

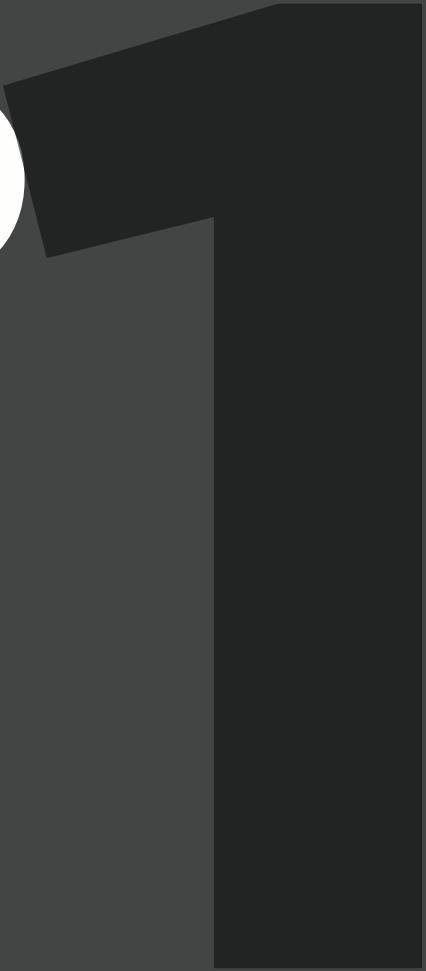


Find more resources at fierce.church/growth

What to Do When You
**DON'T KNOW
WHAT TO DO**

PART ONE

TRUST
IN THE
LORD



PART 1: TRUST IN THE LORD

Are you ever amazed at how insanely complicated life can become? If you're anything like me, you know that the pace of life can quickly blur out of control. My wife calls it, "everything coming to the front". It tends to feel like too many open apps on your computer depleting the power necessary to run any of them well.

- The floors need to be refinished
- A kid needs to take their driver's test
- A discouraged friend needs an impromptu coffee
- A volunteer needs to be corrected firmly enough to take it seriously, but gently enough to know I believe in them
- A project at work is due a week earlier than expected
- An irate client is refusing all of your best efforts to meet their needs

Of course, you want to find the savviest solution and quickest workarounds in times like these. And there are probably people around you who have decent advice.

Still, in moments like these, some of the best leadership advice we can take is found in the book of Psalms:

“Trust in the Lord and do good; Dwell in the land and cultivate faithfulness.”

PSALMS 37:3, NASB

PART 1: TRUST IN THE LORD

Let's take a closer, quick look at the first directive.

Trust in the Lord.

Trusting the Lord can feel like the opposite of DOING something, yet it is the most potent thing we can do. START with trusting Him. That means saying things to ourselves like,

- Jesus takes care of me.
- Jesus knows what to do next.
- The Lord will accomplish His purposes concerning me.
- God is superintending my entire life.
- Jesus didn't bring me here to leave me here.
- I don't have to know HOW God is going to deliver me!
- Nothing is too hard for the Lord!
- Jesus' thoughts toward me are always kind and faithful!
- I won't doubt in the dark what He showed me in the light!

**Here is the truth: God has the
entirety of your life planned.**

PART 1: TRUST IN THE LORD

He knows the nuanced details of every hour. He knows what you need when you need it. If He is really the good Father you claim he is, you can trust His heart even when you don't know His plan or purpose with a situation. Trust Him again today. Let go of responsibility for the results. We often want to know HOW or WHEN God is going to move in our situation but the truth is that walking with God always requires unanswered questions that we'd prefer to know. Look at the path that you're on right now and say this out of your mouth,

“God is the God over THIS! He is not intimidated and He will not be one second late! He is my friend! He knows what to do and He ALWAYS has my back!

Trusting the Lord and resting in His loving, sovereign care is part of the work (rest) of spiritual leadership.

PRAY IT

Holy Spirit - help me proactively trust You with each and every area where I am experiencing tension or anxiety. I believe You are FOR me, that you know what to do, and that You will use even my mustard seed of faith to work miracles (Luke 17:6).

PART TWO

**DO
GOOD**



PART 2: DO GOOD

“Trust in the Lord and do good; Dwell in the land and cultivate faithfulness.”

PSALMS 37:3, NASB

So Do Good.

