/her and he/she will never be you. Your strengths might not be his and his weaknesses might not be yours.

Imitation is limitation. (Jon Mason)

Imitation suppresses your thinking capacity. It buries your abilities and exposes your weaknesses. God gives us equal chances to build our lives with

the gifts he has given us. ***The moment you imitate someone you reduce your chances of discovery***.

James went to a town and found out that it had no agrovet. Taking this as a business opportunity, he rented a house and stocked it. In a period of 5yrs his business enabled him to purchase pickup. On seeing this Peter, a resident of the area, borrowed a loan and opened an agrovet too. After one year a contagious disease attacked the animals of the place and killed almost all. To James, this was not a huge inherent sale dilemma, since he used he used his vehicle to ferry his products in other unaffected regions. On the other hand Peter was counting loses with the risk of his household properties being auctioned. Don't try to be like your neighbor. Be yourself.

If your fellow businessman looks successful, that is his time, wait for yours to come. ***The truly successful people are driven by the desire to achieve, not the desire to outdo.*** Give the best in

your project and whatever you'll achieve will be the best you could have achieved. God assigns us different abilities according to his grace. He expects you to focus on them and give the best.

For the kingdom of God is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods. And unto one he gave five talents, to another two and to another one; to every man according to his ***ability****; and straightway took his journey. Then he that had received five talents went and traded the same, and made them other five talents. And likewise he that had had received two, he also gained other two. But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money. After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them. And so he that had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, Lord, thou deriveredst unto me five talents: behold, I have gained beside them five talents more. His lord said unto him, well done, good*

and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord. He also that had received five talents came and said, lord thou deriveredst unto me two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents beside them. His lord said unto him, well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of the Lord. Then he that had received one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed. And I was afraid and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine. His lord answered and said to him, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed. Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received my own with usury. Take therefore the talent from him, and give it to him

which hath ten talents. For unto everyone that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath. Matt 25:14-29 (KJV)

God gives you a gift that is equivalent to your ability. He knows where your ability can't exceed. That's why there are grades A to F. Not all will get As. The A guy may be gifted in academics but not in sports, and the vice versa may also happen. In as much as the F guy may want to get an A in academics, it may never happen. But if he focuses on sports, where his strength lies he'll be in a position to get the 'A' in it. Stop complaining and start attaining. Sometimes we tend to complain a lot to God concerning our abilities in certain fields, but he can't help because he knows where your abilities lie. He knows that you can't handle frustrations and that's why he can't allow you to be a politician. Stop complaining and start doing things differently.

Invest in your strengths and let not your weaknesses derail you.

You need to discover your strength, focus on it and live it.

CONCLUSION

Gained knowledge assumes power when effected (Author)

You can go to a thousand conferences or read a thousand books but if you don't practice what you learn, it will be of no use. The five pillars of excellence will only help you when practiced.

In living for something, the first step is having a dream. After dreaming, believe that you can achieve it by overcoming fear. The next three processes are physical. You strategize, you focus and you sacrifice. You are the driver of your life and power has been given to you to determine your fate. I subscribe to the 80-20 principle, which states that 20% of what you do lead to 80% of the effects you see in a situation. To succeed the right way you have to incorporate the five pillars entirely and with no partiality.

