**Leading in Joy: 21-Day Devotional for the Spirit-Led Leader**

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**INTRODUCTION**

 **This devotional is being written because of a prophetic word that was spoken over me immediately following the release of my first book "Leading in Joy: Finding Fulfillment as A Spirit-Led Leader". Since that time my readers have asked for "something" that could compliment the book and help them stay motivated and encouraged in a more tangible way. Proverbs 29:2 (msg) says "When good people run things, everyone is glad, but when the ruler is bad, everyone groans". We need our Spirit-Led leaders to be good; mentally, physically and spiritually. This devotional is designed to inspire, motivate, and strengthen leaders as they lead their teams. Each day you will find scriptures and quotes along with prayers that will touch on the challenges that leaders face on a daily basis. In addition, there will be space to write your thoughts, affirmations, challenges and solutions.**

 **As leaders, we have an opportunity to start anew and set the tone for the day. Why not start by being connected to the one who gives us the strength to endure and continue to be Spirit-Led.**

***DAY 1***

***THE POWER OF PRAYER***

***“In the morning when I rise, give me Jesus”***

***\* Reverend Jacob Knapp\****

I Chronicles 16:11 (NIV) tells us to *“Look to the Lord and his strength; seek his face always”.* Why is starting your day with prayer so important? Because spirit-led leaders should look to the Lord for understanding each and every day to ensure that our actions are in line with His plan and not ours. We understand that it is God that guides our footsteps. We offer praise and thanksgiving for the blessings and seek guidance and strength for life’s challenges. In addition, we can go the Him on behalf of others. What are the challenges that your team(s) may be facing? Has a team member come to you with a need that only prayer can resolve? Ask God for wisdom as you navigate those challenges as you provide the support that your team needs.

I like to start my day by reading a scripture and prayer. Then I have my “conversation” with God. This practice gives me a sense of peace because I have established my connection to the Creator who gives me everything I need to face the day. Scripture tells us in Matthew 6:33-34 (TNT) “So above all, constantly seek God’s kingdom and his righteousness, then all these less important things will be given to you abundantly. 34) Refuse to worry about tomorrow, but deal with each challenge that comes your way, one day at a time. Tomorrow will take care of itself”.

Not sure where to start? Let’s say this prayer together:

*Father, in the name of Jesus, we come to you this morning with praise and thanksgiving in our hearts. We thank you for your many blessings. We thank you for life, health and strength. We thank you for your grace and mercy that’s brand new each and every day. Now Father, we ask for your divine guidance for today. Lead us in the way that you will have us to go. Provide wisdom and clarity as we navigate today’s challenges. Give us the right words to say so we don’t offend anyone because we understand that words have power. Fill us with compassion when needed and strength when necessary. We pray for those that you have given us charge over. Touch their lives as they deal with any hardships that they may be facing for we know that you are able to do exceedingly, abundantly above all that we could ever ask or think. And we ask all these things in your name, Jesus. AMEN.*

***PRAYER REQUESTS***

1. ***What are your needs? What are you specifically asking God for?***
2. ***What are the needs of your team? Be specific.***

***NOTES***

***DAY 2***

***AN ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE***

***“16) Let joy be your continual feast. 17) Make your life a prayer. 18) And in the midst of everything be always giving thanks, for this is God’s perfect plan for you in Christ Jesus”.***

***I Thessalonians 5:16-18 (TPT)***

I love the Passion translation for this scripture. The NIV version tells us to rejoice always; that we should be filled with joy as we offer praise and thanksgiving unto God. It goes on to say that we should pray continually. Our lives should show that we are always connected to the Father. Lastly, no matter what is going on around us, it is God’s will for us to always give thanks. Scripture tells us in Psalm 100:4-5 (NIV) to “Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name. 5) For the Lord is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations”.

Being grateful acknowledges that we haven’t done anything ourselves. We acknowledge that we see God at work in our lives and the lives of our family members. We have so much to be thankful for, including being a spirit-led leader. When you have an attitude of gratitude, it’s hard to focus on the negative. Remember, there is always someone who is worse off than you. So, be thankful for all things big and small and praise God for it!

*Dear God, I come to you this morning with a heart full of gratitude. I thank you for waking me up this morning and allowing me to see another beautiful day. I am grateful for the opportunity to praise your holy name. Thank you for my family and friends. Thank you for your provision of food, clothing and shelter. Thank you for your many blessings, big and small. Thank you for trusting me to lead your people. As I begin this day, I thank you for leading and guiding me as I lead them. You are a faithful God and you are worthy of all of my praise! In Jesus Name. Amen.*

***GRATITUDE LIST***

***What are you grateful for today? Keep a running list.***

***NOTES***

***DAY 3***

***ENCOURAGE YOURSELF!***

***“I repeat, be strong and brave! Do not yield to fear nor be discouraged, for I am YAHWEH your God, and I will be with you wherever you go!”***

***Joshua 1:9***

We live in a world where everyone has an opinion about something. Unfortunately, those opinions are often negative. As leaders, our character is often attacked when decisions are made that others do not agree with. Our superiors may feel that we are not capable, and our team members rally against us. How do we keep going when words are spoken that cut deep? We can turn to people we trust for comfort and support, but when that is not an option, we must turn to God and let his word help us encourage ourselves. We know that God has put us in this leadership position for a reason to fulfill a unique purpose. Don’t doubt yourself and remember what God says about you! You are a masterpiece made in His image!

