



Equipped to Serve

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| Chapter 1: “To this end I labour...” (Col 1:28, 29)

Introduction

Each man has his own *burden*. We sometimes refer to this as our *call* or *vision*. What I share will be added in different measures to your individual burden as you draw upon it. In this way it will fill out your understanding and conviction as to what God has destined you to pursue in life.

What I am giving you as principles of life in God, are merely a packet of *seed*. They are for you to plant and nurture if they are to become fruitful in your life.

1. The Development of Fellowship with God

My enjoyment of fellowship with God started in the initial wave of gratitude for forgiveness which resulted in great joy within me. I was full of praise and adoration for God our Father.

In retrospect, I see that *openness to God* and *emotional spontaneity* were two of the most vital aspects of my early life that have continued to prove fruitful to progress.

By *openness to God*, I mean an attitude of:

1. Expectation — He can do anything, at any time, in any way, in any place that I am.
2. Hunger and thirst for God, pulling on Him to do these things.
3. A heart ready and willing to respond obediently to anything He might do or say.

I experienced enlargement of my expectation as a result of what He did in response to my openness. It has become an endless cycle of blessing and increase.

By *emotional spontaneity*, I mean learning to laugh and cry, rejoice and repent, pray and praise, which has developed in me a responsive heart to God. Our

emotions are to be cultivated even though they are still to be controlled. People respond to emotion more than explanation. This is why, if there are two pastors in the same vicinity, one excellent in teaching, the other very caring and feeling for the people, the one who is most likely to have the people deeply joined to him is the man of emotion rather than explanation.

Developing the emotions makes us sensitive to God's workings, and leads to knowing God intuitively (in the heart). As yet, the mind remains largely uninformed, and although this is not desirable as an ongoing thing, it is certainly our initial experience.

Having said this about the emotions, it is equally true that we need an informed faith. Paul prayed that the "eyes of your understanding be opened" (**Eph 1:18**). Feelings will change, whereas understanding will deepen convictions. As understanding is built in, so we are built up, which leads us now to spiritual discipline.

It is the cultivation of a disciplined way of life that prepares us for a revelation of God.

2. Spiritual Disciplines

1. Quiet Time (QT)

The natural progression of fellowship leads you to disciplined quiet times. Although daily QTs when followed as routine or obligation have been discredited as legalistic, it is nevertheless true that the absence of seasons of quietness with God will eventually lead to poverty of soul and vulnerability to sin.

Again, looking back over the years I see the practice of a daily time of meditation as one of the greatest strengths in the development of my spiritual life. Although in recent years I have modified my approach to QTs, I remain convinced they are vital to fellowship with God.

2. The reading and marking of the Word of God

God's life works powerfully in those who love the Word. It reads, speaks, grips and provokes you. There is so much that the Word of God does in you that nothing else could — preachers could never produce what the Spirit does through the Word. It is this opening of my life and mind to its truth and challenges that has proved indispensable

to personal development. I read the Word simply, in an attitude of faith. I don't look for its difficulties or problems, I don't concern myself with the arguments and authorship or authenticity of historical detail. I first read the Word to let it read me. I take what is obvious from the surface, apply that and rejoice in it. My marking system – underlining, colouring etc, reinforces its impact on my mind.

When studying the Word more earnestly for a given purposes, I give myself to research as to the authorship, the background of the principal parties concerned, the circumstances of the nation at the time, the issues that are primarily being addressed etc. But my first approach to the Word is to get to know God by allowing its revelation to minister to my life.

3. Choice of Companions

Choice of friends is vital to ongoing spiritual progress. It was the awareness of this that made me face up to my first series of difficult choices. These were to affect my relationship with my former friends in the world.

Their way of life was now so different from my own. I had witnessed effectively amongst them to the point where those open to Christ and change had already been converted. Finally I was faced with the difficult choice concerning those who had no intention of changing. I became convinced that continued companionship with some of them would eventually lead to the compromising of spiritual values and that meanwhile I would be under constant pressure to conform to their behaviour and active ties.

Then there were the carnal Christians. I met many in my early experience. It became clear to me that continued company with these would prove almost as damaging. Fellowship was based upon the sharing of discontent, mutual grumbles, ill-feeling, gossip, argument, contentious discussions and soulish issues such as *preacher for lunch* and *destructive sermon analysis*.

Alternatively, there was the prospect of companionship with those whose heart was towards God. Who loved Him as I loved Him, who were intent on making progress in their spiritual lives while pursuing their destiny.

I decided these were the companions I should cultivate, for their fellowship would help sharpen my spiritual insights and provoke me towards maturity.

3. Verbal Confession

1. As soon as it is feasible it is good to confess your faith verbally. Confession with the mouth seals something in your heart. It is commitment, confirmed in your own words that spurs you on in your Christian pilgrimage.
2. Verbally sharing your faith deepens your appreciation and conviction of the life you have received, as well as sharpening your ability to communicate it effectively to others.
3. Confession quickly 'winkles out' from the crowd those whose faith and boldness is similar to your own, and you will be drawn to them as they are drawn to you. It is often the beginning of progress in meaningful relationships.

4. Learning from Men

- "Of the past..."

I owe a great debt to men such as Andrew Murray, F.B. Meyer, S.D. Gordon, Watchman Nee, Rees Howells, Charles Spurgeon and others. I have never met these men in the flesh, but have sat for hours on end listening to them opening their hearts in revelation of Christ to me. All this has taken place through my being a prolific reader. I cannot overestimate the value books have had in my life. The writings of such men as these speak to all ages and times, since the principles set out are themselves eternal.

"Of the present..."

One of life's privileges is the opportunity of fellowship with men of spiritual experience beyond ourselves. They may not see themselves as fathers or mentors to us, but many of them are that. They are deep waters of revelation,

experience and truth for us. I am again indebted to numerous men in my own lifetime — Ellis Francis, Gerald Jarvis, Tom Crouch, Raymond Rees, Ieuan Jones, Austin Sparks, Duncan Campbell, Arthur Wallis, Ern Baxter, Dave Mansell and others. They were willing to take an interest in me and allowed me to draw upon them in my development. Needless to say, I clung to several of these very strongly and learned from every one of them.

Then again, in retrospect, I see how many men who were growing up alongside me in their own faith have greatly influenced my life. I think in lots of instances we owe as much, if not more, to brothering than fathering in our spiritual progress.

