

# Equipped for Service

## Part 2: Helping with Motivation

PETER DEWITT  
AGATHOS CHURCH  
JANUARY 15TH, 2017

---

Full Text (for reading on your own)

### *Patience and Ease*

The joy of the Lord is our strength. There is an oil of gladness that is being released across our congregation. I had a vision in prayer recently in which I saw 5 antique oil cans which your grandfather probably used to grease gears. They were riding on something like railroad rails together. In the vision, there was a large oil can in the middle of other oil cans. The large oil can was out in front and it had oil coming out of it. I asked the Lord what the vision meant and he told me “you've been trying to grease the skids for the other skid greasers.” His point was that there was going to be an uprising of the anointing *within each member of Agathos* to do the work of the kingdom. And then He spoke to me during worship that there was a supernatural ease coming upon our body - a supernatural ease to do the very things we've been wanting to do. The work of the kingdom that you have felt some resistance to is going to become a work of ease for you. And it's going to be because of the individual work of the Holy Spirit welling up within you! Amen!

I am totally aware that where I am leading the body right now can be a challenge. God is leading me and I am leading the body and He is leading us into some new territories! We are talking about outreach and discipleship— Kingdom employment!

Now, I know we have all been in conversations at the grocery store where we tell someone that we go to church and it is a very pleasant conversation. Those conversations are great but they are not going to get anyone saved. That is just a tidbit. That is just a seed. That will not cause them to go home, kneel by their bed and receive the Lord in their heart. While it is great that they know that you go to church and that they liked you, that tidbit is not enough information to lead them to the Lord nor is it going to disciple them. There is a lie that circulates around in the body of Christ that tries to make impotent Christians that are not equipped to get anyone saved nor to disciple anyone, and all the while they think they're doing the Lord's work, but what they're doing is not personally challenging and they are not challenging other people either.

That said, I am aware that where I am taking the church right now is a challenge for many of you! I am guessing that 80 to 90% of the members of our body at some point during the sermon series or during “Commissioned!” or during “Your World Needs You” have felt overwhelmed or been

somewhat intimidated by the task at hand. I am completely aware and have personally experienced the fear factor of starting to evangelize and disciple. In fact, it is probably natural that many of you either consciously or in the back of your mind have been hoping that I would change the topic sometime soon. But being that I'm not going to be changing the topic anytime soon, I want to speak some comfort to you :)

When you are working on stepping into something new, it is totally normal to at one minute feel excitement about the work of the Kingdom, and then, the next minute, be feeling trepidation about doing the work of the Kingdom. Please, be at peace with those emotions and up-and-down thoughts as you step into this new thing. It's OK!

I have even been noticing a difference in my preparation for sermons. Over the last few months as I've been preparing sermons, I've noticed that the Lord is operating with me is leading me differently in my sermon preparation for Agathos. The difference being that he is showing me that this is not a season for more revelation as much as it is the season for more action! Believe it was Kenneth Hagin who had a visual of the American church with big, fat heads and small, emaciated bodies. What's the meaning? Their knowledge of American Christians has far surpassed their application of that knowledge.

In John chapter 4, Jesus said "My food is to do the will of my Father." You may think "I thought that the spiritual food was his body, the Word." But here Jesus is saying "the food is not just the Word, but it is also doing the Word!" Do not be deceived being hearers of the word only!

We are in a new season as a body! Don't you perceive it? God wants you to perceive the new thing that He is doing - because you need to understand the new thing or you can become discouraged or flustered. Agathos is beautiful to God. He loves our knowledge of Him and our purity, AND (new thing alert!) He is calling us to "go out, reach out, and give to others what He's given to us."

When there is a new thing, we need to have grace for ourselves. Don't get into the mindset where you feel bad that you are kind of questioning whether you want to do this. Don't allow yourself to feel discouraged if you are not all on board already. Don't feel like you are the only person in the church who is feeling some trepidation about this new season. Nearly everyone probably is!

In fact, the only ones not feeling some nervousness about evangelizing and discipling are the ones that are already doing it. For those who have been discipling people for years and witnessing to people for years. This will not be intimidating to them - it will be encouraging. They will be thinking "yes! everyone else gets to experience the joy, delight, purposefulness, and LIFE that I experience by being a minister of the Kingdom!"

Just be patient with yourself, OK? Paul told Timothy (2 Tim. 4:2) to “*reprove, rebuke, and exhort with complete patience and teaching.*” What’s the take-away? God is patient with us as he is exhorting us into a new thing! And so is your pastor! Let’s be patient with ourselves, even as we press in as a body.