*God, I come to you today with a troubled heart. I have been under attack from all sides. But I know your word tells me in Philippians4:6 to not be anxious for anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present my request to you. So, I pray that your word washes over me and gives me the strength to withstand the opposition. Help me to drown out the naysayers. I will stay focused on you and who you say I am. In Jesus Name. Amen.*

***AFFIRMATIONS***

***What does God say about you? Write your “I Am” affirmations below.***

***Example: I Am Amazing***

***1.***

***2.***

***3.***

***4.***

***5.***

***6.***

***7.***

***8.***

***9.***

***10.***

***11.***

***12.***

***13.***

***14.***

***15.***

***16.***

***17.***

***18.***

***19.***

***20.***

***NOTES***

***DAY 4***

***YOUR YES!***

***“For we walk by faith, not by sight [living our lives in a manner consistent with our confident belief in God’s promises].***

***2 Corinthians 5:7 AMP***

What does it mean to say “Yes” to God? It means putting your trust in Him when there is something he has asked you to do. I know this is easier said than done because his “ask” is usually something so big or out of the ordinary that you stop and question: “Did I hear that right?” You might even say “Why are you asking ME to do this?” or “I am not equipped for this task”. That’s when fear and hesitation set in. Now, imagine how Mary felt when the angel came to her and told her that she would carry the Son of God. Where would we be if she didn’t say “Yes”? Imagine how Moses felt when God told him that he would be the one to lead the people of Israel to freedom. Where would they be if he didn’t say “Yes”? Scripture tells us in 2 Timothy 1:7 KJV *“For god hath not given us the spirit of* *fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind*”. So, what is God asking you to do today? Give God your “Yes”. Even if you can’t see it. Even if you don’t understand it. Don’t worry; God’s got this! Surrender to the Lord and trust His will for every situation in your life. Remember, all things work together for your good!

*Dear God, I awoke this morning with my heart totally surrendered to you. As I give you my “Yes”, I ask that you equip me for the task that is before me today. Give me wisdom, strength and courage to face any obstacles that are put in my path. I put my trust in you for you know what’s best for me. Thank you for choosing me to fulfill this assignment. Thank you for choosing me to be a Godly leader. In Jesus Name. Amen.*

***REFLECTIONS***

1. ***Make a to-do list of all the things that you have put off doing.***
2. ***Now, list what is preventing you from moving forward.***
3. ***What do you need in order to say “Yes”?***

***NOTES***

***DAY 5***

***STIR UP YOUR GIFTS***

***“God gave you a talent. He gave you a gift. Are you using it? If not, start.”***

\*[***www.YouBetterPreach.com***](http://www.YouBetterPreach.com)\*

What are your gifts and talents? All of us have something that we are naturally good at. However, once identified, it is up to us to nurture that gift and use it to fulfill our purpose here on Earth. As leaders, God has given us a special talent for leading people. Some of the gifts that come with being an effective leader are humility, compassion, wisdom, knowledge, etc. However, whatever the gift is, it’s not effective if you are not putting it to use. 2 Timothy 1:6-7 MSG *says “And the* *special gift of ministry you received when I laid hands on you and prayed – keep* *that ablaze!* When you find yourself in a slump and have lost your passion for leading, I encourage you to rekindle the flame and recommit to serving your team with all the gifts that God has given you.

*Father God, show me what my gifts and talents are. Fill my mind with ideas and visions. Show me how I can use those gifts to serve your people so that you get the Glory. Thank you for blessing me with the gift of leadership and trusting me to lead your people. In Jesus Name. Amen.*

***SPIRITUAL GIFTS***

***Do you know what your gifts are? List them below.***

***1.***

***2.***

***3.***

***4.***

***5.***

***6.***

***7.***

***8.***

***9.***

***10.***

***NOTES***

***DAY 6***

***STAY HUMBLE***

***“A man’s pride and sense of self-importance will bring him down, But he who has a humble spirit will obtain honor”***

***Proverbs 29:23 AMP***

Chapter 3 in my book talks about serving with humility. Each time I have taught classes on leadership; students have indicated that humility is an important characteristic for a leader to have. Why? Because prideful, arrogant leaders will soon fall flat. They are so busy worrying about themselves that there is no space for them to focus on their teams. As a result, they will not receive honor and respect from their teams or from God. This will eventually lead to disastrous results! Today, as you go before God in prayer, ask him to search your heart and remove any pride and arrogance that may exist. You want to be a servant leader and not a “Boss” who esteems himself more than others. You want to lead like Jesus because He was the perfect example of a humble leader.