5. Learning to Handle Defeat

I have seen so many allow themselves to be wiped out by mistakes. If I had allowed this to happen to me then I would have been destroyed in the first three months of my life. But again and again I came back to the bedrock conviction that I was born again despite my many miserable failings.

I have continued to go forward with this conviction of faith, that God is greater than my mistakes, bigger than any problem I face, deeper than any shallowness of thought, word or action on my part.

This enables me to bounce back again from any failure, embracing grace as the means to restored fellowship, and giving me liberty from any condemnation that would threaten my progress or happiness.

6. The Power of Discipleship

I can recall that almost every night for eighteen months I was in the home of one gracious family. In retrospect, I see this was grossly selfish on my part being inconsiderate of their needs of privacy and family life. It also caused me to miss out in other areas of life that should have been in my consideration at the time, such as my relationship and responsibility to my family.

Nevertheless, these men blessed, encouraged and provoked me. One of them, knowing I wanted to be a preacher, took me under his wing in what I consider the hardest 'school for preachers' - street work. My earliest preaching opportunities,

for several years, were open-air work. He taught me to stand and preach without fear among the street crowds... you don't need invitations for this!

More than anything, I drew from what these men were. I liked their ruggedness and strengths, their openness and laughter. I liked the fact that they were ordinary and yet deeply spiritual. These men stand out as having had a hand in shaping my life. Theirs were the voices that helped crystalize my life values and concepts. They prayed and patiently worked on me using the Word, while believing God would use me one day. Many of these men have gone home to be with God, others are still living. But all have extended their days – without knowing it –within my life.

The following are some of the areas of life for which I am indebted to them. I didn't see all these aspects in any one single individual, but rather this is a composite picture of spiritual values gleaned from them all.

1. **Love God supremely** – everything else in life orbits around Him. He is to be the centre of our affections as much as the source of our life.
2. **Seek the Kingdom of God and His righteousness first** – it is not my selfish desires in life that count, but what promotes His Kingdom and expresses His righteousness that should be sought first.
3. **Total commitment of life** – to following Christ. To “deny ourselves and take up our cross” is simply that—a total denial of self interests and full commitment to the pursuit of His interests.
4. **Manliness** – to be a ‘man’s man’. To have a backbone. To stand up in life and learn to cope with it. Not merely to hang on, but to triumph.
5. **Prayer** – Nothing of significance happens without someone having prayed it through. I learned the *fervent* prayer life with a group of men, 90% of whom were in their 50-60's. We stormed the enemy's strongholds with great shouts of praise and threw down his resistance with holy anger. Our meetings were very tearful, noisy and filled with the loud praises of God.
6. **To yield to the Spirit** – that all my actions and attitudes are to be ruled by the Spirit. To know His anointing (more later on this subject) meant obedience to the Spirit.
7. **A worldwide revival** – the only hope of the Church ever fully accomplishing the purpose of God in a single generation is twinned to

the hope of the greatest spiritual visitation of all time coming upon such a generation.

8. **Do everything with excellence** — seeking to ‘excel’ is seeking to be excellent. For too long, Christianity has given shoddy, substandard presentations of its message. During the last 15-20 years men have rightly embarked on a new pursuit of excellence in order that the jewel of Christ be made more wonderfully obvious by its presentation.
9. **Love His Church** — to give oneself for it just as He gave Himself for it. This is not the mixturised church of corrupt religion, but the church of the Living God, the redeemed of the Lord. Giving ourselves for this church means our time, energy, money, thinking and often the forfeiting of legitimate leisure pursuits.
10. **The Sovereignty of God** — He rules supreme. That there is an unchanging, unalterable purpose at work in the history of mankind, and that nothing lies outside His ability to change, manoeuvre or control situations, people or nations in purpose of this—His purpose.
11. **How to take criticism** — and not ‘cave in’, so that others do not dominate your faith. This is achieved by “considering Him who endured” (**Heb 12:3**) and fixing one’s hope in what lies ahead.
12. **Love people despite** — what they have done, said or schemed against us. The majority of them are not engaged in a malicious personal vendetta, but in their weakness have opened themselves to the control of the powers of darkness. Our “wrestling is not with flesh and blood but with principalities and powers” (**Eph 6:12**).
13. **To stand firm** — when everything is pressing you to change. Never compromise the truth merely to curry favour or gain some temporary respite or advantage from those who mean no good to the gospel. On the other hand, in non-essential areas to be always open to compromise in order to obtain a higher good. Some things are negotiable—others not. Wisdom is in knowing the difference.
14. **To be non religious** — I do not mean unrighteous. I don’t mean opt out of the “true religion that is undefiled”, but rather to be free of the trappings of liturgy, ecclesiasticism, institutionalism and instead enjoy the free, spontaneous life of God... this is “life more abundant.”

15. **Live and move in faith** — to be able to say as Paul said “I believe God.” Not in Him, but Him. This means that you are not leaning on man but dependant fully on the faithfulness of God for your existence and progress.
16. **Give the Word of God place** — We are instructed by His Word in every area of living. It measures our attitudes, convictions, purpose and motive. It continues to feed, search, guide, correct and protect us in life.
17. **Be a man of deep devotion to Him** — learning to laugh and be natural, yet having a deep devotional walk with God.
18. **Giving** — that one is not miserly or skimp, but generous in all things, realising it is the secret of receiving so much.
19. **Love people** — it is a cold, impersonal, hurting world. Just loving people as they are is step one to change in them. The name of the game is people. People matter more than things.
20. **World Mission** — that there is no way I can close my eyes to the vast under-evangelised areas of the world. The world is our parish. We are the seed of Abraham and, as the covenant people of promise, destined to be a world blessing.
21. **Embrace the disciplines of God** — He can minister to me by command, counsel or circumstances, using any or all as necessary to achieve His objective in my life.

7. Community Living

The three years I spent in college were profitable from the point of view of learning to express my life in close quarters with other people. I don't know whether it was my upbringing as a child, or what, but I never found community living a problem.

I have been able to adapt easily to living with a crowd as long as there has been some place — all I've needed was a bedroom — to pull aside and be alone with God for a time. Apart from that, the difference of temperaments and personality were no great issues for me.

Here are some of the things I have learned in community with others.

