

“When Less is More”

By McKade Marshall

We are living in a time when things are speeding up. Our cars can now go faster than ever before. Our TVs feature more channels, in more colors, and with more sounds than ever. Our phones can now not only be detached from a wall and require zero cords in order to work (*aka* the modern day “smart” cellphone), they can also search the internet, pay bills by using a touchscreen, take pictures, record videos & sounds, and even be used as a flashlight. Libraries are no longer the go-to place for researching a subject matter; we now have Google. Fold-out maps of different cities and states are no longer necessary, as we have electronic navigation systems (available on our smartphones and built into our vehicles) to help get us to our destination.

With all of this modern technology, it is easier to get more done with less effort. In theory, all of these modern conveniences should give us more free time to do with as we please. **However, if we are not careful, it is easy to get caught up trying to fit even more activities in less time.** Instead of taking time to cherish the moments we have with our loved ones, we are busy chatting on our phones and reading the latest news on our social media apps. Instead of getting quiet so we can clear our minds to think and make good decisions, we turn up the radio and try to keep an ongoing text message marathon and work at the same time. It is no wonder we live in a culture full of attention deficit disorder!

The problem with trying to do too many things at one time is we actually wind up accomplishing less and use up even more time than necessary for completing a task. The key to living a productive life is to get focused. *I believe we are in a season of cutting out the clutter in our lives so we can run the race God has called us to more effectively.* Developing a leaner lifestyle can not only help you get more done, it will also give you peace of mind and open up more time for God to do a new thing in your life. Contrary to conventional wisdom, having more is not always better. As a matter of fact, in the Scriptures God would oftentimes call on His servants to use less resources at their disposal in order for God to display His great power. This is what happened with a young leader by the name of Gideon.

Gideon was not a man of noble descent. He was not even the most brave when God called him to deliver Israel from the oppression of the Midianites. When God called Gideon to deliver Israel, He sent an angel to speak with him while he was threshing wheat to hide from the Midianites. The Lord tells Gideon to tear down the altar of the false god Baal and make burnt offerings. Gideon obeys the Lord, but because of his fear of his family and the community, Gideon destroys the pagan altar at night when no one is around. The next day the community is in an uproar, but God strengthens Gideon in order to prepare him to lead Israel to victory. Gideon blows the trumpet to assemble for war against their enemies, gathering 32,000 men for battle.

However, God knew 32,000 men was too many for Him to display His power as God. He did not want Israel to think it was their own strength that delivered Israel from their enemies. Judges 7:2 (NASB) says, “*The LORD said to Gideon, ‘The people who are with you are too many for Me to give*

Midian into their hands, for Israel would become boastful, saying, 'My own power has delivered me.'" God knew full well then, and still does today, the pride of man. He knew man was susceptible to self-pride, when really it was the hand of God, that was to save the nation of Israel. The Lord then has Gideon ask anyone who is afraid of battle to leave. 22,000 men left, but 10,000 still remained. God tells Gideon it is still too many men, so He tests the men to see who drank water with their hands versus those who got down on their knees to drink in a stream nearby. Only 300 men lapped the water with their hands. God tells Gideon He will deliver Israel with the 300 men who lapped water with their hands and has the rest of the men go home.

Later that night God tells Gideon to go down to the valley and listen to what the enemy camp was saying. Gideon hears a man in the camp telling a dream he had to his friend. The man tells his friend he dreamed a loaf of bread was tumbling down into the valley, knocking their tent flat. **The friend replies in Judges 7:14 (NASB), "This is nothing less than the sword of Gideon the son of Joash, a man of Israel; God has given Midian and all the camp into his hand."** When Gideon overheard this, he knew God had given him the victory. He returns to the camp of 300, divides them into three parties, and launches the attack. When the Midianites and their allies hear the 300 trumpets of Gideon's small army, along with the smashing sound of the clay jars in their hands, God sends a spirit of confusion over the enemy's camp.

The whole army begins to turn on one another, fighting each other with their swords. The Midianites and their allies begin to flee, as the Israelites pursue and overtake them. The men of Israel are able to take back the land the Midianites had taken from them. Gideon is then heralded as a great hero and was rewarded with gold from the spoils of the enemy. Then the Lord gave Israel peace from all their enemies for forty years because of Gideon's brave obedience to deliver Israel out of the hands of the Midianites and their surrounding enemies. With only 300 men, God was able to deliver Israel out of their oppressors by the hand of Gideon.

In the same way, God does not need something great and powerful to deliver you out of your problems. God can take something that seems small and ordinary, and use it to catapult you out of bondage and into freedom. This is what happened to me a few years ago before I had ever written my first book. For several years I had tried to sit down and write a manuscript that could be used for publication and for production. Many times I would begin writing a thought then it would fizzle out. The thought had no direction. The idea within the paragraph I had written was good, but it wasn't enough. After months of trying and nothing ever coming to fruition, I turned my focus elsewhere. I spent almost an entire year reading through the whole Bible, cover to cover. I took five journals of notes, filled with thoughts from each book and chapters of the Bible.