### *3 Keys about The Word*

You want to start everything in ministry with the Word and in prayer. His Word makes us wise. It feeds our spirit, making us strong. It develops our faith as it reveals His love for us. It is our weapon against Satan’s attacks and keeps us from being deceived by false doctrines. It equips us to accurately minister to others. It makes us true disciples and sets us free. It produces spiritual growth and maturity in us - renewing our minds, and awakening us to righteousness. It enables me to walk free from sin and fills my heart with joy and peace! John 6:63 says “*It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life.*” So, we want to be in the Word!

The first key to being in the Word is to know the value of the Word - to remember what the Word does for us! That’s what the declaration about the Word will do for you. It will give you an expectancy for what the Word is going to do for you! If you are finding that you need more hunger for the Word of God, meditate on the scriptures that are on the back of the bookmark. The scriptures about the value of the Word of God will stir your faith about the Word itself.

The second key about the Word for our body during this season is to remember that as we step further into ministry, we don’t want to get into spiritual debt. Recall that we’ve heard that the average pastor who quits the pastorate spends a total of 23 minutes a week in the Word and in prayer - no wonder they quit! How could that be!?

Surely they did not start pastoring by spending so little time in the Word and in prayer. Surely they started ministering beyond the fruit that they had coming from the Word in their lives and then they had fires to put out and then they had less time in the Word and then they had more fires to put out and then they had less time in the word. You can see how they can easily become like a 40-hour per week community organizer - not like a pastor! Acts 6 says what to do. The apostles said “we need someone to wait tables for us. We can’t be pulled away from our time in the Word and in prayer to wait tables.” Now, is there anything wrong with a leader waiting tables? No - as long as it doesn’t pull them away from their time in the Word and time in prayer.

Mary was not pulled away from Jesus’ feet. Jesus said “that good thing is not going to get taken from her, Martha! She is going to stick right by My side and listen to My words.” The people asked Jesus “how shall we do the works of God.” Jesus answered “believe in the One whom He sent.” Believing in the Word is the work of God! Get ready for ministry by being in the Word and being in prayer. It solves 90% of the ministry problems before they ever start.

We want to give the fruit, not the branch. The branch stays in the vine and it produces fruit. So, what do you feed people? The renewable fruit! It just keeps coming and you keep having new fruit to give! You end up being like a July zucchini grower. You have so much fruit that you are just trying to find people take it off your hands! When you are abounding in fruit, it makes it easy to give it away!

In order to do this, you have to get into an investment mindset with the word and in prayer, in which you say "I'm going to invest in my relationship and connection with Jesus such that I have an abundance of fruit to giveaway! Never letting people naw on me, the branch. I'm just giving them the extra fruit that I have."

Remember that God's grace applies to our time in the Word and in prayer! There is grace even (and especially for) the disciplines! Don't "do the Word" without the Holy Spirit. Make a point to invite the holy spirit into your time in the Word. "Holy Spirit bless this time in the Word!"

It is important to not allow circumstances and emotions determine my time in the Word and in prayer. The enemy works against your time in the Word and in prayer with circumstances and emotions. So, if you plan, you essentially put the enemy at bay! The plan is the diligence part (first the natural then the spiritual). But even with the plan, invite the Holy Spirit's supernatural intervention in your time in the Word!

We have the author of the Bible living on the inside of us and He wants to have a book club meeting with us anytime we open the Word! Imagine how exciting it would be to have Mark Twain on-call anytime you opened Tom Sawyer. Holy Spirit is literally on-call with you about the Word. He is ready and waiting for you to open the Word and invite Him, in faith to join you there!

I want to also encourage you to pray for a hunger for God's Word! That is a very good prayer to pray. There is nothing that the enemy is opposing more in your life than your time in the Word. Some of the greatest spiritual warfare happening right now, in your life, is the opposition to you being in the Word. If you will commit to your time in the Word and in prayer, you will render that opposition useless. When you get your time in the word set, the Lord will develop things in your heart, and those things will bear fruit and you will have so much fruit that you just must give it away to others and now other people's lives are changing!

Mark 4 shows us that opposition comes "on account of the Word." The enemy is against you being in the Word. So, make a point to schedule your time in the Word and time in prayer. Don't get condemned if you don't have a grace yet to spend an hour in the Word. Spend 15 minutes. Make a commitment and as your desire grows, do more. The key is to get to the gym, not necessarily to have a 3-hour workout initially. Have grace for yourself. Make it a habit and once it is a habit and a routine, you will naturally feel a desire to add to it.