- 1. Don't take things too seriously.** It's amazing how we can make mountains out of mole hills and little issues assume great importance. This is where many relationships have floundered and fellowship been broken. Many things are best overlooked and forgotten by the immediate release of forgiveness and love at the time.
- 2. People respond to praise.** Don't be afraid to praise others. This acknowledges, honours and builds men up. Make room in your heart for appreciation of others.
- 3. Everybody loves to be loved** and so the time taken, word spoken, gesture made, effectively communicates our appreciation and love for people.
- 4. Make room for others.** Don't look for ways to promote yourself by seeking prominence. Make room for other men, people respond to those who have made room for them. Give them scope in your life, fellowship, responsibilities. Let them try things out for themselves and 'have a go'.
- 5. Keep short accounts.** If there is a breakdown of fellowship, deal with it quickly. Get rid of it before it widens. It is the accumulation of small things that creates the big problems. Just as it is the silt that comes down with the river that forms the mud bank that eventually holds the waters back.
- 6. Don't be afraid to confront.** Don't look for confrontation, but neither should you run from it where it is necessary for the saving of the person or situation. Paul disliked confrontation but was not afraid to stand up to Peter when a fundamental issue of the gospel was at stake. It is better to be wounded by your friends than destroyed by your enemies.
- 7. Grace and Faith.** Serve up, in every relationship with people, great dollops of grace and faith. These are the twins of all progress and achievement in relationships.
- 8. Be loyal** to men and men will be loyal to you—the end time will be characterised by “treaty (covenant) breakers” (**2 Tim 3:4**) amongst other things. All the more reason to shine as a light in a dark place in respect to keeping covenant.

9. **Love the brethren.** By this I mean demonstrably so. Let your feelings become tangible in this respect.
10. **Serve one another.** Do little things—learn to hump the tables around. Learn to look after each other's needs. Be a servant and in this way you encourage others to serve. Particularly be a Joshua to a Moses somewhere.

The principles hold good not only when living under one roof as an 'extended family' - but as strengthening bonds to secure harmony inside the relationships of the wider community of the church.

It would be wonderful if our Christian experience was only a series of positive virtues. Unfortunately, I have been both a victim and perpetrator of some negative issues also.

Chapter 2: Some of my Early Mistakes

Most books I have read of preachers of the past emphasise their greatness and spirituality without highlighting any faults. Indeed, many men would not advocate the sharing of mistakes, saying "it will leave you exposed to your enemies, or "open to criticism".

However, I would have been greatly helped if someone had written honestly of their mistakes when I was young in the faith, and shared some of the pitfalls and how to avoid them. So, embracing the risk of vulnerability, I am going to share with you as openly as possible.

1. A wrong view of the world

In South Wales "worldliness" was equated with anyone who watched TV, went to the cinema, dance hall or pub, or followed contemporary dress trends, or hairstyles. Because I loved God and genuinely wanted to follow Him with everything in me, whatever these 'older Christians' said was taken as truth. I surrendered to their legalistic mind-set, little realising it was to lead to my becoming as legalistic as they were in my view of worldliness.

No-one addressed what I now see to be the greater evils that were abounding in the churches at the time: hypocrisy, legalism, deceit, backbiting, gossip etc. The result was instead of "life abundant" I often tried to fill times of dullness with religious activity and thinking, trying to persuade myself I was happy.

Later understanding helped me define worldliness biblically. Consequently I was able to enjoy myself 'in' the world without being 'of' it. Worldliness is when my attitudes, behaviour, thinking and speaking continuously conforms to the moral values of the world system around me.

2. Ineffective Bible Studies

Within the early weeks of my Christian life I was introduced to the Bible study meeting. These were generally too complicated for me. One major hindrance was everyone used the King James bible (AV) which used such outdated English

that I was completely lost. Furthermore, the study generally consisted of an exposition of a biblical passage or book with little reference or relevance to the present day. So I had little understanding of how to apply God's Word to present day situations.

When speaking to the ordinary man you make things plain by speaking plainly!

3. Foolish Controversies

As the months rolled by I listened intently to the various interpretations people were putting on things they were reading. I was introduced to the arguments for and against different interpretations. I was becoming part of a circle of people who measured spiritual growth by how much Bible knowledge you had and how well you argued your interpretation.

I became trapped in the **arguments of the ill-informed**. Pride and prejudice quickly took root in my heart in such an environment. I found myself refusing to admit my ignorance even when another's knowledge was clearly superior to my own. So often the game of **'bible upmanship'** dominated our fellowship as people.

1. To be clever is often the way of the fool, not the wise.
2. Refusing to admit ignorance is deciding to remain ignorant.
3. The admission of ignorance opens your mind to knowledge that leads to understanding.

4. Taking up other people's offences

Frequently those who were proud, rebellious or stubborn would get hurt. They would then campaign for support. In the ensuing controversy I often foolishly found myself supporting persons out of sympathy or friendship though lacking understanding as to the issues involved, taking up their offences as my own. Some of these arguments would go on for months at a time and churches would have several 'cliques' within them that were quite political in nature. I had to learn:

1. To be part of the answer you must not be part of the problem.
2. Defend a rebellious man and you share his judgment.

3. Support the proud and you share their downfall
4. When friendship rules judgment, the best means of bringing resolution is rendered impotent.

5. Second-hand opinions

Because I was generally untaught in the scriptures I tended to learn from what I saw in others. The people I admired were strong men with equally strong opinions.

In the absence of personal revelation I adopted their opinions as my own. I failed to realise that when second-hand opinions are stubbornly defended, one can end up a bigoted exponent of other peoples' prejudices.

1. Your foundation in life is your personal revelation.
2. In order to stand in truth you must be in the revelation of it.

6. Failure to exercise judgment

What we now know and teach regarding judgment was unheard of. I simply adopted the attitudes, opinions and prejudices of those I admired, believing they must be right. My only form of judgment thereafter was to condemn those who didn't agree with or conform to my newly adopted prejudices.

It was not until I was baptised with the Holy Spirit that I learnt to judge or *prove all things* and thereafter recognise that I should learn from peoples' strengths and avoid their weaknesses.

1. To be free of something we must pass and carry out sentence on it within ourselves.
2. Judgment not only delivers—it protects our freedom.

7. Poor Testimony in my Family

Looking back, I believe that the reason much didn't 'go well' for me in the early years of my Christian experience was because of my violation of the Word of God in not "honouring my parents" adequately.

I was thrilled with the fellowship I was getting outside but at home I became a restless and moody young man. At times, when conscience would speak strongly to me about my relationship with the family, I would squash its views by my wrong understanding and interpretation of the scripture "unless you hate your father and mother for my sake..."

