

CHAPTER 25

HOW TO TAKE THE CONFUSION AND FRUSTRATION OUT OF LIFE

- I. HAVE YOU EVER BEEN TO A MOVIE WHEN SUDDENLY THE PROJECTOR BECAME ERRATIC AND THE FILM RACED FORWARD AT HIGH SPEED?
- A. Remember how the actors on the screen darted to and fro, and the picture became jumbled, chaotic and confused?
 - B. The whole affair reminded you of a busy anthill with people bumping into each other in a mad rush to get nowhere.
 - C. To just think about the clatter and rapid movement leaves one reeling, exhausted and tired.
- II. HOW TYPICAL THIS ILLUSTRATION TO OUR EVERYDAY LIVES.
- A. Without goals or a purpose for living, our actions tend to be hurried, fast-paced and hectic.
 - B. We tend to do things by fits and starts — stopping and going, backing up and launching forward in different directions.
 - C. We begin a task, but rarely see it to completion — and if we finish the job, it's usually mediocre and second-rate.
 - D. Except for a few habits that regulate our lives, each day is spent in bewilderment and confusion — reaching out for something to bring joy, happiness and success.
 - E. Or we can do just the opposite — plod along at a snail's pace, accomplishing little and getting nowhere.
- III. WHAT ABOUT YOUR LIFE?
- A. Is there a lack of clear purpose?
 - B. Do you have a plan?
 - C. When starting your day, do you have trouble deciding what to do first, and how to use your time?
 - D. Do you feel a deep inner frustration and disgust for failing to accomplish what you want to do, and know that you should?
 - E. Is your low self-esteem reflected in your living environment with things helter-skelter and lying in disarray?
 - F. Do you lack the drive and forcefulness to venture out and reach for new horizons (or "accept new challenges")?
- IV. THE PURPOSE OF THIS LECTURE IS TO EXPLAIN HOW TO ORGANIZE YOUR LIFE, ELIMINATE CONFUSION, AND BE A PRODUCTIVE, FRUIT-BEARING MEMBER OF GOD'S CHURCH.
- A. But first, let's examine some of the hidden causes of failure and frustration:
 - 1. Patterns of laziness, carelessness and apathy carried over from our childhood environment.
 - 2. Self-pity and the tendency to shift the blame to others for our failure in life.
 - 3. Failure to set goals, raise our standards, and improve our chances for advanced opportunity.
 - 4. Comparing our lives to others and feeling we've been shortchanged and cheated.
 - 5. A general lack of self-discipline and drive, being conquered and controlled by circumstances, our own weaknesses, and the fear of what others may think of us.
 - 6. Failure to walk with God and keep Him at the center.
 - 7. Guilt and related emotions which are the result of giving into our flesh, the world and Satan.
 - 8. An overall sense of frustration because we're not married, don't have a good job, or a promising career.
 - 9. Failure to develop our God-given talents and abilities that cry out for fulfillment.
 - 10. A total preoccupation with self and neglecting to love our fellowman.

V. WHERE TO BEGIN:

A. In order to understand how to cope with frustration, we need to consider three vital principles.

B. We must realize that:

1. MAN INNATELY NEEDS GOD.

a. He was created incomplete, needing the life and added power of God's Holy Spirit.

(1) Romans 8:9,16 = "...Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.... The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God."

(2) I John 3:24 = "...and hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us."

b. Because man has sinned and cut himself off from God, he must be reconciled and forgiven, if he's to experience peace of mind and a happy life.

(1) Isaiah 59:1-2 = "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear."

(2) Isaiah 55:6-7 = "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon."

(3) II Chron. 7:14 = "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land."

(4) See also Ephesians 2:1-6,16.

c. Only God, then, can satisfy the universal hunger and thirst in man.

(1) John 4:10-15 = (A description of the living water that quenches.)

(2) John 6:28-35; 47-58 = (A description of the bread that satisfies.)

d. Even though man may enjoy a measure of success in his cut-off state, the need for God haunts him continually.

e. True happiness and lasting success can never come until man repents and turns to God with his whole heart.

2. TO ENJOY AN ABUNDANT LIFE, YOU MUST GROW AND ADVANCE TO HIGHER LEVELS.

a. This principle applies to both the spiritual and physical realms.

b. God never intended that we remain static, but rather has placed within man an inherent desire to grow — to progress onward and upward to higher plateaus.

c. This growth principle is revealed in the whole of creation as seen in the sprouting of the seed or the birth of a child — life starts small and grows to maturity.

d. God revealed this success formula to Adam in the Garden of Eden.