### *Refresher: How to be in the Word*

We need to start hearing to be able to teach others. You will disdain the simple things if you don't think you need to teach them. You will cherish the simple things if you think you need to teach them.

The first point about "how" to be in the Word is to realize that there are different ways to read it. There are about four main ways to read the Word of God. You can think of it as a camera zoom lens that either zooms in very narrowly to a small part of the Word or zooms out to the Word overall.

- Zoomed out would be a reading plan in which you read the whole Bible in a year. It is very helpful to read broadly in the Word of God because it keeps you from becoming imbalanced by only focusing on a small section of the Word. The Word of God is our spiritual food and like physical food, it is healthy to eat a varied diet. There are scriptures on grace and there are scriptures on the fear of the Lord. If you only read on one or the other, you can become imbalanced towards one or the other. Both are totally true. Carbohydrates are good, as are proteins and health fats. We need a balanced diet and reading the whole Word of God brings context to the rest of our study, meditation, and memorization.
- Topical study is when you gather all the scriptures on grace or the fear of the Lord or the fear of man and pull them together into one place for in depth study. You can go to an online bible website, type "fear of man" and see all the scriptures that come up. A physical concordance would allow you to do a similar search. It is often helpful to search related terms as well. Then print those scriptures out on a page and maybe laminate it - placing it where you can see it and read it daily for a few months. Watch what happens! Topical studies help you confirm doctrine and get the nuances of God's truth on any matter.
- Meditation (more on this later).
- Memorization is very powerful in ministering to others. When you have scriptures memorized and even know the address, it helps people have confidence in your ministry to them. It seems almost "too natural" but it simply helps other people receive ministry better so I am all for it and want to utilize this reality to help THEM! Imagine a politician who had no facts memorized. It's like a soldier without bullets. You don't always have time to pack your bullets on the battlefield. When you witness and minister, having some scriptures memorized is a very powerful tool!

### *Where to Start in the Word*

Thinking about new believers, where do you tell them to start reading in the Word? In general terms where should they spend most of their time in the Word? In the New Testament! When I was a young

believer I spent a lot of time in the Old Testament. It's all the Word of God! It's all profitable (2 Tim. 3:16-17) but some of it is an easier place to start for new believers. The Old Testament raises a lot of questions that the New Covenant answers. Hebrews tells us that Jesus gives us a better covenant. Mark 2 tells us not to put new wine in an old wineskin. There is a new covenant! Jesus said "this is My blood of the new covenant which is shed for you!" We should be encouraging new believers to spend the super majority of their time in the New Testament. It is my opinion even, that even mature believers would do well to spend the majority of their time in the New Covenant. We want to be solid in the New Covenant to understand and get the revelations that are in the Old Covenant. This is not a command, just an opinion. Paul had opinions too (1 Cor. 7)

### *3 Ways to Turbocharge your Time in the Word*

First, **read it out loud**. Proverbs 4:20-24 says "*My son, give attention to my words; Incline your ear to my sayings. Do not let them depart from your eyes; Keep them in the midst of your heart; For they are life to those who find them, And health to all their flesh. Keep your heart with all diligence, For out of it spring the issues of life. Put away from you a deceitful mouth, And put perverse lips far from you.*" This tells you that there are 3 gateways to your heart: your ears, your eyes, and your mouth - and your heart is where the Word of God is working! Mark 4 tells us that the seed of the Word is going into our hearts so we want to give the Lord access to our hearts as much as possible. Reading the Word out loud causes our eyes to work, our mouth to work, and our ears to hear what our mouth is saying. Now, we are engaging all 3 gateways to our hearts!

Additionally, reading the Word out loud is ministry practice. Ministry is basically speaking the Word to people. So, if you are speaking the Word for 30 minutes or an hour out loud each morning, you are going through all the motions of ministry and thereby training your heart to be a minister of the Word! Also of interest is that speaking the Word of God out loud on a consistent basis will dramatically improve our public speaking - the Bible was what many of our presidents read out loud on their own. It was the text of the Bible that determined their speaking style, cadence, and confidence.

The second way to supercharge your time in the Word is to **meditate in the Word**. In Hebrew, the word meditate means either to "chew the cud" (ruminate on something) or to pound something in (like forging steel through continually pounding it). Note that eastern mediation is demonic. It is totally different than scriptural meditation. Note also that there is a movement right now to re-brand eastern meditation called "mindfulness." This is a very ironic name because it is a total inversion of the truth about what eastern meditation teaches. Mind-emptiness is what it tries to get you to do. Mindfulness is a form of Buddhist mediation that tries to get you to empty your mind. So, what do you think is going to happen when people empty their minds? What goes into it then?