After I was baptised with the Spirit I realised the full extent of my loss in these respects and sought, as much as possible, to rebuild my relationship and fellowship with the family.

Honouring parents is the "first command with promise." The law of the first mention means that the association of ideas is highly significant e.g. worship and Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac.

8. The Wrong Concept of God

From childhood, the religious idea of God that I gained from parents, people and church, was warped. He was depicted as severe, easily offended and quick to punish. That before He would extend forgiveness, He needed to have His wrath totally placated by punishing me. This distorted mental image of God hindered my ability to fellowship with Him as Father. It continually undercut my ability to believe His promises since I was constantly disqualifying myself as unworthy. One day, reading the word, I was struck by the response of Jesus to Philip – "if you've seen Me, you've seen the Father." I realised then that the only image of God I should hold is the revelation seen in the Person of Christ. This changed my whole approach to fellowship with God.

1. A right knowledge of God's nature is foundational to making a right response to His presence and power.
2. The right image of God is received by a revelation of Christ in the Word. The Word freed me from the God created in my imagination.

9. Rationalisation of the Word of God

The most casual reading of scripture convinced me that the bible portrays a God of miracles and power.

It is this element of the supernatural that was a stumbling block in the teaching of the churches I first found myself in. They gave **spiritual significance** to everything associated with the supernatural and made it merely symbolic of things to do with one's character or behaviour. For example, leprosy became symbolic of sin, therefore the healing of lepers was indicating God's desire to completely cleanse you from sin. Opening the eyes of blind Bartemaeus represented God's desire for us to have spiritual sight.

Consequently, I slipped into the pitfall of believing my interpretations of the Word instead of the Word itself. Looking back, I see my interpretations were undercutting my faith for say, miracles. Obviously, the more rational the interpretation, the more acceptable to the mind. Nevertheless, not one of the interpretations I put on things, ever fully satisfied me emotionally or spiritually and it is very doubtful whether they truly settled in my mind.

I have come to see the Word is always true; my interpretation of it may or may not be.

1. I am not called to believe my interpretation but I am called to believe His Word.
2. The mind must always submit to the Word, not the word submit to the mind.

I want to emphasise that all these issues took place before I was baptised with the Spirit. Indeed, they resulted in such unhappiness and dryness that they were the reason why I began searching for more—even though I had no idea of what.

Chapter 3: Life in the Spirit

1. The Spirit — by Faith or by Works

Towards the end of the second year of my Christian life, I began reading Christian periodicals which emphasise the power that one received with the baptism in the Holy Spirit. I was particularly influenced by the experience of Charles Finney and of the accounts of the revival in the Hebrides written in a monthly revival publication called 'Herald of Hope'.

I became desperate in my desire for the baptism of the Holy Spirit. I would go into the park and spend hours in the woods calling on God. At other times I would go up the 'cwm' and sit by the river and cry to God for His Spirit. I wasn't sure what was to happen. I just knew that my thirst for God kept increasing.

I actually wrote to the Hebridean revivalists Duncan Campbell and Percy Hassam (his colleague in the League of Prayer), and asked them to help me. Hassam's reply began "Dear Candidate for the Baptism..." Unfortunately, this completely switched me off because I had always hated examinations and to be a candidate for something spoke to me of assessment.

I heard a great deal of 'holiness' preaching emphasizing restitution and therefore wrote letters to individuals asking forgiveness. I sent letters to people, putting right the wrongs that I had committed before becoming a Christian. I went back to the shop I had worked in as an early morning newspaper boy while I had been in school and gave them money that I had overcharged on some of the weekly accounts etc. All these things were efforts to get myself into a place of readiness to receive the Spirit.

In the Sovereignty of God, a young man came my way who attended a Pentecostal church and invited me to attend a healing crusade in their assembly. I was astonished at the crowds and since there were no more seats, they welcomed me to sit on the pulpit steps from where I had a good view of what was happening. The miracles completely knocked me out. The music and praise was alive and I could feel the vibrancy of God's life in the place. However, being by now a bigoted evangelical fundamentalist I was constantly analysing what was going on in the meeting and most reluctant to acknowledge the miracles as evidence of God's presence.

At the end of the meeting, a young man shouted over the heads of the people: “All those who want the Baptism come and get it in the back room.” That was enough for me as an evangelical. I was affronted. I said “The Spirit is not an ‘it’, He is a Person” and made my way towards the door.

Fortunately, one of the men standing nearby leaned over and said very simply “Don’t worry about what others say, know in your own heart what you are seeking for.” That halted me. Quietly in myself I heard the voice of God saying “Don’t let your prejudices keep you away from My promises.” This broke through my mental defences and I went into the back room as indicated.

The evangelist then explained the baptism in the Spirit from the scriptures and one thing he said shot into my heart like an arrow. “Many of you have not received the Spirit because you’ve tried to buy God’s gift. You have tried by works of restitution to become righteous enough to receive the Spirit. If you had achieved that, it would have been by your own merit and not by faith.”

Suddenly I could see it clearly. All my self-efforts had been treating the baptism not as a gift to receive but a merit award. As I knelt down, I opened my heart to receive from God and suddenly I was overwhelmed by the glorious presence of the Lord Jesus in the room—I wanted to love Him with all that was in me and started to worship, only to find myself speaking in other tongues. From this point my life was to take a major turn. I knew that I had met the supernatural God.

2. Living in the Supernatural

The baptism of the Holy Spirit opened up for me the whole realm of the supernatural. Although my new birth was a supernatural experience, it was an inner transformation. There were no major external manifestations immediately. It was very much the experience of “the spring of water welling up within.” When I speak of the door now opened into the supernatural, I am speaking of the out-flowing rivers of water that carry the life of God into human need.

By experiencing these external manifestations of the life and power of God, I came to realise that:

1. **Supernatural is normal.** I began to see that my new birth had made me compatible with the unseen spirit world. “He who is joined to the Lord is one Spirit.”
2. **Supernatural world accepts us warmly.** It is not a case of my having broken into a realm of spirits who reluctantly accept my presence, but

that being joined to God I was both compatible with, and welcome amongst, the heavenly host as I approached the throne of His presence.

The full release of God's power in the miraculous is now possible to me and the angels gladly assist in this happening.

3. Supernatural manifestations are the result of actioned faith.

Thereafter I did not sit around waiting for God to do miraculous works. The demonstrations of the supernatural are the result of definite actions of faith on our part.