*“Lord Jesus, I thank you for this day. For this is the day that you have made, and I will rejoice and be glad in it. Father, I ask that you create in me a clean heart and renew a right spirit in me. Remove any pride, arrogance or boastfulness that is within me, oh God. Help me to lead my team with humility, meekness and respect. Help me to communicate in a way that does not offend but uplifts and encourages for my desire is to be more like you, Jesus. I ask all these things in your name. In Jesus Name. Amen.*

***HOW TO CALM THE “BOSS” IN YOU***

***Humility is a characteristic that can have a profound impact on your effectiveness as a leader. Recognizing that it can be tough to be humble in a world where most leaders are only concerned about power and ego. So how do you practice being humble? Below are a few examples taken from the article “23 Best Practices to Become More Humble” by Taylor Rochestie and Ali Garbacz***

1. ***Accepting Your Limitations (What does that look like for you?)***
2. ***Appreciating Others (How would you do that?)***
3. ***Appreciate What You Have (Make a list below)***

***NOTES***

***DAY 7***

***PREPARE TO SERVE***

***“26)Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, 27) and whoever wants to be first must be your slave – 28) just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many”***

***Matthew 20:26-28***

In Chapter 3 of Leading in Joy, it states that when Jesus began His ministry, He set about doing the work that he was assigned to do. He assembled His team of disciples, trained, mentored and served them. It goes on to say that Jesus was among people during His entire ministry on earth. Jesus had a servant’s heart. Whether it was in a synagogue or on top of a mountain, His ministry was all about how he could serve the people he encountered. As a leader, it’s important for you to understand that your team needs you to not only lead, but also provide feedback, impart knowledge, coach and mentor them. This is how you can effectively serve them. Today, let us pray that God will give you the capacity to provide the support that each member of your team needs in order to be successful.

*Dear God, I thank you for waking me up this morning and giving me another opportunity to praise your holy name. Today, I ask for wisdom and strength as I prepare to serve my team. Give me a heart that has the capacity to serve them in such a way that they will be built up and equipped for any task that is put before them. Lord help me to not grow weary as I pour into them. Now Lord, I ask that at the end of the day, you refill me so that I am ready to do it again the next day. I ask these things in your name. In Jesus name. Amen.*

***REFLECTIONS***

1. ***Take a moment to reflect on how having a servant heart could benefit your team. Make a list of things that you can do to better serve your team.***
2. ***All managers have someone in the organization that they are accountable to. Take a moment to reflect on the needs of your superiors and make a list of how you can better serve them.***

***NOTES***

***DAY 8***

***LEADING THROUGH CHALLENGES***

***“The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged.”***

***Deuteronomy 31:8 NIV***

Challenges are a part of life for today’s leaders. Whether it’s a work assignment, conflict among your team or a difficult colleague, leaders have to find ways to overcome these obstacles. One way to prevent that feeling of defeat is to lean on God. The above scripture tells us that the Lord goes before us and is with us. It also tells us not to be afraid or discouraged. No matter the obstacle, we can be confident that God will see us through it. Now, facing opposition is not an easy thing and often times we feel like burying our heads in the sand or giving up altogether. That’s why the second half of that scripture tells us not to be afraid and not get discouraged. This reminds me of another passage of scripture found in Joshua 1:9 NIV which says *“Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.”* As leaders, we don’t back away from challenges. Instead, we look to God for wisdom and strategies to help us tackle them head on. So today, let’s pray for wisdom and courage to face whatever challenges you may face today**.**

*Father, I come to you today seeking your strength and wisdom. Things have been chaotic at work lately and I am feeling defeated. Help me to stay strong and courageous. I need your guidance as I find strategies to deal with the challenges that lie ahead. Most importantly, I need your strength, so I am not tempted to give up. I stand on your Word in 2 Chronicles 15:7 AMP that says, “But as for you, be strong and do not give up, for your work will be rewarded”. So, I will press on and continue the work that you have assigned me to do. In Jesus Name. Amen.*

***STRATEGIES***

1. ***What challenges are you currently facing? Make a list.***
2. ***What strategies will you use to overcome these obstacles. Make a list.***

***NOTES***

***DAY 9***

***FINDING THE BALANCE***

***“Never get so busy making a living that you forget to make a life”***

***\*Dolly Parton\****

I’m sure every leader can relate to this topic. Family, work, ministry, hobbies; how do you handle it all without being overwhelmed? Early in my career it seemed impossible to juggle everything at once. When you are new to leadership, you spend a lot of time figuring things out. You have a new job with new task and a new team which adds another layer of responsibilities. As a result, you may find yourself spending more time at work than you would like. You then arrive home exhausted but somehow find the energy to take care of your family. In addition, if you have a hobby or ministry commitments you enjoy, you find the time to squeeze that in only to do everything all over again the next day. You can see how easy it is to become overwhelmed if you don’t find a way to manage it all. Here are a few tips that helped me:

1. Make a to do list for the day and prioritize 3 or 4 of the most important tasks. This leaves room for those unexpected tasks. If you can get more done, great. If not, carry the rest into the next day.
2. Don’t overcommit! Learn to say “No” and be okay with it.
3. Give yourself a hard stop at work and then LEAVE! Exceptions should only be urgent matters that absolutely cannot wait until the next day.
4. Do your best not to take work home so you can give your full attention to your family or other activities.