People that are into eastern mediation try to go to places they consider to be “spiritually thin” and they meditate on that mountain and try to empty their mind. What they are doing is inviting demonic spirits to come in and inhabit them. Mindfulness is a new movement to make that sort of practice more palatable and broadly accepted. Beware.

By contrast, what’s the scriptural form of meditation? The opposite of mindfulness! In scriptural meditation, you fill your mind with the Word of God! So, you are not emptying your mind in scriptural mediation – you fill it with the Word! *“Blessed is the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful; But his delight is in the law of the Lord, And in His law he meditates day and night. He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither And whatever he does shall prosper.”* (Psalms 1:1-4) Joshua 1:8 says the same sort of thing!

When you meditate in the Word of God it helps you not miss parts of the Word. As you slow down enough to meditate on a scripture, you discover parts of verses that you almost feel like you’ve never seen before! We’ve seen them, but we read them more quickly – for contextual type reading. Mediation slows us down enough to receive more thorough revelation from the Lord on the scripture.

The last way to supercharge your time in the Word is to **teach others!** In 1 Corinthians 4, Paul says *“Let a man so consider us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God”.* When you receive revelation from the Word of God, you become a steward of it. That means the revelation still belongs to the Lord, but now you are a steward of it. *“Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful.”* Remember in Luke 19 *“Well done, good servant; because you were faithful in a very little, have authority over ten cities.”* What made the servant faithful in the master’s eyes? Because he had done business with his mina! When God gives you revelation, He wants you to do business with it! He wants you to share it!

When you start sharing the revelation, an amazing thing happens – He multiplies what you have! In Matthew 14, Jesus said *“You give them something to eat.”* And they said to Him, *“We have here only five loaves and two fish.”* He said, *“Bring them here to Me.”* .... He blessed and broke and gave the loaves to the disciples; and the disciples gave to the multitudes. So they all ate and were filled, *and they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments that remained.*” Jesus says to share the revelation that you have and the result will be that you receive a basketful of left-over fragments from that revelation to take home. In other words, their revelation increased because they shared the revelation that they had.

Don’t disdain the simple teachings. Get in the Word. Get in prayer. Remember the basics.

### *Finding Motivation*

Motivation in your heart turns into momentum with your feet. Motivation takes something that would otherwise be drudgery and makes it something that you want to do. It’s great to know that you need

to workout, it's really nice when you know you need to work out and you are motivated to workout. It changes it!

Here are 3 ways to increase your motivation.

1. Be overflowing with fruit. We already mentioned this. When you have zucchinis coming off the vine like crazy, that increases your motivation for ministry in a major way. Instead of wondering if YOU have enough to give you are hoping their laps are big enough to receive it all! When you are overflowing in the Lord, it becomes very easy to become motivated to minister. In fact, Joseph Prince says that many people that have understood grace have so much of the goodness of God in their heart that they have become spiritually frustrated because they are not ministering the goodness of God that they have enough. He said "some of you are even getting upset with your spouse because you are not ministering enough. You need to complete the cycle of grace." Do you know what the second half of the cycle of grace is? That it's more blessed to give than to receive! You receive, receive, receive, but then you give, give, give. The Law is about achieving. Grace is about receiving. We are a receiving church, but then you want to give out of what you've got by grace.
2. Dealing with fear associated with ministering.

1. The first type of fear is the fear of rejection. Look at Luke 10:8-11 *"Whatever city you enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you. And heal the sick there, and say to them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you.' But whatever city you enter, and they do not receive you, go out into its streets and say, 'The very dust of your city which clings to us we wipe off against you. Nevertheless know this, that the kingdom of God has come near you.'"* Is that the mentality we normally have when we are witnessing to people? So if they rejected the message of the Kingdom, Jesus told the disciples to go into the streets and declare 'the very dust of your city which clings to our feet we wipe off against you!'"

We are so afraid of rejection, but it is not Jesus' way. He didn't tell His disciples "be afraid if they reject you and feel really bad if they reject you." What did He say? "If they reject you, reject them and do it in public so maybe someone will come to their senses and realize the stupid thing they've done!" Jesus was doing this out of grace for them. If people reject the message and you walk away feeling bad for yourself, they will be empowered to think they were right! Jesus is saying "if they reject you, let them know how wrong they were! Make them know that you think they were crazy for rejecting the message of the Kingdom!" "We wipe your dust off our feet - we won't even take your dust with us! But know that the Kingdom of God has come near you!" As in, "if you are thinking tonight on your bed what that whole thing was about know that it was about the Kingdom and maybe you should think again!"