Jesus said that we should "lay hands on the sick and they will recover" and in His Name "cast out demons". This is not to say God cannot perform His wonders and miracles apart from our actions of faith, but to emphasize that normally God's manifestations are a direct result of faith. The great hall of fame of Hebrews 11 demonstrates this.

4. Supernatural gifts of the Spirit are not for decorative display.

Neither are they means by which I minister solely to myself. They are distributed for the purpose of God:

- Manifesting His Presence amongst us
- Making known His will in the situation
- Communicating His life to our needs
- Making clear His mind concerning the world, church, the present situations.

These supernatural abilities are given us to be used both within the community of God and the world at large.

Whenever we receive anything from God our response to what He is giving/doing determines how far we go in the purpose of these gifts.

3. Training Ourselves in the Supernatural

My initial response to the first manifestation of the supernatural was a euphoric sense of excitement. I had broken beyond the boundaries of the natural and was experiencing what had previously been beyond my ability.

To progress effectively in the manifestations of the supernatural I had to recognise that training myself to godliness embraced training myself in the right responses to the supernatural. The following forms a basis to this:

- 1. Exercising ourselves in what we have.** I have seen far too many people allow their first manifestation of a spiritual gift to become the last. It has gone to sleep the moment after it first awakened.

The fact that Paul said to Timothy “stir up the gift within you” was indicative that it was within his ability to do such. We are the first to benefit by experience of the supernatural and the more we continue in the exercise of our faith in this area, the more we shall profit as a result.

- 2. Seek to excel in the use of these Spiritual gifts.** Just as we start life as infants and are not perfect in our understanding, communication or actions, so it is in the realm of the Spirit: our faith is yet small; our understanding is even less.

My seeking to excel was doing all within my power to perfect my response to God by making myself available to His will and by functioning in harmony with the prompting of His Spirit. For example, take the exercise of vocal gifts (tongues, interpretation and prophecy). In a gathering of the people we should seek to know :

- The flow of immediate emphasis by the Spirit of God in the meeting.
- Perceive the need of the people present.
- Allow the Word to form in us according to our perceptions and convictions.
- Submit mind and emotions to the spontaneous impulse of the Holy Spirit.
- Be sensitive to the appropriate opportunity afforded in the meeting.
- Speak confidently, clearly and in faith.

- 3. Judge the source of your supernatural experience.** I came to see that it was not only God who performed the supernatural. The Bible

records many instances and supernatural workings that were not from God.

In training myself in the supernatural, I confidently recognise God Himself as the source of my supernatural life. The manifestations I experienced were not merely supernatural, they were divinely supernatural.

I saw the need for me to judge myself in this respect and so confirm my faith by the Word or vision I received. This enabled me to be confident in the actions I was prompted to take and to be assured that my obedience would lead to gain in the situation. The way to judge the source of your spiritual experience is by its outcome. Ask yourself did it end in:

- Christ exalted
- Life enriched
- Purpose achieved
- Faith enlarged
- Word confirmed
- God worshipped.

4. Pray for Greater Manifestations. Paul says explicitly to those speaking with tongues that they should ask God that they might interpret. God clearly wants us to receive revelation.

One day, while on a farm helping out, the Lord spoke clearly to me that if I wanted to move more in the supernatural I could. He said I could move into areas presently considered impossible if I would only ask and believe.

- There is nothing restrictive in God's desire towards us.
- We determine the boundary to the workings of God.
- We set the limits on the manifestations of the supernatural through us

5. **Wait Expectantly.** Do not be in a hurry to contribute in a meeting or act rashly in a situation. I have had to learn to hold my heart open to God and allow my mind to receive words of knowledge, discerning of spirits and instructions from the Holy Ghost before acting.

6. **Give yourself to the Word of God.** As servants of God, we live by the quickened Word. They are spirit and life to us. The Word of God dwelling richly in us becomes a resource of the Spirit in our developing life and ministry.

Every spiritual ability is sharpened and made more effective by much study and meditation of the Word. I found out early in my experience that waiting on God through the Word would result in my:

- Receiving faith... “faith comes... hearing... Word of God.”
- Feeding my faith... “desire the sincere milk of the Word.”
- Confirming my faith.

7. **Claim the Power of the Blood.** One of the most prominent features in our prayer meetings used to be the *pleading of the blood*. What we meant by this was that our legal access and standing rights before the Throne of the Almighty were guaranteed by the blood of Jesus Christ.

Our boldness of approach was the direct result of our faith in the blood. Therefore, whenever we came to pray we confessed our faith in the power of the blood and saw ourselves triumphing over the powers of darkness through its power.

I have found to this day that the continued confession of this reality leads to powerful reinforcement of faith leading to victory over the power of the enemy. It has, without question, great impact in the unseen realm. The blood of Christ is the most effective supernatural power before God on our behalf.

- What is under the blood can never again hang over our lives.
- The power of the blood is greater than the combined strength of all powers of darkness.
- The blood legally guarantees what grace has declared.

Chapter 4: Captured by a Vision

Webster’s dictionary defines the word **vision** as “something seen in a dream; an act of power of seeing; a trance or imagination.”

The Bible often gives words expanded meaning to express spiritual concepts. One example of this is the word **vision**. In the Scriptures, vision is used for both a prophetic and progressive revelation, embracing far more than was originally understood in its reception.

Your vision determines:

1. The direction you take in life.
2. The decisions you make in life.
3. The relationships you form in life.
4. The ministry you perform in life.

The pragmatist would remind us that our vision is only as good as our response to it. Your response to the vision determines the kind of person you become, the goals you achieve and the future you will experience.

1. The Impact of Vision in your Life

The impact of a vision has far-reaching consequences.

1. It gives life its meaning, and purpose to our circumstances and experiences in life.
2. It gives clear goals to aim for eg Abraham’s vision of the city resulted in him becoming a pilgrim rather than a wanderer.
3. It focuses our thinking, praying and faith into effective action.
4. It provides the parameters for our relationships in life.
5. It pulls life and ministry together in a disciplined yet fulfilling way—so that we invest our time, money and energy wisely.
6. It becomes the measuring rod of our achievements.

7. It is the catalyst for our relationships in ministry.
8. It is walking in our vision that cause some people to drift out of our lives whilst drawing others alongside us.