A year after I had not attempted to write, I was sitting in the living room sipping my coffee, and a friend began to play a worship song on the piano. **Like a gust of wind, something began to stir me up on the inside as I listened.** All of the sudden I heard a still, soft voice within that said, "McKade, it's time to write your first book." Without hesitating I grabbed my laptop and walked to another room. As I sat for a minute, with a blank screen in front of me, I slowly began to type. I didn't know what I was going to write about. Piece by piece thoughts began to fill up the first page. Before long I had an outline for the entire book. A few months later I had my first manuscript for the book written. I entitled this first book *Tasting the Goodness of God: 31 Daily Devotionals for Everyday Living*.

Tasting the Goodness of God was the launching pad for a dream I had years ago to one day create and produce inspirational Christian material. This 31-day devotional book led to the formation of MLM Publishing. MLM Publishing became my own independent publishing business, formed in response to

this first book. Over the past four years the dream has grown, as God has led me to write two more books, go on book tours, mail seasonal newsletters to subscribers, create weekly videos that are shown all over the world through the internet, and host an annual #31DayChallenge event every January. All of these achievements have come not by me trying to do more, but rather by focusing on less. For me, doing less was actually more as I learned to focus on one thing at a time as God has led me.

I had to cut out a lot of clutter in my own life before I could begin to write cohesively and consistently. When I learned to focus on one thing at a time, God began to multiply the ministry He had given me of writing. I progressed from writing a 31-day devotional to doing many other things. However, it all started with me getting still before the Lord and getting focused. Likewise, God has some big dreams He wants to fulfill in you and through you in your lifetime. The dream God has placed in your heart starts as a seed. A seed is small. There is not much to a seed. However, over time that seed will take root and begin to grow. Your dream is the same way. **You must be faithful in the small things before the big things come to pass.**

As you seek God and pursue the things He has placed in your heart to do, there will be times when you feel like you are not making much progress. Things are not growing as quickly as you would like. Business is not picking up as much as you had hoped. Your child is not doing well in school. You are having a hard time staying motivated. These are the times to press in and keep moving forward. Keep being faithful no matter what is happening around you. *These difficult times are a test.* If you will pass the test and keep honoring God, then God will honor you and promote you at just the right time. Developing a disciplined lifestyle is the key to rising higher in your destiny.

God has given you everything you need to live a life full of victory. **2 Timothy 1:7 (NIV) says, “For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline.”** The Lord has given you His Spirit to dwell in you, which gives you the strength and discipline you need in order to live out the great calling of God on your life. There is no obstacle too great and no challenge too difficult for you to overcome with God’s help. With the Holy Spirit at work in you, you can accomplish much more and with less resources and energy. Gideon accomplished much more with 300 men and God’s Spirit leading him than he ever could have with 32,000 men and fighting in his own strength.

Know today that you are not alone. God is with you. He is fighting your battles for you, making a way through the clutter and the cares of this world. When you know God is stirring on the inside for you to do something, be still and know that He is God. Listen to the still, soft voice of God within. It’s these stirrings and promptings within that are going to propel you to the great things God has called you to do. The world is full of information and advice. However, only a small amount of information from your Creator is far greater and more relevant to your life than an infinite amount of information from this world.

Less information from God is far more powerful than great information from man. Don’t succumb to this Information Age by replacing the voice of God with the voice of data and analysis only. The voice of the One Who created all things always has the final say. The stars, the heavens, the earth, the animals, the human race, and all things are subject to the voice of their Creator God. You can study and prepare yourself for what is coming in life, but ultimately your life is in the hands of your Creator. **The Apostle Peter tells us in 1 Peter 4:19 (NIV), “So then, those who suffer according to God’s will should commit themselves to their Faithful Creator and continue to do good.”** No matter what the circumstances look like in your life, continue to seek God and entrust yourself to your Faithful Creator.

I believe we are entering into a season when God is doing more things in our lives with less resources. This winter season God is causing us to go up higher and move further along without us having to exert more effort. God is shifting gears. *He is taking us from first gear to fourth gear, from fourth gear to overdrive!* There is no limit as to what God can accomplish in and through you this season when you place your faith in Him. If you will focus on what God has called you to today, He will bless you and multiply your efforts with success. Over time, God will elevate you to the next level of your destiny and purpose. He will send the right people into your life and move obstacles out of the way for you to move forward. Keep believing and standing in faith. As you stand strong in the Word of God and His promises, God will get you to where you need to be.

In closing, if you are subscribed to my newsletters but do not receive weekly e-mails from me, I encourage you to go to www.McKadeMarshall.com and submit your e-mail address on the contact page. **Every Sunday I e-mail hundreds of subscribers a 15 to 20 minute video called *Word of the Week* with an inspiring Christian message.** I do not want you to miss out on these weekly videos so make sure you are signed up to receive *Word of the Week* in your e-mail inbox every Sunday!

I declare this winter God is making more out of less. The winds of change are shifting things for you to rise higher and reach new benchmarks in your journey with God. As you keep studying the Word of God and lifting up your voice in prayer, God is causing things to fall into place. He is bringing into focus specific things for you to work on so you can move forward into the next chapter of your life. **The plans God has for you are great and are firmly established in Him.** With God multiplying the effectiveness of your efforts, you are becoming all God created you to be in this lifetime. There is nothing you cannot do with God's strength living inside of you! I love you, and I am praying for you.

When Less is More,



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Author of "*BREATHE*" and "*Tasting the Goodness of God*"

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