

Are You Selling Your Kingdom Effectiveness for the Price of a Cookie?

Most of us struggle with what our calling or purpose really is or should be. We search high and low for God's will when we need to be searching for Him. From an early age I had hints of my calling, road signs along my journey. These hints of God's design always lived in me. It just took time for them to be put to use to create the new creature I was designed by God to be. I had to surrender to His design. That took a lot of time and a lot of giving up of the things I was giving in to.

His desire for me and for you is that we "may have life, and that [you] may have it more abundantly" (John 10:10). However, there is a huge stumbling block to us obtaining this. We have an enemy, a thief, who also has a mission. That mission is to steal, kill or destroy my destiny and the destinies of all God's children.

Obstacles

Satan is powerless unless we give the keys of our lives over to him. Most of us don't knowingly give him access to our home, that place that is supposed to be reserved for the Holy Spirit.

"What? Do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God, and that you are not your own? You were bought with a price. Therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor. 6:19-20).

God owns us, but allows us to steward our time, resources and our bodies. We have freedom of choice given to us by our

Master. That gives the evil one full reign to tempt us. God tells us He will help us in our times of temptation (1 Cor. 10:13). Many times, though, I didn't want His help. I wanted to give in to temptation. I willfully did that time and time again.

Called to Write

As a child, I knew I would one day write a book. Back then, I wouldn't have termed it a "calling." I would have said it was a dream, but it never went away. It followed me throughout my life. The dream became defined as a book that would make a difference.

Little did I know, that dream would begin by me writing my own life story, *Sweet Grace: How I Lost 250 Pounds and Stopped Trying to Earn God's Favor. GoFavor.* When I was dreaming about writing a book and mapping out my life plan, weighing 430 pounds was never a part of that. I don't think it was God's plan either. I fell into the evil one's tempting snare of delicious foods, which became an addiction and nearly took my life. The devil was laughing the whole way through.

What Satan meant for evil, though, God used for His good (Rom. 8:28; Gen. 50:20). God, in His grace and mercy, was faithful to keep calling me back to Him and the path He had for me.

During a prayer time in January of 2013, God showed me it was time for me to write the book and it was to be my story. I had gone through hell and back. I'd gained an enormous amount of weight and lost it. Thinking about writing a true story about my biggest mess in life made me feel naked, exposed and very vulnerable.

Going Through Temptation

God had a calling on my life, but first I had to come through the fire. My temptation time was over 30 years long. I wasn't as quick to understand that temptation comes before a person

can step into his or her calling. Jesus got that memo, though, because He came through His temptations with flying colors. His first one was similar to what got me stuck for 30 years. It took Jesus no time at all to overcome it.

He had fasted for 40 days and He was hungry (Matt. 4:2). The devil told Him to change the stones on the ground into loaves of bread to prove that He was the Son of God. Jesus gave a profound answer. He said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God'" (Matt. 4:4).

Jesus did not even entertain the idea of giving into His physical hunger. In that one answer, He summed up why we need to have a constant, sweet hunger for God. God feeds our souls. He keeps us alive. He sustains us. Obedience to Him helps us move and navigate through our lives.

Calling Tested

In our lives, there are glorious times when we hear God and feel His anointing power guiding us into our calling. The strength of that calling will be tested. Will we endure the temptation, trial or difficulty or will we give up and abandon our call?

The thing that will get us through is understanding how important it is to hang on to God's promises. Even if we fail and give into temptation that doesn't mean our calling is revoked. It just means God has to tweak the timeline.

God has a purpose for each of us. It started before we were born when He planned every part of us and wrote the book about our lives (Ps. 139:16). He wants us to succeed even more than we do. He is the one who knows exactly what we are uniquely designed to do.

We can't let the devil's temptations steal, kill or destroy our effectiveness in the kingdom for the price of a cookie. We

are worth more than that. God's kingdom is worth more than that. {eoa}

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