*Dear God, as I start my day, help me not to be overwhelmed by all these responsibilities. Ecclesiastes 9:10a AMP says “Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might;”. I get great joy out of the work that I do and therefore have a hard time saying no when I should. Help me to prioritize and not overcommit so that I can do all things in excellence unto you. In Jesus name. Amen.*

***THE JUGGLING ACT***

***Let’s put into practice today’s suggestions.***

1. ***Make a to do list for today’s tasks.***
2. ***Make a list of the top 3 or 4 in order of priority***
3. ***What time is your “hard stop” for today?***
4. ***Enjoy the rest of your day!***

***NOTES***

***DAY 10***

***GOD’S GRACE***

***“For out of His fullness [the superabundance of His grace and truth] we have all received grace upon grace [spiritual blessing upon spiritual blessing, favor upon favor, and gift heaped upon gift].”***

***John 1:16 AMP***

Wow! What a God we serve. He is so generous with his blessings. Understanding that grace is a free gift from God that cannot be earned. And to think that he gives grace to us freely over and over again. Knowing that we as leaders make mistakes whether intentional or unintentional, we serve a God of second chances. How is it that we are able to receive His grace? According to the scripture, we receive His grace by faith (Roman 5:1-2). Hebrews 11:1 says, *“Now faith is confidence in what we* *hope for and assurance about what we do not see”*. Our confidence and faith in God allows us to enter into his presence and experience his grace. Why do we need God’s Grace? Let’s take a look at I Corinthians 15:10 TPT – “But God’s amazing grace has made me who I am! And his grace to me was not fruitless. In fact, I worked harder than all the rest, yet not in my own strength but God’s, for his empowering grace is poured out upon me”. His grace is the reason we are who we are. The gifts that he has given us to help others. The blessings that he has given us to bless others. I find this to be so humbling to be the recipient of his grace and favor.

How can we as leaders extend a measure of grace to those we are responsible for serving? We can be compassionate leaders. We can be empathetic leaders. We can show kindness and forgiveness when someone makes an error. We can give feedback and corrections with love and offer words of encouragement. Our teams should see the Jesus in us!

*Dear God, I thank you for loving me the way that you do. I thank you for your grace, favor and mercy that you shower upon me each and every day. I know that I wouldn’t be the person I am today without your love and grace. Thank you for loving me even when I messed up! Now Father, help me to be patient, compassionate and kind to those you have given me charge over. Help me to offer corrections with love along with words of encouragement. Help me to build them up and not tear them down. Allow me to see their strengths and coach them through their flaws. I ask all these things in your name. In Jesus Name. Amen.*

***REFLECTIONS***

1. ***Think about someone on your team that has made an error that needs to be addressed. How can you extend grace to them today?***

***NOTES***

***DAY 11***

***LEADING THROUGH CHANGE***

***“Leaders are – by definition – change makers. When you are called to lead, you are called to advance, move forward, and improve the situation”***

***\*Jonathan Michael Bowman, J.D.\****

If you have every had the task of making changes within an organization or team structure, you know how difficult it can be. You are instantly met with resistance, resentment and hostility. Let’s not forget that famous phrase that I’ve heard from every team I have managed; “Because we’ve always done it this way!” As much as it pains me to hear that, I understand that it comes from a place of fear. No one likes change. However, our job as leaders is to figure out how to navigate as we lead our teams through this time of transition. There is no greater example of this than the story of Moses beginning in Exodus 3:1. Moses was called by God to lead the Israelites out of Egypt. During that 40-year journey, Moses was met with opposition not only from Pharoah, but from the Israelite people. Why, because they were fearful. Several times they questioned Moses about why he brought them out into the wilderness, and they wanted to go back to what was familiar. However, Moses stayed focused on the task at hand and trusted God to get them to the Promised Land.

Another point worth mentioning is that you never want to disregard the processes that are already in place. Consider that the foundation: assess what is currently working and what could be improved. Then, you build upon that foundation. I have seen firsthand the damage that is done when leaders come in and completely dismantle a program down to the foundation to prove a point. Unfortunately, they are often ill-equipped to rebuild because they haven’t taken the time to understand how the current process works. Don’t be that leader! Learn everything you can from the team and create a culture of collaboration and communication, so everyone, including you, is able to embrace the changes.

*Dear God, today I have been tasked with introducing a new process to the team. I understand that change is hard. So, give me the wisdom to lead my team through this transition. Give me the words to say that will instill trust so we can move forward with confidence. Lord, if I stumble along the way, help me to learn from the mistake and continue on the journey. Your word says in Psalm 37:5 “Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass”. Lord, I put my trust in you. In Jesus Name. Amen.*

***CHANGE MAKER***

1. ***List 3 things that you have identified that need to be changed or tweaked.***
2. ***What strategies will you use to implement those changes?***

***NOTES***

***DAY 12***

***GOD’S HEALING POWER***

***“Is anyone among you sick? Let them call the elders of the church to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord. 15)And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise them up. If they have sinned, they will be forgiven”***

***James 5:14-15 NIV***

Sickness in the workplace, ministry or friend group is inevitable. Life happens to all of us, so it is critical as a leader to be empathetic and compassionate when a team member shares that they are facing a health crisis. Understand that it takes courage and trust for them to share something so personal with you. Due to privacy concerns, it is imperative that you guard that information and only share with those that absolutely need to know.