2. Vision comes from...

1. **Crisis encounters.** Some of these we experienced prior to our conversion, many of them since, but probably none of them as great as our initial experience of God's salvation eg Saul's experience on the Damascus Road.
2. **Hunger and Thirst for God.** God has committed Himself to respond to our pursuit of Him. He never plays hide and seek with us; He never taunts us with promises of supply only to hold off the goods promised.
3. **Observation.** Much of our understanding of spiritual principles has come by observing what has been happening in the lives of others. We need not reinvent the wheel in order to progress in life.
4. **Maturity of Life.** Our vision clarifies by *putting away the childish things* of our immature years. We are then able to consciously advance through our spiritual *teens* in which we learn to overcome the world and go onto spiritual manhood. Now through proper attitudes and disciplines of life, by hatred of iniquity and living in righteousness, and the joy of the pursuit of God, we experience an ever-enlarging vision.
5. **Meditation.** It is unfortunate that much spiritual activity is the result of little thought. Many great truths expressing a revelation of God are little understood today because people don't think things through.

Meditation is not practicing yoga or falling into a trance, but is the deep restful contemplation of God and all that springs from Him. Through meditation, God orders our thoughts in a direction that leads to heightened awareness of His presence and a deepening vision of His Person and purposes.
6. **People.** The greatest effect upon our lives has been the consequence of being surrounded by people.

7. Although much sadness and pain has resulted from unhappy experiences with people, much of our understanding and appreciation of life has also come through our involvement with others. Vision often results from the interaction of negative and positive experiences in life, all contributing to the end God has in view.

3. Vision Struggles to be Born

My earliest memories of my Christian experience were of personal struggles with my own carnality. I was fighting the carnal mind that said: “It’s just emotionalism, self-delusion; it is a form of brainwashing.”

A close friend from my past said “God did not make him in His own image, man made God in his own imagination.” Somehow this hooked into my mind and I fought it for weeks. Little did I realise at the time that these struggles were helping confirm my faith in God.

I was helped by an old Sunday School teacher, a rather fussy little woman, who told me the story of a boy who had a very difficult jigsaw puzzle given to him for Christmas. It depicted a world map with large areas in the same colour. After several weeks of effort to put this map together he was most frustrated. Then it was pointed out to him that on the reverse side of the puzzle was a full figure of a man. He turned all the pieces over, put the man together, which was easy, only to discover he had put the world together. This simple illustration was later to be im-portant to my vision of Christ as a corporate man.

Jumbled Pieces. My initial concept of **Church** was that there was one Church, just like one Christ. It was irrelevant to me whether I was in a denominational or non-denominational church. Affiliations were not an issue. My only consideration at the time was—is there life in this Church? Are the people real and friendly? Is the presence of God here?

At the same time my thinking concerning the **world** was rather confused. I was not sure if it was all bad, if not, then what was okay and what was not okay, and what makes the differences anyway?

My mental image of God was generally along the lines of a rather frightening and austere figure who, nevertheless, held a strong affection for me because he would forgive my sins and receive me into His heaven one day.

The thoughts about myself were very mixed up. Being a strongly emotional person, my feelings governed my mind and faith a great deal of the time. I sometimes felt holy, strong and spiritual, at other times sinful, weak and worldly. Often I felt in-between both extremes; I was trapped in my turbulent feelings.

4. The Vision Forms...

As the months passed, it became clearer to me, that God was working behind what appeared a jumble of disconnected pieces. He had a plan that was going to affect every aspect of my life.

I cannot say at what point, but certainly after several years, I was free of the initial pressures of carnal reasoning and found myself more and more captive to a progressive revelation of God. From my limited and rather fearful understanding of God, already mentioned, I began to catch hold of His greatness and goodness.

Eventually I was seeing Him as Isaiah did, as One who is “high and lifted up and whose train filled the temple.” I caught glimpses of His majesty and greatness. I could see His throne surrounded by angelic hosts constantly moving in the heavens. I could see His power superseding all others. There was nothing He could not do. At no time was He redundant, tired, or less than vigilant for His people.

Two men affected me at this time — Watchman Nee, through his writings. The other, T Austin Sparks. I owe more to this man than to any other. He helped me to see the sovereignty of God in His purposes, the goals of His intention in the fullness of our age. For several years I devoured his magazines *A Witness and Testimony*; I read most of his books and finally had the exciting and fulfilling privilege of attending his major conference at Honor Oak in London.

1. **“...In Christ”.** The revelation God was bring to me at the time concerned the meaning of the term *in Christ*. I was now seeing Christ as:
 - The horizon of God’s purposes—He had no plans beyond Him, no interests outside of Him. It was this revelation that caused Paul to conceptualise the term *in Christ* for our life as Christians.
 - The Lord of the Church and whose Lordship would ultimately extend over all else.

- The summation of all the perfections of God's intended manhood.
- The measuring rod of my manhood.
- The unifier and divider of men.

Everything we now see in relation to God, man, the Church and the world can only be understood in the context of a revelation of Christ. He is the key to understanding all else. The present working of the Spirit is to reveal Christ in such a way that all else unfolds through our knowledge of Him.

I could now see things much more clearly than before. The central issues of life was not my grasp of spiritual principles or religious practices, but primarily my relationship to this Man as the centre and circumference of all God's purposes.

This meant the King must come before the Kingdom; the Giver before all gifts; the Lord before any man. The supremacy of Christ was to be established in my life.

2. "...The Church". With Christ in the centre of the universal stage, the church is seen in a new light. It is to be:

- The Temple of His glorious Presence
- The House of His Habitation
- The Body to express His life.

Suddenly all contentious issues between men such as *Which church do you belong to? What does your church believe? Do you practice this in your church?* were of little or no consequence. It was now clear to me that everything must be settled by this revelation of Christ, the full purpose of God.

Since the revelation of the centrality and supremacy of Christ is far greater than all denominational differences, it confronts us with an issue we must settle. Will we commit ourselves to the indivisible unity of the corporate Christ by refusing to separate on any non-vital grounds that weaken our fellowship, testimony and life together?

3. "...The World". Over the years, I feel confirmed in my thinking that however much men try to give permanence to this world *system*, it is by its nature doomed to pass away.

Our vision of the **World of the Future** is one in which:

- There is a final end to all evil
- Death, poverty and sickness no longer exist
- There is universal peace amongst the nations
- Righteousness rules the relationships and actions of men
- The earth is populated with people in the fullness of Christ
- The revelation of God is the mainspring of their every act of worship and good work.

Our vision of such a world is sufficiently ‘tomorrow’ to be our hope, yet with the potential of ‘today’ that challenges our faith.

