



THE LORD'S FLOCK GROWTH DIGEST

PASTORAL GROWTH SERIES

DOWNSWING

(PRESS ON. 5 Keys to Power Part 5)

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June 29, 2022

In golf, "Downswing" is the downward movement of a club when the player is about to hit the ball. When the ball is finally hit, all that is left is for the player to look at his ball and his target. In the same way, we may experience pitfalls, failures and difficulties, but we need to keep our focus on our "target". It is not easy to keep going when everything and everyone are going against us. Like the Israelites in Exodus 14:1ff., when we are backed against the wall, and there is nowhere to turn to, we must learn to trust and turn to God. Press on!

WHAT WE NEED TO DO:

- 1. Trust God.** We should be still and not be afraid. God alone can deliver us.
 - 1.1 "Amen, amen, I say to you, whoever believes in me will... do greater ones than these (Jn. 14:12).
 - 1.2 If Jesus was able to overcome, we too can be victors. When our circumstances tempt us to feel defeated, we should believe in God's truth, power and strength. The Lord will always be working with us and for us.
- 2. Obey God.** We must sincerely follow what He wants/desires us to do.
 - 2.1 Paul and his companions were stopped by the Holy Spirit from taking their intended route and were given a different direction (Acts 16: 6-8). Paul listened and obeyed the prompting of the Holy Spirit. Indeed, God had other plans for them.
- 3. Praise God.** There is power when we praise God.
 - 3.1 Paul and Silas were thrown into prison and their feet were fastened to stakes. Despite this dismal situation of Paul and Silas, they praised God, prayed and sang hymns, and a miracle happened (Acts 16: 23-26).

3.2 Let us rejoice in the Lord always (Philippians 4:4).

3.3 In all circumstances let us give thanks, for this is the will of God for us in Christ Jesus (1 Thess. 5:18).

3.4 Instead of fretting and complaining, we need to pray and give praise to God.

3.5 Aaron and Hur held up the arms of Moses to ensure victory against Amalek (Exodus 17:10-13). There is power when we raise our hands to God.

4. Put into action what we believe. We should be willing to go out of our comfort zone.

4.1 We must get excited when we are at "the end of our rope." If we experience hardships, the eyes of God are on us. He works in mysterious ways and there is nothing He can't do. God will always use His power for us because He wants us to succeed!

4.2 In Luke 13: 31-35, the Pharisees urged Jesus to leave because they wanted to stop Him from going to Jerusalem. However, Jesus was determined to finish His mission.

4.3 Sometimes, God works on the 11th hour. We need to remember that God's time is always perfect and He can always be depended upon.

CONCLUSION: Serving the Lord faithfully is not an assurance that we won't face difficulties. But those who love the Lord will persevere. Our hardships and perseverance will pay off. Therefore, we should not lose hope! Let us not give up when events/things do not happen as quickly as we expect these to be. Let us keep up to our calling! We should know that God is working through us. We must know that the result of our labor is still out there waiting to be fulfilled.

REFLECTION: When you experienced difficulties and failures in life, what gave you hope to continue your spiritual journey?

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