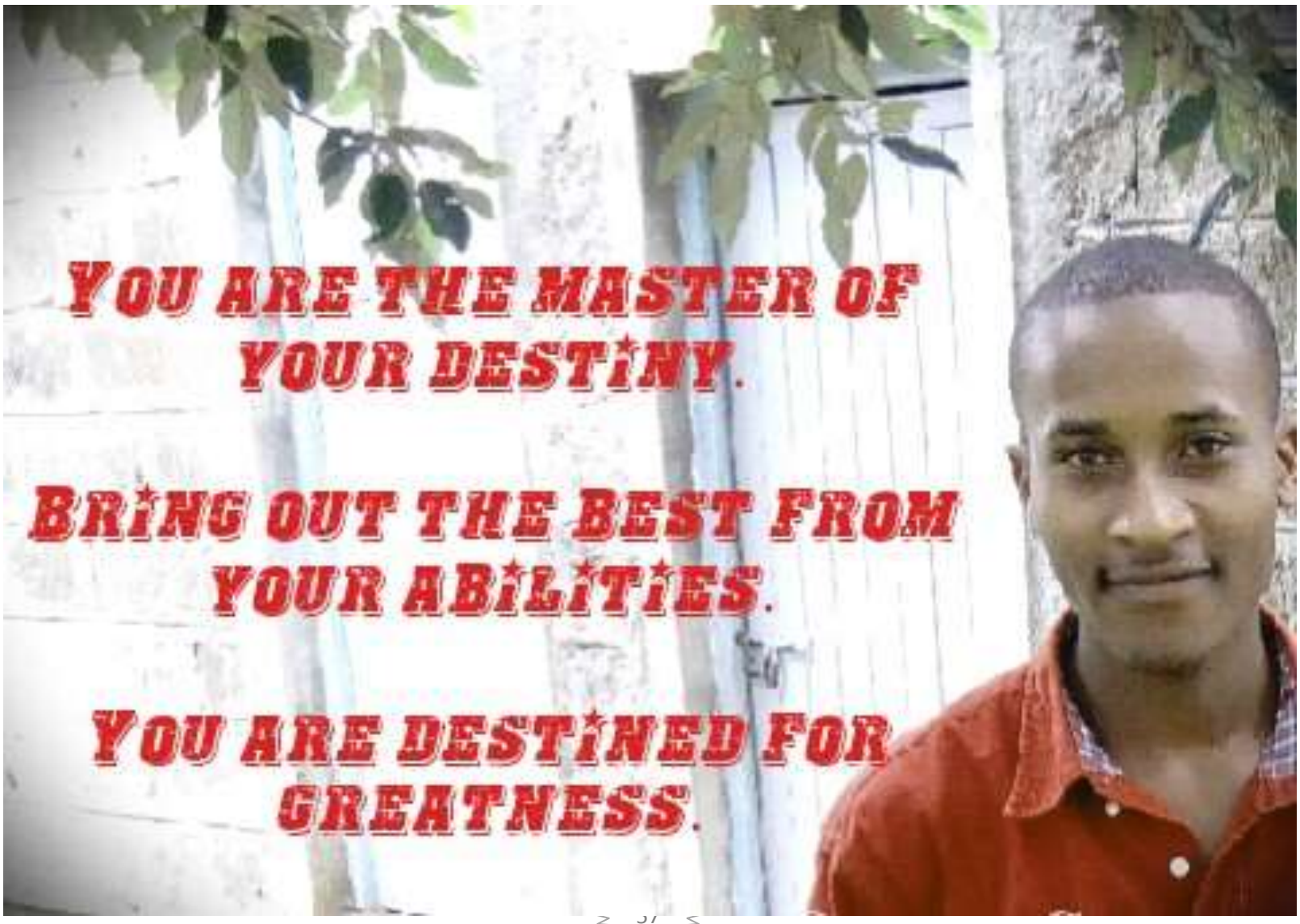
If you want to be successful you have to start hanging out with more successful people (Jack Canfield). One blind man cannot lead another one; if he does both will fall into a ditch. No pupil is greater than his teacher; but every pupil when he has completed his training, will be like his teacher (Luke 6:39-40). The lesser learns from the greater. Hook up with people who are the best in the field and learn from them. They have the best practices, insights and tips which will be extremely valuable in your pursuit of excellence. Rather than trying to learn everything from scratch, it is easier to leverage on learning from others and build from there. This will jump start your learning curve by huge degree. As iron sharpens iron, so does one man sharpen another (Prov 27:17). Paul told believers in Corinth to imitate him as he imitated Christ because he was the best example of excellence in Christian faith by then. Common people share common ideas but advanced people share advanced ideas. If you want to go to the extra-ordinary you must not operate in

the ordinary. Learning from the best is a powerful weapon against failure.

It's dangerous to be concerned with what others think of you, but if you trust the Lord you are safe. (Prov 29:25). I earlier stated that you are the driver of your life. If you allow people to drive it you will be at a greater risk of living miserably. I also stated that there are two voices of great influence in the life of humanity; God's voice and devil's voice. Just know that nothing good comes from the devil. John 10:10 records that he comes to steal, kill and destroy. God is the perfect solution of the problems in your life. He is the only one who can help you live for something. He is the only one who can lead you to your destiny. He, through Jesus Christ, his son, welcomes you to the free gift of salvation. He welcomes you to a life of abundance, not only here on earth but also in the life to come. BE AMONG THE NUMBERS

PRAYER

Father in the mighty name of Jesus. I worship and thank you for your greatness and for what you have done in my life. Help me live the course you've called me to in this world. Help me discover and live it, and use it to build my life, to serve others and to glorify your name. I make this prayer in faith in Jesus name. Amen. **Blessings**



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