4. **...Man.** Man today is far less than his creative potential suggests — see **Genesis 2:26-27**. Paul’s description of Christ as being the second man was no slip of the tongue or casual comment. It’s a vital concept.

When the Bible speaks of Adam as the ‘first man’ it is speaking of an order of mankind, a certain kind of man. Likewise, Christ represents a new order of mankind, a new kind of man. ‘In Adam’ is a corporate phrase, just as ‘in Christ’ is.

In coming to Christ, we left one order of mankind, that which was sub-standard, sub-normal, warped, tainted, defiled. We became part of a new kind of manhood whose nature and character share the perfections of Christ.

I have come to see that any solution that merely deals with my past but fails to deal with me, leaves me doomed to repeat the sins of yesterday and makes necessary repetitive repentance in every tomorrow. Praise God it is not so, His solution included not simply **cleansing** but also **changing** me!

As God’s new manhood, we have the task of sharing in the restoration of all things. The ascended Christ is committed to work by the Spirit through this regenerate corporate man to restore all else.

5. **...Society.** The present trend of embracing *causes* as crusaders can work against our vision. Any cause small than our vision threatens the attaining of it.

Man is a spiritual creature before a social one. To awaken social conscience without first having awakened God-consciousness is to generally provoke man to engage in another round of self-righteous dead works.

- We cannot successfully or permanently change society until we have successfully and permanently changed man.
- Man's spirit must come to life and engage God in conscious fellowship before he can truly discover the best way to help his fellow man.
- No social involvement/action will ever spiritually fulfil the spiritually dead.
- Man will, after every reform, return to being whatever kind of man he is, even though he may despise himself for what he is.

5. Intimidated or Stirred by the Vision

The vision of Christ's perfect manhood should not intimidate us. To be *in Christ*, means we have the prospect of these perfections being fulfilled in ourselves. We share the nature of this perfect man. God and ourselves are one in the second man. We are now the extension and expression of this God/Man... Christ.

“For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, and you have been given fullness in Christ, who is head over every power and authority.” (Col 2:9-10)

God has accommodated our finite capacities by taking the initiative in revealing and relating Himself to us in man. It is the grace of God that the gloriously Divine became utterly human. That the God on the throne became a baby in a cradle. And so from helpless infancy to manhood we have a meeting point with God — our humanity.

Fellowshipping with God is only possible through the man Christ Jesus, our Mediator. My revelation of His unique Manhood provides the foundation to my ability to fellowship with Him.

I am not hindered in my fellowship with God by memory of the hurts and wrong done me by fallen man; for the basis of our fellowship is in the new Manhood of His Son, the uniqueness of Christ.

6. The Vision is Established

Without vision, we are *beating the air*. We are wanderers not pilgrims, having no place to go, much less knowing how to get there. We embrace a vain religion empty of any sense of God's Presence or Purpose.

However, with a vision, we are provoked to work even more committedly for God's tomorrow, while challenged to know our role in today's society.

My vision is the picture I have indelibly printed in my soul of God, Christ, Man, the Church and the World, and my place in this interlocking whole.

7. Your Vision Pursued

At some point, your vision of the ultimate and final end of things must touch the present state of things. A vision, as described, demands I do something about the lost, the world, the corruption of society, the division in the Church and the needs of the broken and bruised in life.

Our vision demands that we embark not only on a pilgrimage ourselves, but that our pilgrimage becomes a crusade for:

- Reaching the unsaved in all nations.
- Preaching the Kingdom to them.
- Ministering so as to bring men into the fullness of Christ (discipleship).
- Provoke, challenge and influence society for the better (salt and light on the earth).
- Live as true sons of the Kingdom.

Personal Visions. Over the years I have had few but very important visions that are indelibly stamped in my soul. They are:

- The crown of righteousness for the faithful.
- The triumphant army of King Jesus more numerous and powerful than any ever seen.
- Revival rains falling steadily over Wales.
- This great nation with flames of revival fire from end to end.

- The glorious power of God manifest in the streets in signs, wonders and healing miracles.

In addition to these visions, which are in the form of graphic mental pictures, I have a vision through challenge and promise verbally spoken in my soul. This is of:

- A glorious Church made ready for the King.
- Ten thousand men for the end of the age.
- Men and women raised up together in ministry across the nations.
- Young men emerging, disciple in our burden, to take God's people onto a fullness of revelation, life and ministry beyond what we have achieved already.
- Hundreds of new Churches through our ministry as a team across this nation and to many nations of the world.

Chapter 5: Seven Basics to Successful Ministry

Success is a partnership with God. In this partnership, I do as much as I can while God does what I cannot do, to achieve success.

1. God will not assume responsibility where we continue to fail to act responsibly.
2. When God sees I am involved where He is involved, He is pleased to involve Himself in my involvements.
3. If I will work where He is working, He is willing to perform His works where I am working.

I have at time questioned deeply the reason why some things have worked out and others not in my life and ministry to date. I have reached the conclusion that in order to be successful in ministry it is necessary to work in conjunction with God in all things.

The following factors must be in place in life.

1. Discovering God in yourself.

Most people's image of God prior to salvation is vague. It is of a distant figure somewhere in the furthest reaches of space who is either a person or the first principle of life superior to all men.

The result is that when we come to God our first efforts at prayer are coupled with an effort to imagine God more distinctly, to personify this principle of life. We all too often end up with an inner picture either of an austere schoolmaster or a very genial Santa Claus in the sky.

Prayer is effective and faith finds foundation when we allow the Word of God to renew our thinking in respect to God Himself and we discover God within us.

Paul described this as *the hope of glory*, the *mystery of Godliness* and infers this discovery as being the key to so much else in our achievements.

In finding God this way three things happen:

1. We learn to enjoy fellowship with **God within ourselves**.
2. We learn to trust the voice of **God within ourselves**.
3. We learn to follow the leading of **God within ourselves**.

2. Motivated in Every Aspect

Keep yourselves motivated in every aspect of your relationship with God so that you are fulfilling the injunction of Paul: “guard yourselves and the flock of God over which He has given you oversight” (**Acts 20:28**) and “press on in order to...” (**Phil 3:12**)

It is interesting at this point to recall all that Scripture commands us to do for ourselves. Obedience to such commands helps maintain high motivation in our spiritual lives. (**Acts 15:29; Rom 6:11, 13, 16; 2Cor 13:5; Eph 5:19; Jude 20, 21**).

Sustained motivation requires that we stay abreast of everything that touches on our calling in the world or the church. This will enable us to maintain a cutting edge to our ministry. Jesus knew God and man deeply and was, therefore, able to relate the one to the other without problem.