I have experienced this on numerous occasions. As a Christian leader, I always offer to pray for their healing and provide them with words of encouragement from the Word of God. I checked in with them periodically to see how they were feeling, how treatment is progressing, and if any additional support was needed.

I have also been on the other side of this having experienced 3 potentially life-threatening illnesses. I received the support I needed from my superiors and co-workers that I chose to share with. In addition, as the scripture above states, I have a circle of women from the church that prayed for me on a regular basis, offered words of encouragement and scriptures that helped me get through the tough times. Psalm 107:20 NIV says, *“He sent out his word and healed them; he rescued them from the grave”.* It’s God’s word that heals! I am forever grateful for my superiors, co-workers and my prayer circle. They were truly God sent.

As leaders we are often called to share in the life experiences of our teams. If they trust you enough to share, please be compassionate and offer as much support as possible so they know that you care about their well-being. If you find yourself in this situation, find those whom you trust and reach out to them for support. If you have developed those relationships, they will be more than happy to encourage and support you.

*Dear Heavenly Father, I come to you today seeking strength and encouragement. In the face of illness, I need a word from you that will sustain me and give me hope. As I pray for myself, I also intercede on behalf of others who are experiencing illness in their bodies. Your word says in Isaiah 40:29 “He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak”. James 5:14-15 says “The prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well”. So, surround me Lord with people who will pray with me and for me. I decree and declare that healing is my portion, and I put my hope and faith in you. In Jesus Name. Amen.*

***SUPPORT SYSTEMS***

1. ***How can you provide support to someone experiencing a health crisis?***
2. ***If you are the one experiencing a health crisis, who would you reach out to for support?***
3. ***What kind of support would you ask for?***

***NOTES***

***DAY 13***

***LEADING THROUGH GRIEF***

***“My soul dissolves because of grief; Renew and strengthen me according to [the promises of] Your word”***

***Psalm 119:28***

Loss is something that we will all experience at some point in our lives. Whether it’s a loved one or a pet, it is never easy to lose someone you love. In addition, everyone deals with grief differently. But what happens when grief hits the workplace, especially if the one who made their transition was a co-worker. It can be extremely difficult for the team to function while grieving this loss. Coming to work every day will be a constant reminder of the person that used to sit in that seat. How can you as a leader support them through this trying time? Acknowledge the loss. Don’t be afraid to share happy thoughts about that person and what the team remembers about them. Also, try to attend their services as a group if possible. Lastly, if someone is having an emotional day, give them the space to collect themselves. If you have an office or private space, invite them in and offer to pray for them if they are receptive. Again, everyone processes grief differently. If you are the one grieving, don’t hesitate to reach out to a trusted colleague or team member for support. The same would apply if the loss occurred in your ministry or friend group. I have personally experienced all of the above and I can say with confidence that we all stand in need of prayer!

*Oh God, my heart is broken! I have lost someone who was near and dear to me. Your word says in Psalm 30:5 that weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning. But I’m not there yet. Your word also says in Psalm 30:11 that you will turn my mourning into dancing; but I don’t feel like dancing. Lord, I need your strength right now. Lord, I need your comfort right now. Lord give me peace that surpasses all understanding as I process this loss. I lay it all at your feet. In Jesus Name. Amen.*

***MEMORIES***

1. ***What type of support can you offer a grieving team member, family or friend?***
2. ***If you are the one who is grieving, take a moment to write down all the wonderful things you remember about that person.***
3. ***Who will you reach out to for support and what type of support do you need?***

***NOTES***

***DAY 14***

***THE PEACE OF GOD***

***“Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. 4)Trust ye in the Lord forever: for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength”***

***Isaiah 26:3-4 KJV***

Peace. We all long for it but rarely find it. So, what does it really mean to have peace? The Oxford Languages Dictionary defines peace as freedom from disturbance. Biblically, it is defined as a state of tranquility, calmness, and serenity. Why do we need peace in our lives? Because when you are at peace, your perspective is different. Life seems manageable, less stressful, and you can control your thoughts. The peace of God helps us to be content and at rest within ourselves during difficult times. It also allows us to live in harmony which comes from trusting in God’s grace and power. So, with everything that is going on in the world and in our lives, how do we as leaders experience the Peace of God? Isaiah 26:3-4 tells us that God will keep us in perfect peace if we keep our mind focused on Him.

