

Christian Lifestyle

There are instructions we are given in the New Testament that are actually keys to catalyse revival. I asked the Lord what some of these instructions are and these were the scriptures that came forth. As you endeavour to accomplish your goals, make sure you embrace this lifestyle. Don't just focus on the results but take note of how you live.

Ephesians 4:17-18, 20-24

¹⁷ So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must *no longer* live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking. ¹⁸ They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts.....

²⁰ That, however, is not the way of life you learned ²¹ when you heard about Christ and were taught in him in accordance with the truth that is in Jesus. ²² You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; ²³ to be made new in the attitude of your minds; ²⁴ and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

Desires = Epithumeo = desire, passionate longing, lust

8 Areas of Lifestyle on which we can focus

1. Deliverance from Mammon and Greed

James 5:1-6

¹ Now listen, you rich people, weep and wail because of the misery that is coming on you.

² Your wealth has rotted, and moths have eaten your clothes. ³ Your gold and silver are corroded. Their corrosion will testify against you and eat your flesh like fire. You have hoarded wealth in the last days. ⁴ Look! The wages you failed to pay the workers who mowed your fields are crying out against you. The cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord Almighty. ⁵ You have lived on earth in luxury and self-indulgence. You have fattened yourselves in the day of slaughter.^[a] ⁶ You have condemned and murdered the innocent one, who was not opposing you.

At the start of the year many of us have financial goals. Be careful to not make money your source of happiness. The love of money is the root of all kinds of evil. Have a vision for how generous you will be. Have a vision for how well you will treat your subordinates and employees. If we want to walk close to Jesus this year we must have a right relationship with money.

- a. We will not walk in greed.
- b. We will hate the oppression of the weak (physically and economically).

Luke 12:15

Then he said to them, "Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions

1 Cor 6:9-10

⁹ Or do you not know that wrongdoers will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor men who have sex with men^[a] ¹⁰ nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.

Kleronomos = inherit. From Greek word Kleros meaning heir. An heir is a possessor. Don't be given to anything except Jesus. A lot of things are addictive. God is a loving father who wants to bless us with good things. However, when He sees that we are bound by those things, I don't think He is that eager.

Greed is described in scripture as idolatry.

4 Types of Greed:

- a. Hoarding – let me amass as much as possible and I can only give when I have amassed enough. Rooted in insecurity.
- b. Overspending – Impatient. Living beyond your means. Inability to practise delayed gratification.
- c. Comparison – Envy, covetousness. Keeping up with the Jones.
- d. Entitlement – They owe me. I must have “freebees” for everything. I must maximize and consume as much as possible. A lot of poor people have the mindset that the rich owe them and its their right to take from them. This can result in affirmative shopping ie stealing.

From Chad Hovind's book, Godonomics

2. The Priority of Prayer

1 Timothy 2:1-4

¹ I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people— ² for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. ³ This is good, and pleases God our Saviour, ⁴ who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.

Prayer must be a priority. We must practise this and pass it on to our children.

Prayer is linked to peace and also salvation of people.

Frost of all = Pro = Before, ahead, above, chief.

Good = Kalos = right, beautiful, noble

3. Purity of Heart

Ephesians 4:31-32

³¹ Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. ³² Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

Malice speaks of wickedness (kakos in Greek).

Brawling/clamour = krazo = shrieks and cries.

When you have a revelation of how Christ forgave you it becomes easier to forgive others. You only know Christ's forgiveness when you are aware of your own wickedness in comparison to His holiness.

4. Renewed Thinking

Romans 12:2

Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

The pattern of this "aioni" - a space of time, an age.

Christianity is counter culture. There are mindsets of ages. That's why generations think differently.

Many people struggle to know God's perfect will because their minds are not renewed. You will always misinterpret what God is saying to you if you interpret it through the filters of your deceitful desires.

5. Delegated Authority

Ephesians 6:1-9

¹ **Children**, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ² "Honour your father and mother"—which is the first commandment with a promise— ³ "so that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth."^[a] ⁴ **Fathers**,^[b] do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord. ⁵ **Slaves**, obey your earthly masters with respect and fear, and with sincerity of heart, just as you would obey Christ. ⁶ Obey them **not only to win their favour when their eye is on you**, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from your heart. ⁷ Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not people, ⁸ because you know that **the Lord will reward each one** for whatever good they do, whether they are slave or free.

⁹ And **masters**, treat your slaves in the same way. Do not threaten them, since you know that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no favouritism with him.

Ultimately God is your boss and He rewards you. When you fail to do things wholeheartedly you are doing it to the Lord. This applies to all menial tasks e.g. washing dishes, cooking a meal etc. Make your work worship unto the Lord.

6. Disciple-making

Matthew 28:19-20

¹⁹ *Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.*

Teach = didasko = to cause to learn, to direct, admonish, to instruct, to impart knowledge.

What are we to teach? Whatever Jesus commanded.

Teaching is so important hence very frequently mentioned in scripture. Almost all the time it's talking about teaching the Word.

Observe/Obey = guard/watch over = Terein

It's not enough to listen to messages and teachings. We must watch over and protect what we have heard. *Terein* comes from the root word *teros* which is a guard.

Imagine what would happen if every Christian took Jesus' last instructions seriously. Jesus taught by parable and commandment.

7. The Power of the Holy Spirit

Luke 24:49 (NIV)

I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.

NLT

"And now I will send the Holy Spirit, just as my Father promised. But stay here in the city until the Holy Spirit comes and fills you with power from heaven."

All these instructions are linked because there are things that grieve the Holy Spirit. It's not about the first infilling but we need to be continually filled with the Spirit.

Acts 1:8

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

The Holy Spirit empowers us to make disciples and also to live out our lives.

I like how Wayde Van Niekerk was relying on God's power when he broke the 400m world record. Don't make this an option, it's a necessity.

8. Freedom from Fear

Phil 4:6

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

Prayer helps you to overcome anxiety. Pray from a place of thanksgiving not a place of anxiety.

Anxious = merimna = dividing and fracturing a person's being into parts. Care, worry.

"The only thing we have to fear is fear itself - nameless, unreasoning, unjustified, terror which paralyzes needed efforts to convert retreat into advance."

---- FDR - First Inaugural Address, March 4, 1933

Don't fear failure so much that you refuse to try new things. The saddest summary of a life contains three descriptions: could have, might have, and should have.

– Louis E. Boone

Love casts out fear