

*Each Thought, Each Step,
and Each Moment*

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All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise noted, are from the King James Version. Italics for emphasis are ours.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction 5

Chapter 1 7

ORDERING EVERY STEP

Chapter 2 10

THE CROSS, OUR IDENTITY

Chapter 3 14

FAITHFULNESS—A HOLY RESPONSE

Chapter 4 18

OVERCOMING SELF-OCCUPATION

CONCLUSION 23

INTRODUCTION

It is all too easy for us to be occupied with the details of life in the busy-ness of each day. We rush through breakfast, rush the kids to school, rush to work, and then rush back home to dinner and the evening's activities. Most of the time, we keep these schedules without submitting them to God—our Creator, Redeemer, and Friend.

God, because He loves us and wants fellowship with us, desires that we follow His steps. He would have us pray over our schedules and appointments. He would have us ask others to pray with us concerning these things.

God desires that our lives would come under His divine authority, an authority that declares all things to be for our sakes, an authority that establishes and blesses individuals, families, churches, and nations.

In this booklet, we will examine the provision and protection of this authority. We can live

a life that includes the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit governing our every thought, our every word, our every step, and our every moment.

Chapter One

ORDERING EVERY STEP

“For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully.

“For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God.

“For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps” (1 Peter 2:19-21).

This passage indicates that I am called to walk in God’s steps, which may lead me into suffering. One of our pastors has suffered terribly in Africa. Others have suffered in Siberia and other locations. Many have been called to suffer here in America—and we should never avoid a call that might bring suffering or a call that disagrees with our flesh. The Word of God says we

should walk in His steps—and that is a very solemn statement.

The divine proposition behind such a statement is Job 23:14: He will perform what He asks us to do. Faithful is He who calls us, who also will do it (1 Thessalonians 5:24). We work out what God has worked into us, and it is to will and to do of His good pleasure (Philippians 2:13).

God's Schedule

Every week I pray that my schedule will be ordered according to God's steps. To make sure what His steps are, I need to be rightly related to Him with every single thought (2 Corinthians 10:5). I have to let the Word and the Spirit guide me each step of the way (Psalm 119:133).

Has God ever postponed things that you wanted to do? Perhaps He said, "Don't go on vacation right now. It is not the time for that." Following His steps may mean putting aside my own plans. This is a part of submitting to the will of the Father.

When every step is guided by the Word, I will not be bound by iniquity, which is emotional deception through subjectivity. The only way that God can keep me moment by moment

(Isaiah 27:3) is step by step.

Right Thinking

I have to walk in God's step—not steps—but each step. I have to let Him bring each thought into captivity—not thoughts—but each thought. I have to choose to walk in step with the Word and the Spirit. God's part is that He then keeps me moment by moment.

This is how we understand what Luke 18:1 means when we are told that men ought always to pray and not to faint. When we do this, no thought will ever be outside of His way, no step will be out of His order, and no moment will ever be wasted. Certainly, we fail, but we can immediately rebound and grow in this process practically. This is God's divine proposition.

Chapter Two

THE CROSS, OUR IDENTITY

Many Christians have no idea about this way of life. They have no idea how they can experience these truths. I have heard of people who say that they ask themselves, "What would Jesus do?" when they come up against a situation. I appreciate the sentiment, but it isn't right. It makes it sound as if He is not there to do it.

God is in us to do what He asks us to do. Consider this thought: "What has Jesus done?" Every time we begin with that thought process, the burden is lifted. Christ finished the work on Calvary. And when the focus comes off of ourselves as we look unto Him, we find that His yoke is easy and His burden is light.

I am not self-employed. God employs me. He is omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent. He wants me to have a single eye, a single thought, a single step, a single moment, a single decision (Matthew 6:22). He is inside of me to

give the power to fulfill that process.

When we go through trials, we may allow our thoughts, steps, and moments with God to fragment. That means we end up dealing with our flesh to answer the trial. We become occupied with ourselves in all the sincerity of a human proposition, with a natural commitment to come through for God. That is a system of good works, and it avails nothing.

