

Chapter Twenty-Six

**(from the book *Life is a Gold Mine: Can You Dig It?*
To purchase a copy, please go to the Store section.)**

“Action!”

So now that you’ve decided to walk according to the unseen and act on your faith, where do you go from here? To give you some direction, I’ve included a few activities that have nurtured my faith over the years. I offer them to you in hopes that they will spur you to love and good deeds as the Bible commands.

1. Is your giving all it can be?

If you keep financial records, check to see what percentage of your income you gave away last year. Are you satisfied with that amount? If not, what percent would you like to give away this year? When you decide that, then determine how much you must give away each month to achieve that percentage. I’ve found that my giving is the most practical and accurate indicator of my faith, and I try to keep the total amount I give significantly above a ten-percent tithe.

I never give offerings based on my bills. In other words, I try to pray and give what I feel the Lord is directing me to give. When He shows me the amount, I give it without worrying whether that money should be used for something else. Often I will consult with my spouse concerning what to give.

I stress that we give only after consulting the Lord and give the amount He directs us to give. It’s irresponsible and presumptuous to blindly write checks for God’s work when you have bills due. I’ve found that only on occasion has He directed me to give money “beyond my means”—money that was to be used to pay something else. When

He has so directed, He has also provided to cover the need created by that unusual offering. At the same time, I've never tried to keep something in the bank to cushion against the unexpected when the Lord has directed to give that money away.

The writer of Ecclesiastes advises you to "cast your bread upon the waters, for after many days you will find it again" (Ecclesiastes 11:1). Cast your bread regularly and abundantly and watch for the return to come in due season. Your faith will be rewarded.

Whenever I've gotten discouraged over my finances, I've referred to God's word for comfort and encouragement. Over the years, the following have been my favorite verses where finances are concerned:

1. Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up (Galatians 6:9).
2. You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised. For in just a very little while, "He who is coming will come and will not delay. But my righteous one will live by faith. And if he shrinks back, I will not be pleased with him." But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who believe and are saved (Hebrews 10:36-39).
3. Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you (Luke 6:38).
4. Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously (2 Corinthians 9:6)

5. And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:19).

Money is something that you handle almost every day. It's therefore a pertinent indicator of your faith and how you're putting it into action.

2. Your life's purpose and goals

Section One led you through a discussion and exercises to help you identify your life's purpose. Assuming that you can now summarize it in one sentence, what do you have faith to accomplish with that purpose? What goals have you set that will be accomplished only through God's power released by your faith?

To help you with this, why don't you think about what you would do if money and time weren't factors. Would you start a business? If you answer yes, then how much money would that business make in its first ten years? How many would you employ? How much money would you give to the Lord's work?

My own faith goals included plans to start a ministry called **Gold Mine Development Company**. I want to see thousands released to function in their God-given purpose and then equipped and trained to be efficient and organized. From there, I want to see those same principles applied in several Third World nations for which I carry a concern (that will challenge me to weed out all of my teachings that are "American-ized" and not related to true kingdom principles, a challenge I truly welcome).

I have goals for my ongoing education, the number of books I would like to write, and some "chaotic" situations to which I would like to bring order in my lifetime. I have no idea how some of these will come about, but faith doesn't require me to have all the answers before I plan or act.

I have written these goals out and review them regularly. Some of them are far from becoming reality, but then so was my desire to become a pastor. God worked that out, and He will work these out as well. If they never come to pass, I plan on dying in faith, having seen them and welcomed them from afar.

3. Your Bible study

I've never been very keen on reading the Bible straight through. I've done it with some success, but I've had much greater success studying topics and individuals in an in-depth manner. I would like to suggest some faith studies that have added a great deal to my understanding and ability to apply my faith. After all, if faith requires action, then maybe your first action step should be to study faith (but remember, don't study just to learn; study so you can swing into action).

1. Read the four gospels and record in a journal everything Jesus said using the words faith and believe. Record your thoughts on these verses, and group them as you see them fitting together. You may want to highlight those verses with one particular color in your study Bible. From there, you can do the same for Paul's epistles, John's epistles, and James' letter. A comprehensive understanding of faith will come only when you get a complete overview, not just singling out your favorite verses.
2. Do a complete study of Hebrews 11. Assign some of the names mentioned in that chapter some space in your time management notebook or system, and then study their lives in the Bible. Keep notes of what you discover on those pages. Study each one with a view toward determining what qualified them to be listed in Hebrews 11. Single out one or two who are particularly relevant

to your life and calling, and make them the object of more intense, long-term study.

3. Based on these studies, what changes can you make in you life? Write down the thoughts you have from this and discuss them with your pastor, mentor, spouse, and children. Remember, faith leads to action, so study with an eye toward doing something.

As we close, be reminded that nothing is too difficult for God. He is in the business of doing the impossible. With that in mind, have faith! No matter how bleak it looks, God can come through with the unexpected and miraculous. So dream and plan accordingly. Put your hand in God's and hold on for the ride of your life. As you do, you'll join with the heroes of the faith and earn your own place in the ongoing rendition of Hebrews 11, a chapter that is still being written for the people of God who have faith.

I hope by now that you are convinced there is gold in your life. Your purpose and the goals you set are of great worth, more valuable than any riches this life can offer. Consequently, your time should be invested in those things that are the most meaningful for you and that will yield the greatest return. To avoid wasting time, you should organize your world so that you can give yourself to the highest priority at any given time.

Yet as I've stressed again and again, it's all for naught if you don't have faith, for "without faith it is impossible to please God" (Hebrews 11:6). Trust God for great things, just as the apostles did in Acts 6. Opportunities abound for those who walk in purpose and faith. May the Lord bless you on your faith journey, and may you hear those wonderful words, "Well done good and faithful servant" at the end of the road.