This instruction from Jesus to His disciples was out of grace to the people of any cities who might reject them.

One time Pastor Brad witnessed to a young lady at the strong lead of the Lord. After finishing sharing the gospel, this young girl looked up and said “you really believe that sh - -“ Brad felt bad, but the Lord spoke to him and said “she didn’t reject you, Brad, she rejected Me.”

If you are sharing the Word of God, you can’t get rejected; you are just sharing the Word. Our job is to share the Word, not to get them saved. The Holy Spirit’s job is to do the ministry and it’s their choice. Our job is just to share the message.

2. The next thing that we fear is ridicule. Imagine I emphatically told you “credit cards are the best way to get rich!” Would you agree with me? And once you realized you disagreed with me, would you then feel bad for yourself for disagreeing with me - or do you feel sad for me? You would feel sad for the person who was saying that “God, I wish someone could talk with them so they don’t ruin their life!”

If people ridicule you for believing the Word of God, we should feel sad for them! Remember, Jesus was ridiculed when He went to raise the little girl from the dead because they “KNEW” she was dead! I know the world thinks they know what’s going on, but Jesus was the one who was right and now that girl was raised from the dead! Don’t give in to ridicule or the fear of it.

3. We also tend to fear not knowing all the answers. Remember, “I don’t know” is a fine answer. The person primarily wants to know the genuineness of the faith that you are professing.

That said, please realize that you know much more than you think you do. You know much more of the Word than you think you do. You know the Father’s heart much more than you think that you do!

John 14:26 says *“But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.”* When you start ministering to someone you will often find that you have what I call “supernatural scripture recall.” The Holy Spirit will bring to remembrance all things that Jesus said to you! When you read the Word, you are communing with a person and therefore when you get revelation from scripture, Holy Spirit will bring to remembrance the revelation you’ve received before.

Remember also that Holy Spirit will back up His Word with power! I remember witnessing to a middle-aged lady on a North Carolina beach. She had an injured knee that was keeping her from having much fun with her family during their beach vacation. I began to share a simple gospel message with her. I noticed that her mouth and throat start quivering before my eyes.

It was the oddest thing. I realized that the Holy Spirit was witnessing to her about the words I was speaking with power! I was speaking simple words, but they were His words so we started to see the power of God back up His Word on her body! The Holy Spirit shows up when you start ministering.

4. We tend to fear not being equipped, but we are going to make sure you are equipped! On the 29th, we are going to practice witnessing. We have a discipleship manual that will help people get the foundational truths very quickly because they are written down and captured in an easy way.

The plan is to initially partner with each other to go through the discipleship process. You will become familiar with what is in the book. You will sharpen each other, and you will get a feel for meeting with someone every couple weeks to discuss what you're reading and start to practically experience how those conversations go best. You will realize "wow, I really have a lot to give now that I see this content in front of me and I have the tool to work with!" My hope is this will make it a low-threshold to get started.

3. Understanding the value of supernatural Kingdom employment.

Please know this: until a few years ago, I would often minister to people in prophecy or perhaps healing, but I had not been sharing the gospel message. So, when Pastor Brad told me about 4 years that "I want to take you out witnessing" I was nervous about it to the point of almost being upset with him for pressing this matter. I was shaking and terrified the first time I went to minister the gospel to those who would hear! I realized (after the fact) that the Prince of the Power of the Air puts a fear around ministry. The fear is a facade but in my experience the thing he puts the most fear around is not prophetic ministry or healing ministry even but ministering the gospel!

As I started to share the gospel more and more I realized that they fear was a facade. I am not saying the nervousness goes all together away, because I will still sometimes feel that. But every time I ever played a baseball game in my life, I felt nervous before the game. That doesn't mean something is wrong; it means something is about to happen!

Now when I share the gospel, I am not afraid about what they think of me, instead I'm only concerned with being sensitive to the Holy Spirit about how to communicate the message so that they would get it and receive Jesus! My focus has shifted from being concerned about myself to being concerned about them!