If I am a prophet, I need to concern myself with all the issues that will either affect or be affected by my prophetic ministry. If I am a teacher, I need to hone my skills and increase my knowledge in every field that will have a bearing upon my ministry.

3. Walk in the Principles

There is nothing more undercutting to a man’s ministry that inconsistency in his life. Failure to walk in the principles we are exhorting others to walk in will lead to an inevitable credibility gap between us. In particular, they will judge you by your own observable practice of life and your response to the government of God, as well as the counsel and command of others.

You must walk in the principles you teach others to walk in.

4. Result of Many Influences

Life is the interaction of many influences on our lives. The primary sources of these influences are people, circumstances, personal feelings and thinking.

The issues that we are required to take strong control over are:

1. **Ourselves:** so that we rule our mind, will and emotions rather than being ruled by them.
2. **Our abilities:** so that we don't find ourselves leaning on our ability but rather using our ability. The greatest weakness of the gifted man is the knowledge of his giftedness which tends to make him complacent and sometimes slothful. It is imperative that our gifts are used to the benefit of others as well as ourselves, rather than becoming a lazy man's crutch in life.
3. **Our time:** you cannot recycle time. Once it is used it is gone forever. Jesus was aware of the importance of time, hence the statement: "I must work the works of Him who sent me while it is yet day, for the time is coming..."

Paul understood the value of time indicated by his statement "redeem the time for the days are evil."

The man of the world understands the importance of time hence his proverb "time waits for no one." Each of us is only given one shot at each minute of life. Mess it up and you will never be able to repeat it.

We have all the time we need to do all the things God wants done by us.

4. **Our resources:** every one of us is rich. We have an abundant supply of all things that are necessary to the enjoyment of success in life and ministry.

Everything in the world is a resource for us. Bear in mind that inanimate objects are never evil. It is only the heart and motive of the user that will determine whether it is used for evil or good. What we must be sure of is that no resource assumes such importance that we become dependent upon it rather than on Him. **No resource is indispensable. No resource is our sole resource.** This knowledge

gives assurance of faith irrespective of what is taken from us or put out of our reach.

- 5. Our Family:** Here lies our greatest strength and weakness, our greatest blessing and burden, our greatest resource and responsibility, our greatest pleasure and pain, our greatest joy and challenge.

Home and family is meant to be for us the **classroom of life**, the **school of ministry**, the **workshop for our abilities**. If we cannot gain control here, we have no rights to seek it anywhere else. If we cannot meet needs here we are not qualified to try and meet them elsewhere. If we don't prove ourselves here, nothing else is proof for us.

Particular points we must be aware of in family are:

- We must disallow any effort to manipulate us emotionally and unrighteously either by wife or children... nor by the church to the detriment of our children.
- That in the things of God touching the church, we do not give preference to wife and children over others simply because of filial ties... nor to the church over family because of fear of being accused of filial ties.
- We should neither demand nor expect more from others than we demand or expect from our families... nor of our family more than others in the church.

5. The Temporary and the Permanent

We need to distinguish between temporary and permanent issues in life. My use of permanent includes things that are long term values and objectives also.

Where we are speaking of friendships, projects or goals, every one of them falls into one or other of these two categories: it is either temporary or permanent. It is essential that we determine which, in order to decide what time and resources to make available to it. We need to measure the cost of all things.

We must never allow the permanent to suffer as a result of attention, time or resources being put into temporary.

- 1.** We must never allow the temporary and short-term to grow fat while the long-term or permanent is severely weakened through being starved of adequate attention and resources.

2. The permanent is always worth higher cost than the temporary.

6. Born into a Corporate Body

Prior to salvation, we may have been loners, individualists or people very limited in our social relationships. In coming to Christ we awoke to the fact that we are born into a community. This demands of us, if we are to be successful in life and ministry, widening involvement with others and a strengthening of new and expanded social relationships. This greatly challenges the timid, or any who suffer from a poor self image.

We cannot afford to be complacent in the matter for each of us must address it within ourselves to ensure that we are totally integrated in life and ministry into the fullness of the Body of Christ. This does not mean that we become so gregarious in our relationships we seek deep relationships with everyone in the church. It is essential we be selective because of their lasting effect on our life and ministry. It does require them to be broad and varied enough to have influence for good on our development as people and ministries.

It is essential therefore that you have colleagues who are friends, fellow servants, and fellow ministers. That you know who these are and the measure of trust and life you can share together securely. That you know what you do for each other in Christ is provoking, stirring, inspiring, challenging, adjusting and disciplining.

Such quality and productive relationships are to be confirmed and cultivated continuously.

7. An Ordered Life

George Whitfield remarked ruefully respecting the fruit of Wesley's labour, that Wesley had solid results whereas he had built with a 'rope of sand'. He was alluding to the disciplined manner in which Wesley had organised the converts of his ministry into 'class meetings' for Bible teaching and testimony. Also, the use of local preachers who covered the length and breadth of this country ministering to these classes.

Whitfield had much larger crowds attending his meetings with far greater manifestations of the presence and power of God in them. However, he had found that the fruit from his ministry didn't last the test of time.

If we are to build for permanence we need to be disciplined in our:

1. **Ministry to people:** exhorting, counselling, adjusting, blessing, visiting of them.
2. **Handling of finances:** that we ensure we do not continuously run into debt, abuse our blessings by squandering money foolishly; don't give beyond our means and don't withhold when within our means to give. Honour God in all financial respects. Meet the needs of the poor at every opportunity.
3. **Church Records:** every one of us should know the 'state of our flock' which means that as the company grows so the necessity for adequate records of people increases. Not only their names, addresses and phone numbers, but their birth dates, abilities, desires, strengths and weaknesses.
4. **Ministry preparation:** not only in the secret place of prayer and personal study, but in considering what is coming up in the weeks and months ahead, turning our minds and heart to it.

Spend a great deal of meditation (thinking time) on what we wish to achieve, what we therefore need to say, what we intend to do, and how we intend to conserve the results.

Dependent of course upon the nature of our calling, different forms of preparation are involved, eg the preparation of a prophet is vastly different from that of a teacher, or the preparation of an apostle to that of an evangelist.

Every 'Word Ministry' should be enjoying the Word and feeding on it irrespective of ministry responsibilities that may be coming up. This will mean we will always have a deposit of revelation adequate to the need of the situation.