

# Building a Devoted Relationship with God and Prioritizing Excellence

Devotion Excellence Divine Guidance

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## Basic Information

- Date & Time: 2024-04-18 19:06:45
- Location: Oasis Bible Training Center
- Instructor: Steve Porter
- Title: Intro to the Deeper Life Part 3



## Summary

In this teaching, Steve Porter shares a key principle for cultivating a deep spiritual life: building God a house of devotion. He emphasizes the importance of coming to the Lord in devotional time before going out to do ministry. Like Mary who sat at Jesus' feet, we must prioritize listening to God's voice and absorbing His revelation.

Steve vulnerably shares how being too busy in ministry led him to burnout and negatively impacted his family. He exhorts us to involve ourselves only in the ministry activities God has truly called us to, and to do those with excellence. We irritate others when we don't spend time in God's presence.

Key points: • Come to Jesus before you go out to minister • Make your devotional time with God a top priority • Don't be so busy serving that you miss Jesus speaking to you • Lay your ministry activities before the Lord and only do what He calls you to • Serve

with excellence and put your whole heart into what God has anointed • Cultivating intimacy with Jesus will lead to fruitful, sustainable ministry

This foundational message will help align your priorities, avoid burnout, and develop a thriving ministry that flows from the secret place. It's time to build your house of devotion!

## Knowledge Points

### 1. The importance of building a personal devotion to God as the foundation for a fruitful and anointed ministry, while maintaining healthy relationships and priorities.

- **Creating a family atmosphere** The speaker expresses a desire to create a family atmosphere for online participants, emphasizing inclusivity and a sense of belonging.
- **Invitation to share location** Participants are encouraged to comment with their location, city, state, or country, to foster a sense of community.
- **Upcoming conference announcement** Details of an upcoming conference from May 3rd to the 5th are shared, with an invitation for participants to attend. More info: [www.oasisbible.org](http://www.oasisbible.org)
- **Prayer for presence and transformation** The speaker prays for God's presence in the classroom and for the transformation of lives through the spoken words.
- **Dependence on divine guidance** The speaker acknowledges their reliance on God for the ability to speak with anointing and for the message to resonate with listeners.
- **House of devotion** The concept of building a house of devotion to God is emphasized as a foundation for being built a house of ministry in return.

- **Dangers of idolizing ministry** The speaker warns against making ministry an idol and prioritizing it over relationships with God, family, and personal well-being.
- **Prioritizing relationships** A hierarchy of priorities is suggested: God first, followed by spouse, children, and then ministry.
- **Consequences of neglect in ministry families** The speaker discusses the negative impact on children of pastors and missionaries when they are neglected in favor of ministry work.
- **Ministering unto Jesus** The importance of ministering unto Jesus and not just pursuing ministry for personal gain or recognition is highlighted.
- **Divine calling into ministry** The speaker differentiates between self-calling into ministry and being called by God, emphasizing the importance of the latter.
- **Receiving and sharing revelation** The process of receiving revelation from God and then sharing it with others is described as a way to ensure that one's ministry is impactful.
- **Anointing on words and life** The speaker expresses a desire for an anointing on their words, life, marriage, and family to ensure a fruitful ministry.
- **Healthy marriages and fruitful ministries** The goal of having healthy marriages and fruitful ministries is presented as an outcome of proper fellowship with the Lord.
- **Coming to the Lord before being sent** The necessity of coming to the Lord and receiving His approval before being sent out to minister is emphasized.

**2. The importance of maintaining a healthy balance between ministry work and personal life to avoid burnout and prioritize relationships.**

- **Importance of balance in ministry** The speaker emphasizes the need to maintain a balance between ministry work and personal life to avoid burnout.
- **Consequences of overworking** The speaker shares a personal experience of hospitalization due to exhaustion from overworking in ministry.
- **Difference between good things and God things** The speaker distinguishes between doing good deeds and doing what God specifically calls one to do.
- **The necessity of self-care** The speaker stresses that taking care of one's health is essential and should not be neglected for ministry work.
- **Learning to say no** The speaker discusses the importance of setting boundaries and being able to refuse additional responsibilities.
- **Prioritizing family** The speaker regrets neglecting family due to ministry work and highlights the importance of family time.
- **Seeking God's guidance** The speaker talks about the importance of being in the secret place to discern God's will and to receive His anointing.
- **Impact of anointed word versus information** The speaker believes that only an anointed word from God can bring change, not just mere information.
- **Importance of hearing from God** The speaker references John the Baptist, who first heard the word of God before speaking it to others.
- **Adjusting schedules to prevent burnout** The speaker realized the need to change his schedule to prevent overworking and maintain health.

