

# Why We Shouldn't 'Fly by the Seat of Our Pants' for Christ

For a large portion of my life, I, and perhaps many others, might have characterized me as a “fly by the seat of my pants” type of guy. Now, there’s a phrase that the younger generation probably hasn’t embraced.

Some might call that spontaneous, while others may describe it as ill-equipped or perhaps even downright irresponsible. No matter how you look at it, the moniker doesn’t exactly carry the most endearing of connotations.

As I have spiritually matured, so has that part of my personality. And recently, I have begun to receive many messages—whether through sermons, books or articles I have read and posted on and —about the importance of preparation. If I am to move to the next level in all facets of my life and my ministry, “flying by the seat of my pants” simply isn’t going to cut it anymore.

Throughout the Bible, we encounter many specific examples of how God prepared certain individuals to reach their destiny in Him. One of the first and most memorable of these is Joseph.

Here was a young man who, like his father Jacob, loved God. But Joseph’s personality contained a couple of pitfalls—overconfidence and a lack of tact (see Gen. 37). His brashness eventually cost him when his brothers conspired against him and sold him into slavery. God knew He could eventually use Joseph; but Joseph required a strong dose of humility and refinement. We don’t know exactly how long Joseph spent in prison, but it was 13 years before Joseph began to fulfill God’s ultimate destiny for him. That’s a lot of prep time.

Yet, when Pharaoh called Joseph out of the dungeon (Gen.

41:14), Joseph was ready for almost anything because of his right relationship with God.

Then there is Moses, who grew up as an Egyptian prince and where servants did many things for him. Once again, we see an example of the absence of humility.

Circumstances, however, changed drastically and Moses took on the life of a Midianite shepherd, a job he was taught to despise. God began to prepare him for leadership, learning about the ways of the people he eventually would lead out of bondage in Egypt and also about life in the wilderness (Exodus chapters 2 and 3). Moses didn't fully appreciate the lesson God began to teach him, but God was getting him ready for a huge undertaking. That's some preparation. You know the rest of the story.

And what about the apostle Paul? After his "Damascus Road Experience" in Acts 9, do you think the man who was then called Saul possessed the knowledge of God and the skills to preach to the masses? Certainly not. Galatians 1:15-20 reveals, *"But when it pleased God, who set me apart since I was in my mother's womb and called me by His grace to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach Him among the nations, I did not immediately confer flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me. But I went to Arabia and returned again to Damascus. After three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter and stayed with him for fifteen days. I saw none of the other apostles except James, the Lord's brother. In what I am writing to you, before God, I do not lie!"* (MEV)

Paul spent three years of preparation for His ministry. It's a little less time than most spend to obtain a bachelor's degree from a four-year collegiate institution. This period included time alone with God, as well as time conferring with other Christ followers. It was 14 years (Galatians 2:1) before Paul returned to Jerusalem with Barnabas and Titus to defend the

gospel.

So as you can see, some of God's greatest warriors needed time—some many years—to prepare for what God had in store for them. Often Christians, in their zeal, want to begin a full-time ministry without investing the necessary time studying the Bible and learning from qualified teachers. Certainly we can share Christ with others, but we need more preparation before embarking on the special ministry God has for us.

Years prior to my employment at Charisma Media, I spoke many times of my desire to work for God. When I got the job nearly four years ago, my brother and spiritual mentor, Kevin, told me my hiring here was the fulfillment of years of speaking it into my life. While I spoke it, God continued to prepare me for His plan. Daily, He continues to mold me for the plans he has for me—as long as I am obedient to His Word, stay in that Word and pursue a strong relationship with Him.

Like Joseph, Moses and Paul, God wants the same for you. He wants you as His follower to make an impact on the kingdom. He's no respecter of persons—Joseph, Moses and Paul are no more special than you are. Don't ever let the enemy make you believe you are inferior.

But, it takes effort on our part, and it takes preparation of our hearts and minds to fulfill the destiny God has for us. Remember Ephesians 2:10, *"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, so that we should walk in them"* (MEV).

And as I always like to say, "there is that." {eo}