(1) Genesis 2:8,15 = "God told Adam to dress it and keep it."

(2) This law involved two key points necessary for his happiness and success:

(a) "To dress it" involves growth progress — moving onward, outward and upward.

(b) "To keep it" involves preserving and maintaining what he had achieved (see Rev. 3:11).

e. Frustration results when we do not grow.

3. THAT THE SPIRITUAL MUST SUPERSEDE, OVERRIDE AND REGULATE THE PHYSICAL.

a. To reverse this order is to put the cart before the horse.

b. As begotten sons, we should superimpose God's Word and His will over everything we do.

c. Earthly happiness and success are only temporary — unless we're walking with God and tuned in to His wavelength as an ongoing way of life.

d. When the physical is in control, we lose contact with the only true source that can produce peace and happiness — God Himself.

VI. STEPS TO TAKE IN ORGANIZING YOUR LIFE.

A. Fourteen steps:

1. Make the Kingdom of God your master motive.

a. This is our purpose, our calling, our hope.

b. God has set this goal for us.

(1) Matthew 6:33 = "Seek ye first the kingdom of God.... "

- (2) Col. 3:1-2 = "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth."
- c. The desire for the kingdom must come first, and should be the catalyst that propels you forward.
- d. If you forfeit eternal life for the fleeting pleasures of this world, what have you gained in the end? (Matt. 16:25-26.)
- e. In seeking the kingdom, four things are essential:
- (1) Fervent prayer.
 - (2) Diligent Bible study.
 - (3) Deep thought and meditation.
 - (4) Wholehearted obedience.
2. Conform to the image and teachings of Christ.
- a. This point is vital because God the Father has commanded us to become like His Son.
- b. Christ is the model, the pattern and the standard of how God wants us to live.
- c. He is the door to the Father's throne (John 10:7-9).
- d. Note these scriptures:
- (1) Romans 8:29 = "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren."
 - (2) II Cor. 3:18 = "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."
 - (3) Ephesians 4:11-13 = "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."
 - (4) Col. 3:9-10 = "Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him."
- e. As we follow Christ and obey His Word, we will grow in the likeness and perfection of the Father (Matthew 5:48).
- f. It's very important to study Christ's life and conform to His image if we are to fulfill the Father's great purpose.
- g. True, lasting success cannot be achieved if we overlook this vital element.
3. Guard against the forces of evil.
- a. There are three common enemies we must fight:
- (1) Human nature and its downward pulls.
 - (2) The world and its powerful influences.
 - (3) The devil and his wiles.
- b. If we succumb to these forces, we will become guilt-ridden and lose contact with God.
- c. We can never be happy and find success in trying to serve two masters.
- d. God demands our total love, loyalty and dedication.
- e. Misery and frustration will be our lot if we don't give God first place in our lives.
- f. Resist these enemies with all your might and don't give in to the forces of evil.
4. Start ruling your life.
- a. After putting God and spiritual things first, your next step is to take charge of your life — immediately!
- b. In other words, start experiencing success — NOW.
- c. With grit and determination, face up to your responsibilities.
- d. Fall in line and get tough on yourself.
- e. The place to begin is where you are now!
- (1) Start with your surroundings and living environment.
 - (a) Organize your closets, kitchen cabinets, bookshelves, desk.
 - (b) Vacuum the apartment, wash the car.
 - (c) Scrub the shower, repair torn furniture, iron clothes that have been stashed away.