Christ Worked In, Christ Worked Out

God employs me, but He is also my Lord, my Savior, and my Friend. The Cross is the only place where I can find my identity in each thought, each step, each moment. My identity has nothing do with genetics, past successes, or past failures. The Cross is my identity. It is no longer I but Christ who lives in me. I am crucified with Him and His life lives through me.

We need to be disciplined to go to the Cross with each thought, each step, and each moment—to be kept by the power of God (1 Peter 1:5).

In Isaiah 27:3, God keeps His vineyard each *moment*. He did not say each minute but each moment, "...lest any hurt it. I will keep it night and day."

When you let your mind wander from God's

thoughts for just several minutes, you leave God's territorial rights. You step out of God's garden to become a target for Satan, even if you do not live in overt sin.

The moment you listen to a single negative word against another, you are living in iniquity. Your hearing is not being kept for that moment. This is why it is so important that we are careful with how and what we hear and extremely careful with what we say.

Tables of Order

"Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you" (Hebrews 13:17).

Tables of organization are crucial in God's plan. They represent order that comes from God. There is not a company, school, team, hospital, or church that does not have a table of organization.

Those on the staff at our church follow Christ as I do. They communicate, as they would in any corporation, about what is going on in their departments or with a certain project. They keep a schedule and tell me when they plan to be away.

We talk things over and pray to see what God wants us to do. We use the table of organization to determine whether we are doing God's will or following a human proposition to fulfill our flesh. The table of organization establishes divine order that produces humility, meekness, and discipline as the pastor follows God.

We submit to those who have the rule in love, not because of control or manipulation. God delegates responsibility and this comes through the table of organization.

Chapter Three

FAITHFULNESS—A HOLY RESPONSE

A woman had been in a wheelchair for thirty years. She had not walked a step in all that time.

“You prayed for me, and you can see that I now walk perfectly,” she said. “You gave me a list of verses on healing. You told me to read them five times a day until healing came and to include those verses in my conversations. I did that. Up out of the wheelchair I came—in front of the doctor.”

The words Jesus speaks are spirit and life. And yet many people are not healed because they do not allow the Word of God to be poured into them. We need to receive the Word until those words become life. We need to hear the Word precisely, categorically, until each word becomes life to our souls.

Submission and Resistance

"Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ;

"Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God" (Ephesians 5:20-21).

"Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (James 4:7).

If we submit to God, we must also resist the devil, or our submission will not benefit us. We can go around confessing the good things God has told us and still not have victory. If we are negatively influenced by something or someone, then we need to submit to God and resist the devil, and we must never give place to the devil (Ephesians 4:27).

This means we must not be around the wrong people. It means we are to submit to doctrine taught by the pastor-teacher we were called to serve under. It means we are to submit to one another in the honor system of faith.

Knowing this, we can enjoy our eternal destiny and spiritual autonomy in our believer-priesthood (1 Peter 2:9). Some people teach spiritual autonomy without prefacing it with "according to God's order."

Peace in the Person of Christ

Faithfulness is our privilege and our holy response. It is a holy way to respond to the Word with each thought, each word, each step, each moment. This becomes a great privilege and it produces positive energy fields in the soul and in the body.

I have had all kinds of negative things come against me throughout my life, but in the midst of it all God has given such calmness. “How can you be so calm?” I have been asked. It is very simple: I refuse to mentally react. Instead, I choose to fellowship with the serenity of victory that is in me with the Person of Jesus Christ and the Trinity.

Total calm and absolute peace and poise are found in the positive energy that comes from above. No matter who comes against me, I will not let his negative energy invade me. No matter how cruel the attacks, I have a wall of fire around me—and so do you (Zechariah 2:5). Instead of being unprotected like a city that has no walls, a wall of doctrine surrounds me (Proverbs 25:28). I will not let the enemy invade my soul with negative energy that will cause me to react—to think about that thing that’s been

nagging me a little bit today, then a little bit more tomorrow, and then a little bit more next week. If I let the negative energy in, then before I know it I will reveal that same negativity myself.

Chapter Four

OVERCOMING SELF-OCCUPATION

We are fools for Christ's sake. We have abandoned every right, every status symbol, and every option connected to the world through the flesh and the devil. We abandon our rights to think according to human reasoning through self-defense mechanisms.