To experience the peace of God we must draw closer to Him. We do this through prayer. Seek God daily, ask for guidance and share with Him what’s on your heart. Scripture tells us in I Peter 5:7 TPT *“Pour out all your worries and stress upon him and leave them there, for he always tenderly cares for you”.* We also draw closer to God by reading the scriptures. By making this a daily practice, we can find instruction, hope and encouragement. 2 Timothy 3:16-17 MSG says “Every part of Scripture is God-breathed and useful one way or another – showing us truth, exposing our rebellion, correcting our mistakes, training us to live God’s way. 17)Through the Word we are put together and shaped up for the tasks God has for us”. Another way to draw closer to God is to spend time worshipping Him. It’s in our worship time that we show our love, honor and admiration for God. John 4:23b MSG says *“It’s who you are and the way you live that count before God.*

*Our worship must engage your spirit in the pursuit of truth. That’s the kind of* *people the Father is out looking for; those who are simply and honestly themselves before him in their worship”.*

*Dear God, life has been so hectic lately. There is chaos in my home and at my job. Lord, I need your peace right now. Help me to control my thoughts and actions. Keep me focused on you so I can make the right decision. Your word says that you will keep me in perfect peace if I keep my mind steadfast on you because I trust and take refuge in you. Father, as I worship you today, I know that you are always in control and that all things will work together for my good. So today Lord, I receive your peace. In Jesus name. Amen.*

***REFLECTIONS***

1. ***What are you struggling with today?***
2. ***Now release those worries to God by spending time in prayer and worship. (You can also play your favorite worship song to set the atmosphere)***

***NOTES***

***DAY 15***

***GOD’S TIMING***

***“Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him; do not fret when people succeed in their ways, when they carry out their wicked schemes”***

***Psalm 37:7 NIV***

Waiting for anything in today’s world is something that most people are no longer accustomed to. We want everything right now! Dinner is microwaved or picked up at the drive thru. Calls to a customer service line are abandoned if the wait time is more than 5 minutes. Putting that expensive non-essential purchase on a credit card instead of saving for it. Let’s face it, all of us at some time or another want instant gratification. So, it’s natural to want our hopes and dreams for our futures to come to pass when and how we planned it. However, our plans may not be what’s best for us. Scripture tells us that God has a plan for our lives, and we need to put our trust in him (Jeremiah 29:11 KJV and Proverbs 3:5 KJV).

Why is it so difficult for us to wait on God’s timing? Because we tend to lose focus. We look around at other people and begin to compare our progress to theirs, especially in the workplace. There may be another leader who is moving up the ladder faster than you are but using underhanded tactics to get there. They may have even stolen some of your ideas and taken credit for it. But Psalm 37:7 above tells us *not to fret when people succeed in their ways.* Why? Verse 9 of Psalm 37 NIV says *“For those who are evil will be destroyed, but those who hope in the Lord will inherit the land”.* If you read further, verse 10 says *“A little while, and the wicked will be no more; though you look for them, they will not be found”.*  I have seen many people come and go during my career because their schemes came to light and they either left or were fired. Now here’s the best part! Verse 11 of that same chapter states *“But the meek will inherit the land and enjoy peace and prosperity”.* Your time will come! Be patient; put your trust in God and watch his plan for your life unfold. I can tell you from experience having been laid off from2

jobs, God always placed me exactly where I was supposed to be. Being laid off was not part of my plan, but God knew best! Wait on Him!

*Heavenly Father, your word says that you know the plans for my life. Lord, help me to surrender my plans and put my total trust and faith in you. Help me not to look to the right or to the left but to stay focused on you. Lead me on the path that you will have for me to go. It doesn’t matter if someone else’s journey looks more appealing, help me not get distracted by what is going on around me. I know my plans will manifest in your time, not mine, so I will wait patiently for you. In Jesus Name. Amen.*

***REFLECTIONS***

1. ***What are you believing God for that has not yet manifested? Write it down.***
2. ***How can you surrender this to God and be steadfast while you wait?***

***NOTES***

***DAY 16***

***LESSONS LEARNED***

***“Smart people learn from their mistakes. But the real sharp ones learn from the mistakes of others”***

***\*Brandon Mull\****

Mistakes are a part of life. None of us are born knowing everything. Life is truly learned as you go and grow. However, we do all that we can to avoid making mistakes because often they can be costly and embarrassing. Knowing that mistakes are going to happen, I want to focus on how we as leaders learn the lesson because recovery is possible.

1. First and foremost, pray before making any decisions. Ask God for guidance.
2. When you make a mistake, take ownership. Whether it impacted your team or involved your superior, let them know that you made the error and are willing to rectify it to mitigate any damages.
3. Don’t pretend to know all the answers. If you don’t know, ask someone who does. Don’t be afraid to utilize your team. If they have been with the organization for a while, they will likely have the answers you seek.
4. Watch and learn from others. Pay close attention when mishaps are discussed in meetings, so you are aware of what NOT to do.
5. Don’t repeat the same mistake twice. This could lead to issues with your credibility and capability. Smart leaders learn the lesson the first time.