- (2) Make a list of the jobs you've been putting off.
 - (a) writing your parents.
 - (b) Catching up on the *PLAIN TRUTH*, *GOOD NEWS*, booklets, etc.
 - (c) Fixing the leaky faucet.
 - (3) Identify the hangups that are holding you back.
 - (a) Procrastination — allowing little, nagging jobs to accumulate.
 - (b) Sleeping in late.
 - (c) Gluttony, laziness, creature comforts, etc.
 - f. Get with it, don't delay — come to grips with your problems.
 - g. Remember that success in everyday, small things is very important to give you courage and confidence in tackling the bigger jobs.
5. Begin to set goals.
- a. Having put your priorities in order — the spiritual first and the physical second — you must set goals.
 - b. Why are goals necessary?
 - (1) You cannot grow or succeed without goals — you will inevitably waste time, go in circles, and accomplish little.
 - (2) Having no goals will reinforce your sense of failure — resulting in discouragement, frustration, and contempt for self.
 - (3) Goals provide purpose, direction and motivation in life.
 - c. What should be your goals?
 - (1) Only you personally can decide this question.
 - (2) Set aside time to think it through.
 - (3) Ask yourself candidly:
 - (a) What do I really want to do with my life?
 - (b) What are my talents, skills and strengths?
 - (c) What do I enjoy as a challenge?
 - (d) What do I enjoy doing in my spare time?
 - (e) If I had my choice of any job in the world, what would it be?
 - (4) Ask God's help and guidance in crystallizing your goals — to truly seek His Will in doing what's best.
 - (a) Prov. 3:6 = "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and *he shall direct thy paths.*"
 - (b) Prov. 16:3 = "Commit thy works unto the Lord, and *thy thoughts shall be established.*"
 - d. There are five basic types of goals — all of which are requisite to leading a successful life.
 - (1) Long-term goals. (To be fulfilled in five years or more.) Here are some examples:
 - (a) To have established a meaningful career.
 - (b) To have paid off all debts, with money in the bank.
 - (c) To have gotten married and established a home and family.
 - (d) To have mastered the basic doctrines of the Church.
 - (e) To have traveled around the world.
 - (2) Intermediate goals. (To be fulfilled in six months to five years.) For instance:
 - (a) To successfully complete my job training.
 - (b) To learn to sew, to do needlepoint, to cook.
 - (c) To become an expert in some subject.
 - (d) To learn to play and become proficient in a musical instrument.
 - (e) To read the Bible through.
 - (3) Short-term goals. (To be fulfilled from the present to the next six months.) Such as:
 - (a) To improve in vocabulary and writing ability.
 - (b) To take a short night course on some subject that will upgrade my life or skills.
 - (c) To lose weight, go on an exercise program, and get myself in top physical shape.
 - (d) To read a book I've been putting off.
 - (4) Daily goals.
 - (a) This involves a list of seven to ten main tasks to be accomplished for each day.
 - (b) It's extremely important to write these down each night before retiring so that you will have a clear picture of what to do the next day.

- (c) Tie each day's goals into your other goals and ultimate purpose.
 - (d) These daily goals will give you immediate direction and incentive.
- (5) Micro goals.
- (a) These are specific goals to be accomplished from minute-to-minute or from hour-to-hour.
 - (b) Setting these little hourly goals will infuse into your life drive and motivation.
 - (c) They will give you a sense of having reached new milestones.
 - (d) Attaining micro goals will help to instill two vital by-products:
 - 1. A sense of confidence and self-respect.
 - 2. A sense of achievement, satisfaction and success.
 - (e) Through the daily attainment of goals, you will eventually establish powerful success patterns or habits that will carry over into every area of your life.
6. Write down your goals.
- a. This is a prime necessity to becoming a success.
 - b. Writing down your goals will serve several purposes:
 - (1) Provide a blueprint to see where you're going.
 - (2) Provide a means of daily review and reinforcement.
 - (3) Provide a reminder to keep you on track.
 - (4) Provide an incentive to seek counsel, knowledge and ideas that will help you attain your goals.
 - c. Without a clear statement of goals you will flounder and fail in a vortex of confusion.
 - d. Rehearse and review — go over and over your blueprint of life until it becomes deeply ingrained in your mind.
7. Make a list of all required duties.
- a. The purpose for this exercise is to acquaint you with the demands placed on your time.
 - b. This list should include only the bare-bone requirements.
 - (1) Prayer, study, grooming.
 - (2) Cooking, cleaning, shopping.
 - (3) Working, eating, sleeping.
 - (4) Exercise, recreation, etc.
 - c. Such a list will enable you to determine how much time remains from each day to pursue your major goals.
 - d. Wisely invest this leftover time.
8. Eliminate the non-essentials.
- a. Take note of your life and pinpoint all time-wasting practices.
 - b. The Bible commands, "*Lay aside every weight that so easily besets us...*" (Heb. 12:1).
 - c. You can easily bog down in useless trivia.
 - d. Control or cast aside the following time wasters:
 - (1) TV — watch it sparingly.
 - (2) Daydreaming and idle thoughts.
 - (3) Worrying.
 - (4) Senseless arguing.
 - (5) Nursing resentment and a bad attitude.
 - (6) Long and needless telephone conversations.
 - (7) Doing things by fits and starts.
 - (8) Procrastination.
 - (9) Mental laziness and forgetfulness.
 - (10) General confusion and chaos in living life.
 - (11) Indecision.
 - (12) Disorganized living conditions.
 - (13) Inconsistency.
 - (14) Idle conversation.
 - (15) Worthless reading.
 - (16) Doing things the hard way — not the sensible way.