Before I practiced leading people to the Lord, I had given prophetic words to complete strangers and ministered to many people, but I truthfully felt incomplete as a Christian. Not unloved! Not that I didn't have a great relationship with God. In the back of my mind, I felt like I was not

mature in my ability to minister to others. That all changed for me once I knew “what to do” in leading someone to salvation. Before learning how to evangelize I felt like a wide receiver that could get wide open on the football field, catch an amazing pass, and then not know how to run into the wide-open end zone! Suddenly it felt like “I know how to finish a play.”

I also found that as soon as I dealt with the “ultimate issue” of whether I would be employed for the king and get Jesus His reward and lead people to the Lord ... once I dealt with that, everything else underneath that became so much easier!

From Pastor Brad: When you are not engaged in the great commission, you are spiritually unemployed. Just like in the natural when someone who wants a job hasn't had a job for an extended period, you can get start to get depressed. When you are in the body of Christ and all you are doing is receiving the Word and you are not doing anything for the Kingdom - that is spiritual unemployment. It is not healthy of your spiritual well-being.

There is zero condemnation on that. God is not condemning any of His children for that. It is just not good for your spiritual health! Once you step into sharing the gospel and leading people to Christ, you literally move from spiritual childhood to adulthood. Even if you have been walling with the Lord for 30 years, if you have never led anyone to Christ, you are going to realize that you were a spiritual child prior to that. There is only a certain amount of growth you can have in the Lord. We must step into being a doer of the Word - doing the one thing Jesus has called us to do: The Great Commission which is to share the gospel.

In December, the Lord showed Brad that he had taken us all through medical school and that Peter was now taking you into residency (the hands-on, medical school apprenticeship). You are going to start operating on people right now!

Think of this: If you went to medical school, do you just want to keep learning about the body, the anatomy of the body, and what you are supposed to do? Do you just want to read about setting a broken leg, or do you want to set one? Do you want to just keep learning about it or do you want to do it?

It is now time. You are so well equipped. You have so much more than you even need to get out there and do it. But once you start to do it and you become spiritually employed, it will so radically change your walk with the Lord - it's incredible!

The joy that is on sharing the gospel is like nothing else! It is the very center, the very heartbeat of God - to win the lost to Him! That's what He wants. That's why Jesus came.

You can pray to Him all day long. You can worship Him all day long. You can read the Bible all the day long. All of that is wonderful and He loves when we do that! But nothing touches His

heart more than you leading someone else to Him - someone who is lost, who is going to hell, who is completely without the experience of His goodness and His grace. He wants you to lead them to Him!

So, when you and I get involved in that, guess who shows up?!? God shows up in a major way! The common denominator to the miracles Brad has experienced is that he was out on the street witnessing. None of them happened in his living room while studying the Bible. Though that was a necessary tool to be equipped to do that thing out there in the street, none of those miracles happened in Brad's living room. Brad's friend wanted miracles and had been studying and studying the Word but he would not go out on the street and witness and share.

We share all of this to say "be encouraged, be motivated, break through that fear!" You will find that fear is a very thin veneer. It is put there by the devil. He screams at you "DON'T DO IT!" But you press in and get to hold someone's hand as they are crying and accepting the Lord into their life! You are suddenly a true instrument in the hand of the master. You think "I am no longer just eating and receiving; I am actually being used by Him to change the kingdom! To destroy the works of the devil and bring people into the Kingdom of God!" You become spiritually employed - it is awesome!

So, push through any fears and think "I am going to actually be operating on people so I need to really know what I need to know so that I can do it!"

Peter: one of the things that created confidence in me (and therefore reduced the fear significantly) is knowing the message to share - having rehearsed and memorized a basic gospel message with some scriptures to back it up. That is what we are going to work on next together!

I am proud of you guys for sticking with this! Like Brad said, it is going to be worth it. You are going to thank me and thank the Lord for pressing this issue because your whole Christian life is going to come full-circle. Keep after it.

---

### Text Summary *(for reading as a group)*

The joy of the Lord is our strength. Peter shared on Sunday that he believes that there is an oil of gladness that is being released across our congregation. There is going to be an uprising of the anointing *within each member of Agathos* to do the work of the kingdom. There is a supernatural ease coming upon our body - a supernatural ease to do the very things we've been wanting to do. The work of the kingdom that you have felt some resistance to is going to become a work of ease for you. And it's going to be because of the individual work of the Holy Spirit welling up within you!

Peter is aware that where he is taking the church right now is a challenge for many of us! When you are working on stepping into something new, it is totally normal to at one minute feel excitement about the work of the Kingdom, and then, the next minute, feel trepidation about doing the work of the Kingdom. Please, be at peace with those emotions and up-and-down thoughts as you step into this new thing. It's OK!