- **Dealing with disappointment from others** The speaker acknowledges that saying no can lead to disappointment from others but it is necessary for self-preservation.
- **Valuing personal relationships** The speaker plans to prioritize his wife and family, including taking trips and attending events together.
- **Learning from past mistakes** The speaker reflects on past experiences and emphasizes the importance of learning from them.
- **Celebrating family occasions** The speaker mentions shutting down his ministry event to celebrate Mother's Day with his family.
- **Expressing love and appreciation** The speaker intends to spoil his wife with gifts as a form of appreciation.

### **3. The importance of prioritizing one's relationship with God and family over busyness and good deeds, and the value of spending time in prayer and devotion to receive God's guidance and maintain spiritual health.**

- **Importance of Prioritizing God and Family** The speaker emphasizes the importance of not letting good deeds and busyness interfere with one's relationship with God and family.
- **Balance in Commitments** A balanced approach is encouraged, avoiding both extreme laziness and overcommitment.
- **God's Calling** Individuals should focus on what God has called them to do and be present where God wants them to be.

- **Eternal Rewards** The speaker mentions that rewards in heaven will be given for both outward service and one's upward relationship with God.
- **Interpretation of Song of Solomon** The speaker interprets Song of Solomon 1:5-6 as a caution against overworking and neglecting one's own spiritual 'vineyard'.
- **Devotional Time with God** The importance of spending time alone with God is stressed, with a warning against being too busy to do so.
- **Personal Prayer Time** The speaker suggests that the time of day for prayer is less important than the act of praying itself.
- **Effects of Neglecting Prayer** Not praying can lead to irritability, carnality, and a sense of spiritual emptiness.
- **Cultivating Closeness with God** A close relationship with God requires time and must be cultivated consistently.
- **Prayer and Discernment** Spending time in God's presence can provide discernment and preparation for encounters throughout the day.
- **Come Before You Go** The speaker highlights the principle of coming to God before going out to do His work.
- **Anointing in God's Work** It is important to engage in work that God is anointing rather than self-directed projects.
- **Excellence in Service** Whatever work is done for God should be done with excellence and a wholehearted effort.
- **Story of Mary and Martha** The biblical story of Mary and Martha is used to illustrate the importance of choosing the 'better part,' which is spending time with Jesus.
- **Avoiding Overcommitment** The speaker advises against overcommitting to activities and becoming stressed, which can lead to missing out on time with Jesus.

#### 4. The importance of prioritizing spiritual focus and seeking divine guidance before engaging in work or ministry to avoid distraction and burnout.

- **Distractions and Priorities** The speaker emphasizes the importance of not being pulled away by distractions and instead focusing on what is most important.
- **Mary and Martha's Example** The speaker refers to the biblical story of Mary and Martha to illustrate the value of being undistracted and choosing to focus on Jesus.
- **The Greatest Choice** Mary's choice to sit at Jesus' feet is highlighted as the greatest choice, which should not be belittled.
- **The Need for Workers** While acknowledging the need for workers, the speaker stresses that the type of work and the approach to it are crucial.
- **Seeking Direction Before Action** The speaker advocates for the importance of seeking God's direction before engaging in work or ministry.
- **Avoiding Burnout** The speaker warns against wearing oneself out and potentially ruining one's family by being overly busy without seeking God's guidance.
- **Choosing a Ministry Approach** The speaker presents a choice between a 'Mary ministry' focused on being with Jesus and a 'Martha ministry' focused on constant activity.
- **Laying at Jesus' Feet** The speaker suggests that laying at Jesus' feet and asking for His guidance should be the first step in ministry.
- **Obedience to God's Call** The speaker mentions specific ministries and activities as examples of obeying God's call after seeking His will.

- **Expectation of Mighty Things** The speaker expresses an expectation that mighty things will happen when actions are taken after seeking and following Jesus' direction.