*Dear God, I come to you today asking for your grace and mercy. As I start my day today, help me to make the right decisions. Please forgive me when I make a mistake and give me the wisdom to learn from it. Let me not be too proud to hear from those who have the answers I need. In Jesus Name. Amen.*

***REFLECTIONS***

1. ***Think of a time when you made a mistake that was brought to your attention by your superior.***
2. ***How did you recover or rectify the situation?***
3. ***If you didn’t recover, what could you have done differently?***

***DAY 17***

***LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE***

***“In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven”***

***\*Matthew 5:16\****

God has given you an amazing gift. He has called and equipped you to be a leader which requires humility, skill, patience, and compassion among other things. However, many leaders lack confidence and therefore hide behind their insecurities or worry about what others think of them. Now I am not suggesting that you flaunt your gifts and talents and become arrogant and cocky but be confident in the knowledge that God has given you. Never dim your light for anyone. Always be ready to rise to the occasion when the opportunity presents itself. Endeavor each day to treat people right and do the right thing. We are called to be the light in this dark world. We carry the glory of God wherever we go. Yes, even at work! Colossians 3:23 KJV says *“Whatever you do, work heartly as for the Lord and not for men,”.*  Our good works should always bring honor and glory to God. So be that beacon of light so when you interact with people, they see the Jesus in you.

*Father God, I am so grateful that you have chosen me for such a time as this. I am honored to be a beacon of light for everyone that I may encounter. Your word says in Matthew 5:15 MSG “If I make you light-bearers, you don’t think I’m going to hide you under a bucket, do you? I’m putting you on a light stand. Now that I’ve put you there on a hilltop, on a light stand – shine!” Help me to lead with confidence and not hide behind my self-doubts. I want to live a life that brings honor to you. In Jesus Name. Amen.*

***REFLECTIONS***

1. ***Name a time(s) when you were hesitant to step up for fear of failure or ridicule even though you had the solution or answer.***
2. ***Were you able to overcome your fear?***
3. ***If so, how did you do it?***

***NOTES***

***DAY 18***

***A LEADER WHO INFLUENCES***

***“If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader”***

***\*John Quincy Adams\****

Influential leaders that have a positive impact on their teams are a rare breed, particularly in the workplace. I have been fortunate to have several leaders who have had a positive impact not only on my career but on my personal growth as well. The beauty of these types of leaders is that you never forget the things that they did that helped mold and shape you into the person you are today. I vowed that I would strive to become that type of leader so I could be the catalyst for others to grow and flourish. What makes these leaders memorable? Here are the things that I remember most and modeled during my leadership journey:

1. Leading by Example – I discuss this topic in my book “Leading in Joy”. On page 22 I indicate that as leaders, we must realize that our team(s) watch everything we say and do, so it is important that we are modeling the behaviors that we want to see in our team members. We become their role models whether we want to be or not and the saying “do as I say, not as I do” no longer applies.
2. Motivate and Inspire – It’s difficult to motivate and inspire if you don’t know what makes your team members tick. You need to know what their goals and aspirations are as well as what motivates them. As stated in my book, it is important to build relationships with your team.

Once you begin to have those types of conversations, your employees will feel like you genuinely care about them. People are more willing to follow leaders that make them feel valued and heard.

So today, think about those leaders who have had a positive influence on your life and pray that you begin to model those behaviors in order to have the same impact on the lives of your team.

*Heavenly Father, I am so grateful that you placed leaders in my life that I could look up to. Leaders that showed interest in me, who nurtured my gifts and helped me to learn and grow. Now Lord, I ask that you give me the wisdom and knowledge to lead by example and be a positive influence for those I lead. Help me to establish healthy relationships and show a genuine interest in their well-being. In Jesus Name. Amen.*

***REFLECTIONS***

1. **Think of that leader or leaders that had a positive influence on your leadership journey. What stood out about them or what helped you the most?**
2. **What behaviors can you model in order to become a Leader of Influence?**

***NOTES***

***DAY 19***

***LISTEN MORE, SPEAK LESS!***

***“There is only one rule for being a good talker – learn to listen”***

***\*Christopher Morley\****

In order to be an effective leader, you must be an effective communicator. Many people only think of communication as the ability to speak well and with clarity. However, active listening skills are equally if not more important. Why is listening important? Active listening allows you to focus on what is being said and gives the speaker your undivided attention. This form of listening conveys a mutual understanding between speaker and listener. It also gives you an opportunity to provide appropriate feedback, support and encouragement. Another advantage to active listening is that it builds trust with your team and shows them that you are genuinely interested in what they have to say. In addition, active listening forces you to concentrate on what is being said instead of thinking about how you want to respond. It also prevents you from interrupting the speaker before they finish their thought. This often occurs when it’s a difficult conversation. Emotions can run high, and defenses are up. Active listening helps you remain calm and in turn, respond in a professional manner, even when the speaker is upset.

There are 2 scriptures that come to mind when I think of active listening:

1. *“To answer before listening – that is folly and shame”*

***\*Proverbs 18:13 NIV\****

1. *“Understand this, my beloved brothers and sisters. Let everyone be quick to hear [be a careful, thoughtful listener], slow to speak [a speaker of carefully chosen words and], slow to anger [patient, reflective, forgiving]”*

***\*James 1:19 AMP\****

As you interact with your team(s) today, make the effort to listen more and speak less.