In the midst of all of the deadlines, dreaming, and details, don't miss the opportunity to DO GOOD TO PEOPLE. It's easy to think about “doing good” as larger-level investments of time, compassion, or money, such as:

- Help a friend move
- Visit someone in the hospital
- Work for an afternoon at the homeless shelter
- Start a new small group for college students, or
- Mow the yard of your elderly widow neighbor down the street

That sounds like A+ good-doing. And no question, we should do as much of that as we can.

But there can be an idolatry to desiring to be doing only things that APPEAR significant, especially in the lives of leaders. Our pride doesn't

PART 2: DO GOOD

need the assistance of us always thinking we need to be “being effective”. Not everything needs to be a world-changing campaign that gets 100 likes on Facebook. Besides, it is unhealthy for the soul to only give itself to ‘great’ things.

I’m finding that there are much smaller, perhaps even more consequential attempts and good-doing that can be done while I’m in the middle of doing the normal stuff of life.

For me, this can look like:

- Going out of my way to say “hi” to a new neighbor or coworker (we don’t need to be best friends today).
- Stopping to have an extra 30-second “good job on that” talk with a staff member or volunteer.
- High-fiving my kids and telling them I’m proud of them.
- Smiling at my wife and touching her as I walk by.

What about you?

Doing Good also answers the question of what to do when we don’t know what to do. Perhaps God is being silent right now. Maybe you haven’t heard anything new regarding your personal life direction in a long time. Well . . . Trust that your Good Shepherd will speak when it is time and until then . . .

Do Good.

PART 2: DO GOOD

It's faithful drops of love here in the tornado of everyday life that remind us that each moment is filled with potential to leave others better.

And this is what it means to live for God. Doing Good may change your attitude if it needs an adjustment. It is amazing how the world can look different when we're on the lookout for smaller ways to love people.

What does God want you to DO? Well, whatever it is, it probably includes doing "little goods" on the way to where you're going.

Leaders don't just do big things that APPEAR significant. Leaders do LITTLE THINGS of significance, whenever they can, to remind themselves and others what Jesus is like.

PRAY IT

Holy Spirit - Thank you for the myriad of ways there are for me to express the love of Jesus in seemingly small ways. Help me pay attention to the smaller needs of people around me, and especially help me respond to your promptings to love.

PART THREE

**DWELL
IN THE
LAND**



PART 3: DWELL IN THE LAND

“Trust in the Lord and do good; Dwell in the land and cultivate faithfulness.”

PSALMS 37:3, NASB

Leaders need to lead from **HERE**.

Dwell in the Land.

Every leader I know wants to move the ball down the field, attain the next level, and push the organization forward. But one problem with being exclusively focused on getting **THERE** is that we can miss a lot of what is **HERE**.

Be where you are.

I'm learning that there are multiple things God **CAN'T** move you on from until you learn the lessons of **HERE**. You need to finish **THIS** work. You need to love **THESE** people. You need to learn to pray about **THESE** things. You need to acknowledge Him in all of your ways - **HERE**. You don't need to (or get to) skip ahead in the movie. Play **THIS** scene. Play with all of the wisdom you have, trusting a good God to lead you to the next place when this season is completed.

PART 3: DWELL IN THE LAND

- When you finally graduate, will you miss some of the leisure time you enjoy now?
- When you're married, will you miss the freedom of here?
- When you have more money, will you miss the simple time of having to trust God and seeing Him creatively and miraculously come through?
- When your kids are older, will you miss their childlike wonder?
- When you're not sick anymore, will you miss the sense of dependency you grew to have on the nearness of Jesus?
- When you finally get the promotion, will you miss some of the people you work with now?
- When your kids have moved, will you miss their funny jokes and timely encouragement?
- When you get THERE, will you miss the rich, thick, unmerited blessings of what was HERE?

**There is always more wonderful happening
HERE than we tend to focus on.**

PART 3: DWELL IN THE LAND

Whatever is going on, and whatever you don't have, there is a ton of blessing that God has already poured into your life. Even in great trial, I have to remind myself, "Self, you have it pretty great right here. With all of the problems, questions, inconveniences, etc. - the lines have still fallen to you in pleasant places."

And I've found that thinking that through almost instantly improves my outlook. Everything gets easier to bear when we're thankful for what is true right now. Or to put it in the form of a question,

"What will I miss about NOW when I finally achieve that goal?"

Now, what about you? Do you not know what to do? Whatever you do, Trust God, and Dwell in the Land.

What impossible to control circumstance do you need to point to and say, "God is God over THIS and He'll deliver me when it is time"?