**5. The main theme is the importance of building a devoted relationship with God, seeking His will, and living a life of excellence in accordance with divine guidance, while also praying for others and believing in God's intervention and protection.**

- **Building a house of devotion to God** The speaker emphasizes the importance of creating a devoted space for God as a foundation for a deeper life in Christ.
- **Seeking God's will** The teaching encourages asking God for His will in one's life and to follow it with excellence.
- **Doing things with excellence** The importance of putting one's whole heart into actions and doing them with excellence is highlighted.
- **God's multiplication of efforts** The speaker suggests that when one does God's will with excellence, God will multiply their efforts.
- **Listening to God's directions** The importance of listening to God to receive directions for life is stressed.
- **Avoiding busyness** The speaker warns against being too busy to hear God's revelations.
- **Cultivating intimacy with God** The teaching talks about the need to cultivate a close relationship with God.
- **Ministries affecting nations** The prayer includes a desire for the listeners' ministries to have a global impact.
- **Presence of God in the room** The speaker prays for the manifest presence of God to fill the room where the online students are.



- **Quicken and stir by God** The teaching prays for the students to be quickened and stirred by God.
- **Forgetting the speaker's words** The speaker asks that if their words are not from God, the students should forget them.
- **Prayer for a family in need** The speaker and another person pray for a family facing health and loss issues, asking for divine intervention.
- **Protection and breakthrough** The prayer includes asking for protection and breakthrough for the family in distress.
- **Restraint order against the enemy** The speaker metaphorically issues a restraint order against Satan, rebuking him from the family's life.

## ? Questions

1. How can you tell the difference between doing "good things" for God and doing "God things" that He has specifically called you to do?
2. In what ways might an excessive focus on ministry lead to neglecting your relationship with God and your family?
3. How do you balance the importance of serving in ministry with the need for rest and self-care?
4. What are some signs that you may be becoming "married to the ministry" at the expense of your other relationships?
5. How can consistently spending devotional time with God impact the fruitfulness and sustainability of your ministry?
6. What practical steps can you take to prioritize your devotional life amidst the demands of daily life and ministry?

7. How might God's anointing and approval on your ministry be affected by whether you are serving out of your own strength or out of intimacy with Him?
8. In what ways can burnout in ministry be avoided by learning to say "no" to activities God hasn't called you to?
9. How can you cultivate a listening posture before God to receive His specific directives for your life and ministry?
10. What might it look like to serve in ministry with "excellence" and putting your whole heart into what God has anointed you to do?
11. How can a lack of intimate prayer life affect your personal character and the way you relate to others?
12. In what ways might "building God a house of devotion" be even more important than "building God a house of ministry"?
13. How can you tell if you are being a "Mary" who prioritizes sitting at Jesus' feet or a "Martha" who is distracted by busyness?
14. What are some indications that you are truly ministering out of the "overflow" of your relationship with God?
15. How might regularly practicing the presence of God transform the impact and reach of your ministry over the long haul?

## **Quotes**

1. "If you build God a house of devotion, He will build you a house of ministry." – Walter Beuttler
2. "When you spend time in the manifest presence of the Lord, He fills you with your marching orders for the day. Suddenly, discernment comes, and you're aware through the word of knowledge that you are going to meet someone. You're already prepared because the Lord has spoken to you that morning, and then you meet that person and minister out of the overflow of what happened in your time with the Lord."
3. "Come before you go. Picture Jesus saying, 'Come to me.' As you come to the Lord, He will then send you. But you're not going to be sent alone; you're going to be sent WITH Him."
4. "Mary had discovered the greatest hidden treasure of all. It's far better to discover how awesome Jesus is and spend time with Him, hearing what He has to say in every moment, than to miss out on hearing His voice."
5. "We need workers who will come before they go. That's where it's at. We need Marthas who will first lay at Jesus' feet, find out what God is telling them to do, and then go with Jesus. We don't need people wearing themselves out and ruining their families just because 'we need more (Marthas) workers.' It says Mary has chosen the greatest; don't diminish this truth."

## **Assignments**

1. Write down the importance of both outward and upward calls.

2. Spend time alone with the Lord and do not cut out Jesus from your daily routine.
3. Find out what God is anointing and engage in that work with excellence.
4. Read your notes and 2 books