When I, as a Christian, abandon self-occupation, I can only live in the occupation of Christ. I am not occupied with what people say or with what I have done. I am not occupied with my past or my future. Instead, I am occupied with hope, faith, love, and expectation, rooted in the promises that come from the living God. God's promises are the premise for the work of the Holy Spirit's operation (Galatians 3:14) in the divine nature of Jesus Christ (2 Peter 1:4).

I can tell you tentatively what my schedule will be over the next month. But every decision I

make must go through the Cross again and again so that resurrection life will give me wisdom to either confirm or disqualify that decision. For this reason, I ask people to pray for me. I have faith in their vertical relationship with God. I need their help because I appreciate what God has said concerning five chasing a hundred and a hundred putting ten thousand to flight (Leviticus 26:8).

Don't Protect Adam

Once, on a trip, God impressed me to return two days earlier than I had planned. The Holy Spirit said, "It doesn't matter who is offended by what you do; this is what I want you to do." Now, if I had followed the pattern of what people were expecting of me, then I would have been living in self-occupation and self-preservation for others.

The most difficult times for some people come when others refuse to preserve their Adam nature mentally and emotionally. It really troubles these people, and they will say things such as, "You don't really love me!" The fact is, they are being loved more than ever. Real love will not preserve Adam but will challenge that nature.

Borne by Body Life

"Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

"As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy [Spirit] said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.

"And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.

"So they, being sent forth by the Holy [Spirit], departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus.

"And when they were at Salamis, they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews: and they had also John to their minister" (Acts 13:1-5).

Paul and Barnabas did not go out on their own. There was fasting and prayer. People prayed for them, and the Holy Spirit sent them out. Every time we take a trip it would be wise to have people pray for us. It is not that we are involving them in our decision-making and letting our privacy be invaded. We should ask for prayer so that there will be the greatest produc-

tion and fruitfulness, so that the trip will be a great time for God. We make it a Body adventure in the humility of submission.

We submit one to another when we ask people to pray for us. We don't have to go into details; we can just say, "It would mean so much to me if you would pray for me." This is all a part of allowing God to lead each thought, each step, each word, and each moment.

Quietness is a Strength

As a man thinks in his heart, so is he (Proverbs 23:7). What a great blessing it is that Satan cannot know what we are thinking. Let's say that I commit mental sins for five minutes, but I do not confess anything out loud. Instead, if I confess everything to God alone and silently rebound, then Satan has no idea about what went on.

God has given us one of the great protective programs of all times. Only God knows our thoughts afar off (Psalm 139). The devil does not.

This is why we must be more ready to hear. This is why we must be swift to hear and slow to speak, and why at times we ought not speak at all. The moment we speak, the avenues are

open and a place is given to Satan.

“I have had the worst week of my life,” someone might say carelessly.

Satan hears it and tells his demon armies, “Write that down. We have a place of influence. We have a place to work. This person will always tell us what he is going through.”

This is why we ought always to pray and not to faint. This is why we pray without ceasing. We cannot be on our knees all the time, but we can be in an attitude of prayer rather than talking. Oh, how Satan gets frustrated when we become still and know that God is God! (Psalm 46:10).

CONCLUSION

Has someone offended you? Do you think you have been unfairly judged? What does it matter anyway? You cannot be touched, because you are hid in the Body of Christ. What does it matter how someone feels about you? Pray. Don't talk about the issue. Be silent and pray.

There are times when counseling is bona fide. A pastor can help someone through difficult times, according to a strategy of prayer. When these matters are handled before God, they are sealed from the devil under the covering of divine guidance, and that avoids private interpretation.

It is so important that we maintain a godly attitude in every step, every thought, every word, and every moment. We can do all things with praise and thanksgiving. That is how we can reflect the very nature of the One who made us and redeemed us.

Draw near to the Body of Christ as never before. Being around one another is like being

around God. It is just like being around Jesus Christ, because we are members of His body (Ephesians 1:21-23). And as He is in heaven, so are we in this world (1 John 4:17).