At some point, you're going to achieve your next big goal, season, or outcome. But when you do, THIS time will be gone. Appreciate THIS RIGHT HERE and ask yourself, "When that happens, what will I miss about NOW?"

LEADERSHIP
You can only lead from HERE. Leaders cannot be where they're not, but they can miss a lot of the good (and joy, and replenishment, and solace) that is RIGHT HERE by being too focused on what is next.

LESSON

PART 3: DWELL IN THE LAND

PRAY IT

Father God - You show me favor all day, every day. Even amidst the difficulties of life right now, thank you for surrounding me with the abundance that I currently enjoy. Please help me to sip the moments I am in, to enjoy the people around me, and to access Your grace to be HERE with an attitude of grateful worship.

PART FOUR

**CULTIVATE
FAITHFULNESS**

4

PART 4: CULTIVATE FAITHFULNESS

To keep the wind in our sails, leaders need to celebrate the success of FAITHFULNESS, even before the fruit of that faithfulness is visible to others.

Here is what I'm finding in my leadership journey:

- Passion can cause us to covet the RESULTS of faithful wisdom and execution instead of the faithful wisdom and execution ITSELF.
- Drive can cause us to take on too much too quickly.
- And ambition, for all its power to help us accomplish great things for God, can also be a subtle SABOTEUR, not only of our motives but of our peace, as well.

Here is the truth: God's dream for us will always really be about faithfully improving the lives of others. Higher position is about stewardship, not status.

Thank God for Psalms 37:3 - a God-sent antidote for chaos and discontent.

“Trust in the Lord and do good; Dwell in the land and cultivate faithfulness.”

PSALMS 37:3, NASB

PART 4: CULTIVATE FAITHFULNESS

In the context of Psalms 37:3, “cultivate” means to take care of, guard, and improve faithfulness.

Cultivating faithfulness means **SHOWING UP** in our hearts and attitude, even when the work is tedious, because we know it is seen and will pay off!

After 13 years of devaluing, betrayals, and false accusations, Joseph was finally exalted to the incredible position of prime minister of Egypt (see Genesis 41:40).

But what he’d really attained was another context in which to cultivate faithfulness. He’d been being faithful the whole time.

- As his father’s errand boy.
- As Potiphar’s servant.
- As the most responsible administrator in Potiphar’s dungeon.
- As a witness to God’s power among the other prisoners.
- And he had done all of this while faithfully, and trustingly, enduring great difficulty and injustice.

He didn’t **BECOME** faithful when he was finally promoted to the second highest office in the land, he had been demonstrating faithfulness for **THE PREVIOUS DECADE AND A HALF** (if we count his time as Jacob’s errand boy).

PART 4: CULTIVATE FAITHFULNESS

He didn't BECOME faithful when he was finally promoted to the second highest office in the land, he had been demonstrating faithfulness for THE PREVIOUS DECADE AND A HALF (if we count his time as Jacob's errand boy).

In his book, *Visioneering*, Andy Stanley tells the story of his father Charles Stanley's success during a significantly difficult season.

When did my dad become successful? I know when he became famous. But when was he successful? The day he embraced the vision God gave him for his life. He was successful long before he was known. His success/faithfulness in those early years is what enabled him to enjoy the rewards of his success during these latter years. But he is no more successful now, in God's eyes, than he was then.

(Andy Stanley, "Visioneering", pg. 47)

**Wherever we are today, like Joseph, our job is to
SHOW UP and serve FAITHFULLY.**

- Faithfully endure this difficulty.
- Faithfully trust God.
- Faithfully improve the lives of others.
- Faithfully change those diapers, knowing God sees you.
- Faithfully write those thank you cards.

PART 4: CULTIVATE FAITHFULNESS

- Faithfully encourage your spouse, even when it seems like it isn't helping.
- Faithfully use your leadership gifts and position to help people. Don't just allow people to serve you - find ways to make people's lives easier!

Are you wondering what to do? Be FAITHFUL RIGHT HERE.

Where is God calling you to be faithful with a confidence that He wastes nothing, and will use your obedience for His ultimate purposes?

LEADERSHIP

To keep the wind in our sails, leaders need to celebrate the success of FAITHFULNESS, even before the fruit of that faithfulness is visible to others.

LESSON

PRAY IT

Holy Spirit, sometimes the work seems so monotonous. Even so, You have given me GOOD work to be faithful with. Help me celebrate by faith that faithfulness IS success. Help me SHOW UP in my heart and attitude, even when the work is tedious, because it is seen and will pay off!