*Dear God, I want to be a helpful, thoughtful listener. Help me to hold my tongue as I actively listen to each conversation I have today. Give me the right words to say as I offer a response. Let me give eye contact and other non-verbal cues that lets the speaker know that I am paying attention and engaged in the conversation. Help me to continue to develop meaningful relationships that will build trust with my team. In Jesus Name. Amen.*

***ARE YOU LISTENING?***

1. ***Think of a time when you had to have a difficult conversation. Were you focused on what was being said or thinking about how to respond?***
2. ***Based on what you’ve read or experienced, what can you do differently to become an active listener? You can include non-verbal communication cues as part of your response.***

***NOTES***

***DAY 20***

***A LEADER WHO MENTORS***

***“Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me or seen in me – put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you”***

***\*Philippians 4:9 NIV\****

Being a leader that mentors their team is critical not only to the growth of the individuals, but to the success and growth of the organization. When you recognize the gifts and talents in each individual team member and help them develop and utilize those gifts to their fullest potential, you have begun the process of mentoring. In order to be a successful mentor, you will need to make communication a priority. Mentoring requires consistent feedback to provide the necessary guidance. You also want to tap into the needs and desires of your team members. What do they aspire to do? What are their short-term and long-term goals? Lastly, you want to provide a positive example by practicing all the disciplines that are being taught. Being a mentor can be tedious, time-consuming, and frankly exhausting. But when done correctly, the mentor/mentee relationship can be very rewarding.

On page 38 of my book, I state that your goal as a mentor is to help mold and shape your mentees, so they become the best versions of themselves. This reminds me of a quote by Steven Spielberg – *“The delicate balance of mentoring someone is not creating them in your own image but giving them the opportunity to create themselves”.* Ultimately, you want them to gain the knowledge and skills necessary to go to the next level, whether that’s in an organization or in ministry. Your influence should be evident in how your team(s) carry on (put into practice) in your absence and even after you have moved on. That’s leaving a legacy.

*Heavenly Father, I thank you for equipping me with knowledge and skills that I can pass on to others. Help me to be a good example and one that people would want to imitate. Your Word says in Proverbs 9:9 NRSV “Give instruction to the wise, and they will become wiser still; teach the righteous and they will gain in learning”. Help me to identify those who I can raise up to be future leaders so that a succession plan is in place. Lord, let my influence leave a legacy for all to follow. In Jesus Name. Amen.*

***SUCCESSION PLAN***

1. ***Identify those team members who could potentially succeed you. List them below.***
2. ***How would you begin the mentoring process?***

***NOTES***

***DAY 21***

***EXPERIENCE THE JOY!***

***“How joyful are those who fear the Lord – all who follow his ways! 2) You will enjoy the fruit of your labor. How joyful and prosperous you will be!”***

***\*Psalm 128:1-2 NLT\****

This scripture tells us that when we operate in obedience and follow the ways of God, we will be blessed, **and** we will get to enjoy the fruit of our labor, **and** we will be joyful and prosperous! It is so encouraging to know that if we as leaders continue to be Spirit-Led, we can be assured that our hard work has not been in vain. We want to know that our “Yes” has produced results that we can be proud of and that the favor and blessings from God has overflowed onto our family, friends, and everyone around us.

On page 54 of my book, I talk about experiencing joy after you have overcome situations and circumstances. There are several scriptures in the Bible that speak to this. Psalm 126:5 KJV says, *“They that sow in tears shall reap in joy”.* Have you ever spent any time weeping about a situation at work or in your ministry? Nehemiah 8:10c NIV says, *“Do not grieve, for the joy of the Lord is your strength”.* We have dealt with grief earlier in this devotional, so let this scripture provide you with strength and comfort. Lastly, Psalm 30:5b KJV says, “Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning”. Yes, the morning will come; we just need to be patient and wait for it! When everything begins to fall into place and you can see your team operating in their gifts and purpose, you will understand that serving them was all the joy that you needed!

**Closing Prayer**

*Lord, I thank you for calling me to leadership. Thank you for leading and guiding me on this journey. Thank you for giving me strength and allowing me to persevere through all of the trials and triumphs that come with being a leader. Thank you for wisdom, knowledge and a servant-heart. I am forever grateful that you chose me for such a time as this. I don’t take any of this for granted. I pray that my sacrifice has been pleading unto you Lord. My desire is to hear you say, “Well done, my good and faithful servant”. In Jesus Name. Amen.*

**CONCLUSION**

There can be great joy in leading others. As a leader, you have the ability to influence the people you lead and change their lives for the better. God has entrusted you with these individuals, and it is up to you to give them what they need to grow and thrive. When this happens, you, being the good tree, will bear good fruit. Matthew 7:17-20 TPT says, *“So if the tree is good, it will produce good fruit; but if the tree is bad, it will bear only rotten fruit and deserves to be cut down and burned. 20) You’ll know them by the obvious fruit of their lives and ministries.”* Leaders are recognized by the people they have mentored, coached and influenced along the way. Good leaders produce good leaders and that is the fruit that you want to hang from your tree.

I pray that this devotional has been a blessing to you and that the exercises have broadened your perspective on your role as a leader. Continue to let the Lord lead and guide you so you can be the Spirit-Led leader that He has called you to be!

God Bless!