

*The thoughts this week are based on the book, **Me, Intentionally: 7 Biblical Strategies For Godly Success** by Dr. Stephanie L. Foster.*

**September 23.** Today, it's so easy to get caught in the crossfire of many competing priorities. Whether at home or work, there is always something to do. Even though we know all things aren't equally important, we act as if they are. Compounded with the pervasive nature of technology, our lives seem to have no boundaries. So how do we decide what's most important in setting our priorities for the day? God says, "But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you" (Matthew 6:33, ESV). What does that mean? Give God the first fruits of your day. Consider beginning each day with two actions: *1. Initiate conversation with God.* Check in with God by reading the Bible and communing with Him in prayer. WE don't know what the day holds for us, but He does. *2. Invest time in listening to God.* We're used to having one-way conversations with God. We talk and talk, sharing our petitions, concerns, etc. and when we're finished with what we have to say, we're quick to end the conversation. However, we're encouraged to "Be still..." (Psalms 46:10). That goes beyond our physical movements and includes our thoughts and words. In quieting our mouths and minds and listening for God in our spirits, we are in position to hear from God. What does He want us to do for Him this day? He is to lead and we are to follow. Why is this important? Because we are stewards of His resources and are accountable to Him for our management of His resources.

**September 24.** Take responsibility for creating powerful atmospheres that echo God's wonderful, affirming thoughts toward you! Your amount of control over your physical work spaces may be limited... still, do the best you can... it's time well invested! Consider these: **A. Spirit:** Putting God first in maintaining mindfulness of His way of doing and being right puts us in great position for taking on the day. In this daily download with God, we experience His awesome exchange. His love, strength, protection, faithfulness, and peace displace our fear, weaknesses, vulnerabilities, and anxieties... if we will trust Him. **B. Soul:** Renewing our minds to God's way of doing and being right reinforces peacefulness within us. Too often, we play tapes in our minds of false beliefs that hinder us from becoming all that God created us to be. Importantly, our minds strive to manifest as reality those images and thoughts we focus upon. What you say to yourself matters. The Bible reveals "for as he thinks in his heart, so is he" (Proverbs 23:7, Amplified). Choose to believe what God says about us and let Him speak His Word over our life. Always remember you have the power to control what you think upon! **C. Body:** No matter where we are, we can set our physical environment in ways that affirm us – create spaces that we like and inspire.

**September 25. Be Grateful!** It's easy to be so caught up in the journey of becoming that one forgets the beauty present in today. We most overlook the very things that are most important in the long term. How often have we promised to spend more time with loved ones only to run out of time to be with them? God is the Giver of all good gifts and it's only right to thank Him for all He's done for us. Especially in tough times, it's important to remember who He is. God is The Omnipotent, Omniscient, and Omnipresent One. No problem we can face is greater than Him. As you stand in faith on God's Word to manifest in your situation, what do you do? Fear not. Keep your focus on God and His Word. The circumstance may look and feel intimidating, but the truth is that it is a defeated foe. With Jesus' resurrection, He made an open show (see Colossians 2:15) of the enemy and all of the enemy's works. What you know and believe matters. So, how can we be grateful despite our current situations? Keep a tight grasp on God's truth. He loves us with an unfailing love and will never forsake us. If you're in need, go to His Word and learn His solution for your problem. He is extravagantly generous and eager to bless His children. Your deliverance is as close as your quality decision to know, believe, receive, and act on His Word. Read James 1:17; Philippians 4:8; 1 John 4:18.

**September 26.** We are stewards of God's resources and He expects us to be diligent. The book of Proverbs is quite blunt in its denouncement of laziness and procrastination. Proverbs 6:9 questions, "How long will you stay in bed, you slacker? When will you get up from your sleep?" Ouch! God's Word is a double edged sword... dividing soul and spirit (see Hebrews 4:12). It's easy to put off until tomorrow what can be done today. God warns us to act differently. Proverbs shares an interesting observation, "A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest – and poverty will come on you like a thief and scarcity like an armed man" (Proverbs 24:33-34).

Procrastination is a thief, robbing you of your valuable time. Though certain seasons of our lives seem like they will never end, we really only have a short amount of time to work. Night is coming when no one can work.

If your work only impacted you, the consequences of procrastination and inaction would be minimized. But that's not the case. God has created you with gifts that others need. Burying your gift like the fearful steward in the parable of the talents will yield similar rebuke. God expects us to gain increases on His investments in us. Further, our stewardship of His resources has temporal and eternal consequences. If fear and/or self-limiting beliefs are keeping you from doing what you know you should do, then go straight to God's Word. His Word has the healing virtue that can restore and uplift you to move out in faith. His love and support can displace the fear. See Him in His Word, telling you, "Come." You can do what He has created you to do. "Take up your bed and walk!"

**September 27.** Do you have a track record of completing what you start? Why is it important to finish what you start? Let's take a step backwards and reflect. Who would knowingly drive over an unfinished bridge; ride on a "nearly" finished plane; or pay for a half-baked cake? Yes, there are varying levels of risk in these examples, but the principle is constant. Completion is a critical measure of performance and expectation. Completion requires commitment, focus, and time. That's why it's so important to identify those actions most aligned with your God-led goals and invest your time in completing them. A key to completing goals that appear intimidating is to break the goals into smaller achievable steps. These steps can then be broken down into discrete daily actions to include in your "To Do" list. Consider adopting a "satisficer" mindset (a hybrid of the words "satisfy" and "suffice").

A "satisficer" is one who determines to select the first action meeting one's minimum standard for satisfaction. This enables you to complete actions acceptably and move on to other actions requiring your attention. All actions aren't equally important and surely all aren't deserving of huge amounts of thought and time. Selecting a pair of shoes and choosing an investment plan probably require significantly different levels of analysis and research. Read Proverbs 12:27; Luke 14:28-30.