- e. As a reminder, keep God in your thoughts and review your goals daily.
 - (1) This practice will encourage you to eliminate waste.
 - (2) It will indelibly write your goals in your mind.
 - (3) It will help to create the desire to achieve them.
- 9. Don't try to accomplish everything in one day.
 - a. Remember the old cliché, "Rome wasn't built in a day."
 - b. Nor can you possibly achieve your dreams overnight.
 - c. Pace yourself — strive for balance and moderation.
 - d. Take time to infuse quality into every project and endeavor.
 - e. 1 Cor. 10:31 = "*Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.*"
 - f. Attack big jobs in easy, bite-sized pieces.
 - g. Don't let the bigness of any goal overwhelm or discourage you — realize that success is reached one step at a time.
 - h. Simplify, simplify, simplify.
- 10. Be flexible.
 - a. Be prepared for the unexpected.
 - b. Don't feel guilty if your plans are thrown off track, or your schedule momentarily interrupted.
 - c. Take advantage of "bonus opportunities" that God may send your way.
 - (1) A weekend trip to an outlying church.
 - (2) An unexpected date that you were hoping for.
 - (3) A promotion that may take time to break into.
 - (4) A new movie someone has recommended.
 - d. Don't be tied down to a rigid schedule, or become a slave to a plan.
 - e. On the other hand, don't drift too far from your overall purposes and lose interest and momentum.
 - f. Learn to be flexible — but keep on track.
- 11. Bounce back from defeat.
 - a. Don't expect life to always go smoothly, it will have its ups and downs.
 - b. Brace yourself if disaster strikes — don't be discouraged by momentary failure.
 - c. It's at this point your mettle is tried; will you "hang in" and endure?
 - d. If you give up in despair, your goals were not meaningful at the start.
 - e. You may need to make adjustments from time to time, but persevere and hold out to the end.
 - f. Proverbs 24:16 = "*For a just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again*"
- 12. Take frequent and regular inventory of your progress.
 - a. Ensure that you are holding fast to your goals.
 - b. Make certain you're keeping on course.
 - c. Ensure that you are growing steadily and picking up momentum along the way.
 - d. Check up to see if your goals are becoming a reality, and that you are nudging closer to their attainment each day.
 - e. Make sure you are building quality into each step — and effectively bringing the pieces together.
 - f. Taking inventory is another way of saying "keep the garden" that God commanded Adam.
- 13. Beware of the pitfalls of success.
 - a. There is a real danger when blessings increase and you become successful.
 - b. Attaining success and material wealth have destroyed a number of people in God's Church.
 - c. They became self-sufficient and took their eyes off God.
 - d. They no longer saw a need for faith, and, in many instances, left the Church.
 - e. They became absorbed by the adventures and allurements of this materialistic society.
 - f. God warns us against these dangers and tells us repeatedly not to forget him.
 - Deut. 8:11-14; 17-19 = "*Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God, in not keeping his commandments, and his judgments, and his statutes, which I command thee this day: Lest when thou hast eaten and art full, and hast built goodly houses, and dwelt therein; and when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied; Then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the Lord thy God, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage...*"
 - "And thou say in thine heart, My power and the might of mine hand hath gotten me this*

wealth. But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as it is this day. And it shall be, if thou do at all forget the Lord thy God, and walk after other gods, and serve them, and worship them, I testify against you this day that ye shall surely perish."

14. Make up your mind to change now.

- a. To embark on this new way of life demands a high degree of determination, hard work and resolve.
- b. Success will only come to those who are willing to commit themselves and take their lives in hand.
- c. Success can be yours, if you are willing to pay the price of blood, sweat and tears.
- d. How can you motivate yourself to change? Answer these questions:
 - (1) Are you satisfied with your state of being right now?
 - (2) Are you willing to tolerate the frustrations and misery of your present circumstances?
 - (3) Are you contented to remain mediocre and average, when you could attain a better life?
 - (4) Since others have done it, why can't you?
- e. God wants you to prosper and be successful — but He will not force your will.
- f. The key is to put Him first, and then exert a powerful discipline over every facet of your life.
- g. Think it through — the choice is yours.
- h. The pay-off is greater than you can imagine.

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