In John 4, Jesus said "My food is to do the will of my Father." Jesus is saying "the food is not just the Word, but it is also doing the Word!" Do not be deceived being hearers of the word only! God wants you to perceive the new thing that He is doing. Agathos is beautiful to God. He loves our knowledge of Him and our purity, AND (new thing alert!) He is calling us to "go out, reach out, and give to others what He's given to us."

When there is a new thing, we need to have grace for ourselves. Don't feel like you are the only person in the church who is feeling some trepidation about this new season. Likely everyone is! In fact, those not feeling some nervousness about evangelizing and discipling are those who have been discipling and witnessing to people for years. This will not be intimidating to them - it will be encouraging. They will be thinking "Yes! Everyone else gets to experience the joy, delight, and LIFE that I experience by being a minister of the Kingdom!"

You want to start everything in ministry with the Word and in prayer. His Word makes us wise. It feeds our spirit, making us strong. It develops our faith as it reveals His love for us. It is our weapon against Satan's attacks and keeps us from being deceived by false doctrines. It equips us to accurately minister to others. It makes us true disciples and sets us free. It produces spiritual growth and maturity in us - renewing our minds, and awakening us to righteousness. It enables me to walk free from sin and fills my heart with joy and peace! John 6:63 says *"It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life."* We want to be in the Word!

The first key to being in the Word is to know the value of the Word - to remember what the Word does for us! That's exactly what the declaration about the Word will do for you - it will give you an expectancy for what the Word is going to do for you!

The second key about the Word for our body during this season is to remember that as we step further into ministry, we don't want to get into spiritual debt. Recall how we've heard that the average pastor who quits the pastorate spends a total of 23 minutes a week in the Word and in prayer. Acts 6 says what to do. There is nothing wrong with waiting tables if it doesn't pull them away from their time in the Word and time in prayer. We want to give the fruit, not the branch. The branch stays in the vine and it produces fruit. You have so much fruit that you are just trying to find people take it off your hands! When you are abounding in fruit, it makes it easy to give it away!

God's grace applies to our time in the Word and in prayer! There is grace even (and especially for) the disciplines! Don't "do the Word" without the Holy Spirit. Make a point to invite the Holy Spirit into your time in the Word. Ask "Holy Spirit bless this time in the Word!" The enemy works against your time in the Word and in prayer with circumstances and emotions. So, if you plan, you essentially just put the enemy at bay! The plan is the diligence part (first the natural then the spiritual). But even with the plan, invite the Holy Spirit's supernatural intervention in your time in the Word! We have the author of the Bible living on the inside of us and He wants to have a book club meeting with us anytime we open the Word! Holy Spirit is literally on-call with you about the Word. He is ready and waiting for you to open the Word and invite Him, in faith to join you there!

I want to also encourage you to pray for a hunger for God's Word! That is a very good prayer to pray. There is nothing that the enemy is opposing more in your life than your time in the Word. If you will commit to your time in the Word and in prayer, you will render that opposition useless. Don't get condemned if you don't have a grace yet to spend an hour in the Word. Spend 15 minutes. Make a commitment and as your desire grows, do more. The key is to get to the gym, not necessarily to have a 3-hour workout initially. Have grace for yourself. Make it a habit and once it is a habit and a routine, you will naturally feel a desire to add to it more!

The first point about "how" to be in the Word is to realize that there are different ways to read it. There are about four main ways to read the Word of God. You can think of it as a camera zoom lens that either zooms in very narrowly to a small part of the Word or zooms out to the Word overall. We can read for context, topically. We can also meditate on small sections of scripture and memorize the Word. Reading large swaths of the Word for context is like having a well-balanced diet. Topical studies produce well-rounded doctrine. Meditation receives revelation and memorization aids meditation and ministry.

We need to start hearing to be able to teach others. Thinking about new believers, it is advisable that they spend most of their time in the New Testament. It's all the Word of God! It's all profitable (2 Tim. 3:16-17) but some of it is an easier place to start for new believers. The Old Testament raises a lot of questions that the New Covenant answers. Jesus gives us a better covenant and we need to be careful not to put new wine in an old wineskin.

Here are 3 ways to turbocharge your time in the Word: First, **read it out loud**. Reading the Word out loud causes our eyes to work, our mouth to work, and our ears to hear what our mouth is saying. Now, we are engaging all 3 gateways to our hearts!

The second way to supercharge your time in the Word is to **meditate in the Word**. In Hebrew, the word meditate means either to "chew the cud" (ruminate on something) or to pound something in (like forging steel through continually pounding it). Note that eastern mediation is demonic. It

encourages you to empty your mind. By contrast, in scriptural meditation, you fill your mind with the Word of God!

The last way to supercharge your time in the Word is to **teach others!** When you receive revelation from the Word of God, you become a steward of it. When God gives you revelation, He wants you to do business with it! He wants you to share it! When you start sharing the revelation, an amazing thing happens - He multiplies what you have! Don't disdain the simple teachings. Get in the Word. Get in prayer. Remember the basics.

Motivation takes something that would otherwise be drudgery and makes it something that you want to do. It's great to know that you need to work out, it's nice when you know you need to work out and you are motivated to workout. It changes it!

Here are 3 ways to increase your motivation about witnessing and discipling - about being spiritually employed:

1. Be overflowing with fruit. When you are overflowing in the Lord, it becomes very easy to become motivated to minister. It's more blessed to give than to receive! You receive, receive, receive, but then you give, give, give. The Law is about achieving. Grace is about receiving. We are a receiving church, but then you want to give out of what you've got by grace.
2. Dealing with fear associated with ministering.
  - The first type of fear is the fear of rejection. We are so afraid of rejection, but it is not Jesus' way. He didn't tell His disciples "be afraid if they reject you and feel really bad if they reject you." What did He say? "If they reject you, reject them and do it in public so maybe someone will come to their senses and realize the stupid thing they've done!" One time Pastor Brad witnessed to a young lady at the strong lead of the Lord. After finishing sharing the gospel, this young girl looked up skeptically and said "You really believe that?!" Brad felt bad, but the Lord spoke to him and said "She didn't reject you, Brad, she rejected Me." If you are sharing the Word of God, you can't get rejected; you are just sharing the Word. Our job is to share the Word, not to get them saved. The Holy Spirit's job is to do the ministry and it's their choice. Our job is just to share the message.
  - The next thing that we fear is ridicule. If people ridicule you for believing the Word of God, we should feel sad for them!
  - We also tend to fear not knowing all the answers. Remember, "I don't know" is a fine answer. The person primarily wants to know the genuineness of the faith that you are professing. That said, realize that you know much more than you think you do!

Additionally, when you start ministering to someone you will often experience that the Holy Spirit will bring to remembrance all things that Jesus said to you! Holy Spirit will also back up His Word with power! The Holy Spirit shows up when you start ministering.

- We tend to fear not being equipped, but we are going to make sure you are equipped!

### 3. Understanding the value of supernatural Kingdom employment.

When Brad told Peter about 4 years ago that he wanted to take him witnessing, Peter was nervous about it to the point of almost being upset with him for pressing this matter. As Peter started to share the Gospel more, he realized that the fear was a facade. Now when Peter shares the Gospel, he is not afraid about what they think of him, but instead concerned with how he communicates the message so that they would get it and receive Jesus! After learning how to evangelize, Peter felt like he knew how to “finish a play.”

A note from Brad: When you are not engaged in The Great Commission, you are spiritually unemployed. It is not healthy for your spiritual well-being. God is not condemning any of His children for that. Once you step into sharing the Gospel and leading people to Christ, you literally move from spiritual childhood to adulthood. We must step into being a doer of the Word - doing the one thing Jesus has called us to do: The Great Commission which is to share the gospel.

In December, the Lord showed Brad that he had taken us all through medical school and that Peter was now taking you into residency (the hands-on, medical school apprenticeship). You are going to start operating on people right now! Do you want to just keep learning about it or do you want to do it? It is now time. You are so well equipped. You have so much more than you even need to get out there and do it. But once you start to do it and you become spiritually employed, it will so radically change your walk with the Lord - it's incredible!

The joy that is sharing the Gospel is unlike anything else! The common denominator to the miracles Brad has experienced is that he was out on the street witnessing. You will find that fear is a very thin veneer. So, push through any fears and think “I am going to actually be operating on people so I need to really know what I'm doing so that I can perform successfully!” You are going to thank the Lord for pressing this issue because your whole Christian life is going to come full-circle. Keep after it.

---

### Points to Ponder . . .

- What are some keys about being in the Word - particularly as it relates to having an increasing personal ministry?

- What are some of the different ways to read the Word - and their benefits?
- How can we increase the impact of our time in the Word?
- What are some very common fears about stepping into sharing the gospel with others?
- In what ways does carrying out The Great Commission change / help our own relationship with God?